

Thank you for considering a WMR event at Grattan!

We are proud of the track, and of WMR's long association with it. 2003 was the track's 40th anniversary and working this track reveals many advantages that can only come with such a history and broad experience. While you are here enjoy the wonderful views and the close relationship with nature that the owners have intentionally left as a part of the facility. Here you will find few concrete barriers and no fences. There is only one trap and everyone agrees that it is essential. What you will find instead is plenty of runoff room, and a wonderful collection complex and technical turns with elevation changes, varying radiuses, blind apexes and off-camber transitions. We also work the track in the old-fashioned way. When the numbers allow, we do respond to cars, off-track and on.

You will also enjoy the hospitality of the Western Michigan region. We provide a gift for every worker that registers, lunches, worker breaks (when the schedule allows) and one of the best dinner parties in the division. Coffee and donuts are free for workers during the morning meetings, which occur one hour before the first session on Saturday and 45 minutes before on Sunday. The schedule is posted on this web site. Workers also have their own FREE camping area at Grattan, near rest rooms and showers. There is only one shower for each sex but it is all ours and there is plenty of hot water. So come to Grattan, experience racing the way it used to be. We will welcome you with open arms and you will soon find our workers at your events as well.

To make your experience at Grattan as enjoyable as possible we have included a collection of information about working WMR events there. You will find most of it consistent with the requirements at other tracks, but some of it is unique to the operations of the track or the region.

ARRIVING AT STATION:

At Grattan you can drive to most stations. There is ample room for safe parking but please pay attention to the following:

- Your car is not an official vehicle and, therefore, is not covered by the event insurance policy. If something happens to your car at the station it is the responsibility of your insurance company (who may question its need to cover) and yourself.
- You must proceed to and from the station in a safe and courteous manner.
- There is no facility to park on station at 5, 5a or 6 as they are located adjacent to the paddock.
- Parking for nine is most convenient across-track.
- If you are new to the track, request a lap on the way to the corner. They are usually granted. Just do so prudently.

CAPTAINS AND TRAINING AT GRATTAN:

At Grattan we welcome experienced persons who want to take the responsibility of the corner. Just because you have an elevated license, however, we won't expect you to take on those duties. If you would like to, just speak to the chief. If you would like to be a captain, here are some things we do ask of you:

- There is seldom any need to work anyone across track at Grattan. Sight distances are usually good, points are readily available and there is often an adjacent station to help out. Protection for workers placed across the track is generally unavailable so we request that all workers be under the direct control of the captain.
- In no instance should the communicator respond to an incident. If sufficiently staffed, other corner personnel could (and should) respond but the communicator should remain protected.
- Scanners are wonderful training tools and we welcome their use for this purpose. Response to an incident with a headset on leaves the wearer without a full sense of hearing. The worker and his partner are counting on the full use of that faculty for their safety.
- When training a new or inexperienced worker, that worker should never be left or sent to a situation alone. Taking a new worker with you or sending them with someone IS an option. Leaving them at the station with someone IS an option. If staffing levels are insufficient to follow one of these options, call for help.
- Two people should always respond to an incident on or near the track surface. One to carry the fire bottle and then watch for traffic, the other to do the work. If staffing levels are insufficient to follow one of these options, call for help.
- The captain should ALWAYS be the person to decide who is to respond to an incident. No one should leave the station on his or her own authority.

RADIO PROTOCOL:

Generally calls are made in the following manner:

- "Control, control this is station X, 'state your flag condition'. *Then wait*
- *When appropriate control will ask you to go ahead.*
- When you continue, state the car number(s) and color(s), what they did, where they did it and the current status (car continued, course blockage, need wrecker now, sending worker – will advise)
- If you have a developing situation that needs to be updated, do it on a regular (30 second) basis.
- EXCEPTION: a blind call (see further topic)

DESCRIPTIONS

It is important that the stewards know what happened and where it happened (hint "four off" is not sufficient).

