

# Flag Training

A science and an art!

# Introduction

- Role of the flag marshal
- Equipment required
- Flag marshalling
  - Your day
  - Hints and tips

# **The Role of the Flag Marshal**

# Definition

- ◆ To act as part of a TEAM
- ◆ To communicate with drivers, advising them of situations they may not be aware of
- ◆ To communicate with other Marshal posts
- ◆ To remain on post while circuit is LIVE, protecting everyone at the scene by proper use of flags and circuit observation



# Flag Marshals equipment

- Set of 6 flags
- Safety car Board
- Gloves
- Hat and eye shield
- Whistle
- Program and pen
- Normal Marshalling Kit

# Flag Marshals equipment

## Handy optional extras!

- Stopwatch (waterproof!)
- Chalk and a small slate or kids etching pad
- Electrical tape
- Carpal Tunnel gloves

# The Flags and Their Use

**Red Flag** - Stop racing or practice. Be prepared to stop if requested. No overtaking!!!

**Yellow Flag** – Slow down, be prepared to take avoiding action. No overtaking!!!

**Yellow/Red Flag** - Change in surface or debris circuit

**Blue Flag** – Faster car is approaching

**White Flag** – Non-competing vehicle on circuit

**Green Flag** – Clear sector

# Starting your Day – Sign On

- Go to sign on – if there are any changes to flag regs, this should be covered in the briefing
- Get your posting from CM
  - Post 4, Post 8 and Post 28 need light controls
  - There are specific rules for Post 28/29 for racing – ensure you are familiar with these

# Starting your Day – Sign On

- Identify the members of your crew
- Collect flags and Safety Car Board
- Check you have all flags and that there is nothing missing or possibly unusable
- Check whether you need a radio – if you do, try to ensure you get a fist mike and test the radio is working before you leave for post

# Starting your Day – on post

- Go out to post as early as you can – try to leave yourself 10-15 minutes to get set up
- Talk to your Crew – agree hand signals and whistle signals – if you don't have a lot of flag experience, don't be afraid to speak up – we're all here to help each other!
- Identify your preceding and subsequent flag posts – if your vision to either post is obstructed, advise your Post Chief – or if you're on your own, advise Race Control

# Starting your Day – on post

- View your flag sector and try to determine driver line of sight – when is the driver most likely to see you?
- As you're unpacking your flags, give each of them a wave – this helps you:
  - find out if you have any wind conditions to deal with
  - see how the flag will display
  - find out if you have any faulty flags i.e. when your flag flies off the pole and wafts gently across the circuit.....

# Starting your Day – on post

- Set out your flags, ensuring that they are secured
  - You don't want flags flapping around at the edge of the bank, where they may be mistaken for “live” flags!
  - You don't want your flags blowing away, falling off the bank, flying into the spectator area or wrapping around your ankles and tripping you up!
- Check your escape route(s) and ensure they're not going to become obstructed (other marshals, photographers, bags, extinguishers.....)



# Typical Race Flag Procedure

- Green Flag
- Yellow flag first 2 to 3 laps
- Blue flag - cover for incidence of overtaking cars
- Green/ yellow flag - finish and start of incident
- White/ red and yellow - as situation demands

# The intriguing mystery of..... Safety Car Flags

- When the Safety Car is deployed, SC boards and **Steady Yellow flags** to be displayed at all posts
- When the Safety Car and Main Train are in your Flag Sector, the **Yellow is waved**
- When the main train has left your sector, the **Yellow is Steady**
- SC Boards and Yellow flags stay out at all posts before Start/Finish until the very last car goes past
- When **Green** goes out on Start/Finish, **Steady Green** flags to be displayed at all posts – RACE DIRECTION
- Do NOT display a **Green** until your preceeding post has done so

# The Last Post Safety Car

- At the majority of circuits in the UK and Ireland, the Safety Car will physically leave the circuit before it reaches the Start/Finish line
- All cars are still under Safety Car regs until they reach Start/Finish and get the **Green flag** from the Starter
- SC Boards and Yellow flags stay out at all posts before Start/Finish until the very last car goes past

# The Last Post Racing

- At the majority of circuits in the UK and Ireland, it is standard for the last flagpost before start finish (sometimes 2, depending on circuit layout) to display yellow flags when cars are coming to the grid to begin racing.
- The purpose of this is to slow them down and ensure they're aware that they are now coming to grid
- At Mondello Park, if you are on Delta 28 and 29, this applies to you!
- If you are at another circuit and are on one of the last posts prior to start/finish, check with your post chief to see if this applies to you

# Displaying Any Flag: Considerations

- What a driver can see
- Where the driver is looking
- When the driver is looking at the flag
- Who else am I signalling to

# Displaying Yellow Flags

## Steady or waved?

- There's no one answer to this – it depends!
- If you have marshals trackside, then the flag is always waved, *no matter where the incident is*
- Some things, like a partially blocked track, are “no brainers” - other situations are not so simple .....