Describe what happened to the car:

- Spun on track– the car remained on the racing surface and rotated in excess of 90 degrees.
- Spun off track– the car left the racing surface and rotated in excess of 90 degrees.
- Slid – The car unintentionally left the racing surface but rotated less than 90 degrees.
- Drove off – The car was intentionally driven off the racing surface, usually to avoid an incident but occasionally for other reasons (i.e. pass in the grass).
- Pulled off – The car was intentionally driven off the racing surface and parked.

Describe where it took place:

- “54 red pulled off driver’s right before our station”.
- “33 white spun center track at our station”.
- “2 silver slid off right and stalled 20 yards past our station. Worker is responding”.

BLIND CALLS

are calls that don’t require permission from control before the call commences. They should be as clear and short as possible such as: “3 go waving yellow” or “pass under yellow at station 4”. They generally occur:

- at call-through stations during the pace lap, first lap and last laps.
- when one corner requests a point or a change in flag condition from another. **ALWAYS** acknowledge these calls blindly as well, as in, “3 copies waving yellow” or “5 copies you need a point”.
- for mechanical and black flag calls the black flag station and start should repeat the call including type of flag and car number. The call-through stations need only acknowledge that they copy the call. Call-through stations should advise if the car is AT or BY the station when they call it through as well as the car’s location in a group.
- If you have contact between two cars during a **NON-EMERGENCY** network silence (see below).
- If you have a pass under yellow during a **NON-EMERGENCY** network silence (see below).
- If you observe lead changes, such as “new leader, 54 silver at 7”.

NETWORK SILENCE:

Generally, network silence is requested during any emergency situation, during any call-through (such as for a black flag) and during races from the end of the course clearance to the end of the first racing lap as well as for the next to the last and last lap. A request for radio silence asks that you hold any call that will not affect the start or continuation of the race. Some things we do want to hear about are emergencies (heavy impact, roll-overs, apparent injury or illness to drivers, workers or spectators) and significant track blockage. If you are asked to hold a call it is a good idea to write down the call you would have made. Pens, notepads, a dry slate and pencils are in each corner box to enable you to do that.

EMERGENCY CALLS:

You can use Mayday, Emergency, Priority or Alert. Pretty much, we’ll get the picture though the standard here is Mayday. Mayday calls most often involve rollover accidents or heavy impact. They can also be used for sick or injured, workers, spectators or drivers or for significant course blockage. When you make a mayday call you are simply asking for network silence on the net. Other stations, including control, will listen and respond to your needs (as allowed by the stewards) until you cancel the mayday. Please remember it is up to you to cancel the Mayday and you should do so as soon as it is apparent that an emergency does not exist or has been responded to.

WORDS WE DON’T LIKE TO HEAR FROM CORNER COMMUNICATORS:

- *Momentarily, temporarily or briefly yellow*– (the turn was yellow or it wasn’t. We don’t describe the time)
- *Oil, hazard or slippery flag* – The GCR calls it “Surface flag” which most clearly describes its purpose.
- *Roll* – unless a vehicle is actually – *on its roof, on its wheels, on its roof, on its wheels*
- *Meatball or furred* – a mechanical black flag is the appropriate description and a closed black is a warning.
- *Re-fired or fired* – use “restarted.”
- *The car is dead* – use “lost power” or “was coasting.”
- *Worker is down*– unless one is (injured or fallen). Use “a worker is responding” if that is the condition.

YELLOW FLAGS

As specified in the GCR, standing yellows are displayed for incidents off the racing surface or when a worker has moved beyond positive protection. A waving yellow flag will be displayed for an incident or a worker who is on the racing surface. Of course this is always subject to change by an operating steward.

WHITE FLAGS

After much discussion throughout the US the comp board has clarified its intent with the recent changes to the GCR pertaining to the use of the white flag. In WMR we will comply with its decision (and appeal to their common sense in the off-season). Therefore, white flags will be displayed for the first practice session of each group each day. They will also be displayed for slow, emergency or service vehicles, **ONLY** if they are moving and on the racing surface (pavement). Since the white flag is shown for two stations prior to the slow vehicle, you **MUST** call the vehicle through your station so that

prior stations know when they can (automatically) lower their flag. You should also report if a slow vehicle has picked up speed at your station so everyone else can know to cancel his or her white flags.

SURFACE FLAGS

Surface condition flags are shown for debris only if it is on the racing surface.

Grattan Station Specifics:

STATION 1: Corner 1 is a 120-degree right-hander. Apart from the obvious problems of first and last lap incidents, here's what can happen. The track was repaved in this area (1-3) in '95. Drivers unused to that yet will enter on the inside and ride the rumble strips. This is very upsetting to front wheel driver cars and prod cars with solid rear ends. I've seen many lift both inside wheels and have to cut all the way across the track to settle it down again. VERY disturbing to others who have taken the correct line which is a wide entry and late apex. The other problem is brake failure toward the end of a session. In that case we have had cars (GT1) jump the gravel trap and fly into or through the dirt berm on the far side. On one occasion a GT1 lost it under braking approaching the corner and took out the station. This is obviously a heads up comer.

Station 1 clears* the pack during the first racing lap.

STATION 2: A lot can happen at corner 2, especially early and late in a race. Turn two is a downhill 90-degree right in which you have to set up for the turn before you can see the apex. The correct line is to turn in where the approach breaks downhill and carry speed through the corner, immediately turning back driver's right to set up for three. The worst problems are cars that slide left into the path of traffic they are racing with. This is especially dangerous with formula cars. They seem to climb over one another's wheels and flip or barrel roll into the large runoff across track. It's a long run from three, but they can help with a car that slid a long way off and stopped. Two is a popular station for pull-offs, most will pull into the station but some pull across track (driver's left) on the approach.

Station 2 clears* the pack during the first racing lap.

STATION 3: Turn 3 is one of the most fun turns in the Central Division. It has a downhill entrance, a high crown, a 130 degree change of direction and an uphill exit. It has changed in character some since the re-paving but is still a blast at speed. If you turn in too late, the turn is off camber and sends many cars around center track or onto the false grid exit. The correct line is to brake just after the downhill section begins and turn in hard. The crown will hold you inside the turn and set you up perfectly for the entrance to four. Cars braking too late will either slide off left and up the hill or over correct at which time they are heading directly for station four or the copse of trees that it sets in.

Station 3 clears* the pack during the first racing lap. It also informs control if any cars leave the racing surface through the false grid (opposite 3) or if any support vehicles have entered or exited the course through the false grid. Station 3 is the first station the race vehicles see on a pace lap.

**A clear station* has had the whole pack pass completely through its area of coverage and has had no incident *that will prevent* the continuation of the race. A station that is not clear has significant track blockage or requires a support vehicle that may result in track blockage.

STATION 4: Turn four is a 90-degree right entered from the left side of the track and the apex clipped center. The station at four is one of the first to be closed (at least 50% of the time). The corner used to be very calm. The widening of turn three has changed that somewhat, but there are no consistent problems that happen here other than the exit of turn three stuff.

Station 4 (when used) has no special communication duties.

STATION 5: 5 is the lead station for the 5 / 5a complex and is not actually located on a corner. It is at the gate of the cross-paddock road and allows access to and from the paddock. Pull-offs occur here regularly and there is usually an ambulance parked here. Wreckers and flat tows will pass through the gate from both race and counter race directions as well as entering the course from the paddock. The station is situated opposite sound control at the point where the track makes a short and serious downhill angle change. This results in most cars getting very light and formula cars leaving the ground altogether. Unfortunately, many drivers seem not to realize that brakes and steering don't work well until the car has settled on four wheels again and get squirrely as hell. Other drivers, knowing that, think it is a good place to pass. Although there are not a lot of incidents here, it does have its share, usually resulting in one or more cars ending up in the large runoffs driver's left or right at the head of the esses (more about that at 5a). Because of the physics involved here, it is also a regular spot for folks to blow their engines or break differentials or axels.

5.controls the rear gate and calls race and support vehicles on or off the course through the gate. Station 5's captain also manages 5a.

STATION 5a (when used) is managed from station 5. This station is way off drivers right and I question its validity as a blue flagging station but have been told by drivers that it is seen. If so, I wonder what in heaven's name they are looking at. You guys drive cars, tell me what you think. There is a great deal of runoff both sides in this area. When it is wet, however, cars will need it. They have been known to get into the marsh driver's left. There is also a drainage field, driver's right, just opposite the left hand portion of the esses that has taken out many undertrays and suspension pieces. This is the first station eliminated when we are short staffed, but it leaves questionable sightlines for the esses from 6 (five sees them fine but they better have binoculars), long yellow flag areas for incidents at the entrance to the bowl (at station six), and a long run from 5 or 6 to deal with cars off here. The esses are right, left, right at about 90 degrees each.

Station 5a may have to notify control about cars potentially damaged by a rough ride through the drain field near the esses. When the lower paddock is full, 5a may need to assist 6 with information about approaching cars and may, in turn, require assistance from 6 about incidents upstream from 6 but downstream from 5a.

STATION 6: This is the bowl (Monza, sugar, toilet, you name it). 140 degrees left with significant banking. A lot of lines are tried here and many of them work. Most drivers like to enter wide, cut into the apex late and let the car drift all the way up, accelerating along the rim and preserving as much speed as possible before the long run to eight. On the closing laps you may see some pretty desperate moves here which usually result in a simple slide off to drivers left (into a grassy depression that's a real mess when it's wet) or drivers right. Sometimes the applied torque here is just too much, especially for older prod cars, who break and pull into seven.

When 7 is staffed, six has no special communication duties. When 7 is not staffed, six is a call-through station for black flag and mechanical black flags at 8 and closed blacks/sound violations at start. It also calls the pack through for start/finish during the pace lap(s), the next to the last lap and the last lap.

STATION 7: Seven is a very wide, very fast sweeper that is taken flat out by most drivers (flat out from the exit of the bowl to the entrance of eight. Mostly there are just pull offs here but, again, toward the end of the race things can get pretty stupid. They go about as fast here as anywhere on the track making it fun to watch and a dip, driver's left, after the corner can unsettle unwary drivers. Enough cars go off drivers left now that they have added Armco drivers left to keep cars out of the trees. This is one of the prettiest stations in the division so take time to look around during the breaks. It is also a wonderful place to watch a race, just don't get carried away. This station may be closed when there are VERY low worker counts but it is a real run to get there and leaves a lot of yellow track for an incident going into eight when it is.

7 (when used) is a call-through station for black flag and mechanical black flags at 8. It also calls the pack through for start/finish during the 2nd pace lap, the next to the last lap and the last lap. It also calls through any cars that are to receive a closed black flag or sound violation for start/finish.

STATION 8: 8 is a high speed, blind apex 115 degree, right-hander. The preferred line is to break early on the outside, apex late and accelerate like mad, holding the car as far inside as you can (this is impossible in a lot of traffic). Approaching this corner it looks MUCH less technical than it really is. There are lots of collisions here and a few roll-overs. Most often you will see someone brake too late and turn in too early ending up off drivers left, hopefully with the rubber side down. Others have been known to try banzai inside passes, mistaking the hilltop as the apex, taking out competitors and sometimes starting brawls that corner workers have to mitigate.

8 is the black flag station. It also calls the pack through for start/finish during the pace lap(s), the next to the last lap and the last lap. It also calls through any cars that are to receive a closed black flag or sound violation for start/finish.

STATION 9: 9 is located at the top of the hill drivers left, on a grass rise. This station is beyond and above the two-turn complex that at the head of the straight and opposite pit in. The drivers come charging up a steep hill out of eight to a ninety-degree right. Straight ahead is pit in. A ninety-degree left puts them on the front straight. The seven to nine area has been widened in the last two years and all of the old markers for the turn nine complex have changed. In the last few seasons we have had a number of cars off left after the complex. This is a potential problem as the runoff rises sharply away from the track. In the past I know that Chuck Shapiro has put his car on its head here. We hadn't had any offs here in years but that seems to have changed with the new track paving.

9 calls the pack through for start/finish during the pace lap(s), the next to the last lap and the last lap. It also calls through any cars that are to receive any manner of black flag for start. 9 calls any cars into the pit that are being discussed on the net as problematic or have been black-flagged and calls the last car into the pits at the end of any session.