# Displaying Yellow Flags

## Steady or waved?

- Could it still be a problem if drivers are trying to overtake?
- Is it in an area that drivers have been using as “track”
- Are there track conditions contributing to the issue – oil, standing water, squashed rabbit etc.....
- Short flag sector and blind corners
  - Do drivers maybe need a little bit of “extra notice” that they might get if there is a steady on the previous post?



# Displaying Yellow Flags

## Does it matter if they can't see me?

- Remember, if you are displaying a **waved yellow flag**, you're not just signalling the drivers – you are also signalling other posts – your previous post will need to display a steady if you are waved. The next post needs to display a **green**.

If you are in a waved yellow situation, you need to keep the flag out,

*even if there are no cars coming!*



# Displaying Yellow Flags

## For how long?

- If you have an issue that is well off circuit, 2 laps – either 1 waved, 1 steady or 2 steady – is usually enough to ensure that all drivers are aware of a potential issue – if you're not sure, ask your Post Chief
- For something that is on the track causing an obstruction, it's waved until the obstruction is moved!
- If you have marshals working trackside, then the waved yellow stays out until all marshals are back in a safe position!

# Displaying Yellow Flags

## For how long?

It's a fine line to walk between safety and overcaution  
– when in doubt, err on the side of caution – or ASK!  
Safety first, always and every time – but keep in mind  
the following when you're making your decision.

- Waved yellow flags neutralise racing for TWO flag sectors
- Familiarity breeds contempt
  - Although drivers should never disobey flags, if you leave it out for long enough, they will certainly start to speed up again!
- What will you do if there is another incident?

# Displaying Yellow Flags

## When to take it in

- Remember, when you take in the yellow flag, drivers feel free to overtake (yes we know they shouldn't until they pass the green! ;) )
- Even if the problem has cleared, never withdraw the flag when there are oncoming cars – wait for them to pass you before you take the flag in

# Displaying Yellow Flags

I don't need it now,  
the Red flag is out

- Ideally, if you have a **yellow** flag situation, you should have both the **yellow** and the **red** flags out at the same time, but this isn't always possible.
- The **yellow** flag takes priority – every other post will show the **red**, but only YOU can indicate where the incident is
  - Yes, they should have slowed down and stopped racing, but you can't rely on drivers, particularly if your crew is trackside!

# Displaying Yellow Flags

*Alllll byyyy myseeeeellffff.....*

- There are times when you may be on post on your own with only a set of flags and a radio for company
- Which is more important, radio or flags?

**FLAGS!**

# Displaying Yellow Flags

AlIII byyyy myseeeellffff.....

- You are not invisible – other posts can see you and in the majority of cases, so can Race Control
- Race Control has many eyes but the drivers only have **you** to warn them
- Which is more important, radio or flags?

**FLAGS!**

# Displaying Blue Flags

**We fear the Blue.....**

- It ain't compulsory, no matter what you heard!
- All you can do is your best
- Unlike Pokemon, you will never catch them all
- Mistakes happen – if you don't make the occasional mistake, you're not trying!



# Displaying Blue Flags

## Blue blue, what do I do?

- Not every post is suitable for blues
- Qualifying is the best time to practice blues
- Get your crew to help you out
- Mistakes happen – if you don't make the occasional mistake, you're not trying!
- Develop tricks for reading a race that work for you
  - Number memorisation (first 4, last 3)
  - Chalk!



# Whistle while you work

- You are the protector for your crew
- Agree whistle signals at the beginning of the day
- Give it a good blow!
- Never leave the flagpost until you are 100% sure that you have a clear circuit

# When the session is over....

Oooh chequered flag is out, I'm going to go help with that car....!

**Oh no you're not! :)**

- The circuit is live until the last car passes you – until the drivers pass the Chequered, they're still racing. In some cases, they're still racing even AFTER the flag!
- while it may be relatively safe for the crew to start cleaning up an incident, it's only that way because you're there to watch their back! Do not leave the flag post until you know the last competing vehicle has passed you.

# Flag Presentation

# Displaying a Stationary Flag

- Largest area possible in drivers view
- Allow for direction and strength of wind
- Hold flag in middle of longest side if necessary not just by corner
- Use wind to aid display

Make sure your message is clear.











# Displaying a waved flag

- Flag at an angle so clearly seen by drivers.
- Waved flag in figure of eight.
- Smooth and steady – drivers can't tell the difference between a slow wave and a fast wave!
- Practice a wave before start of race or practice session: allow for changes in wind direction.
- Balance flag in hand, try to use wrist action: you may be waving the flag for a long period of time.



The drivers view

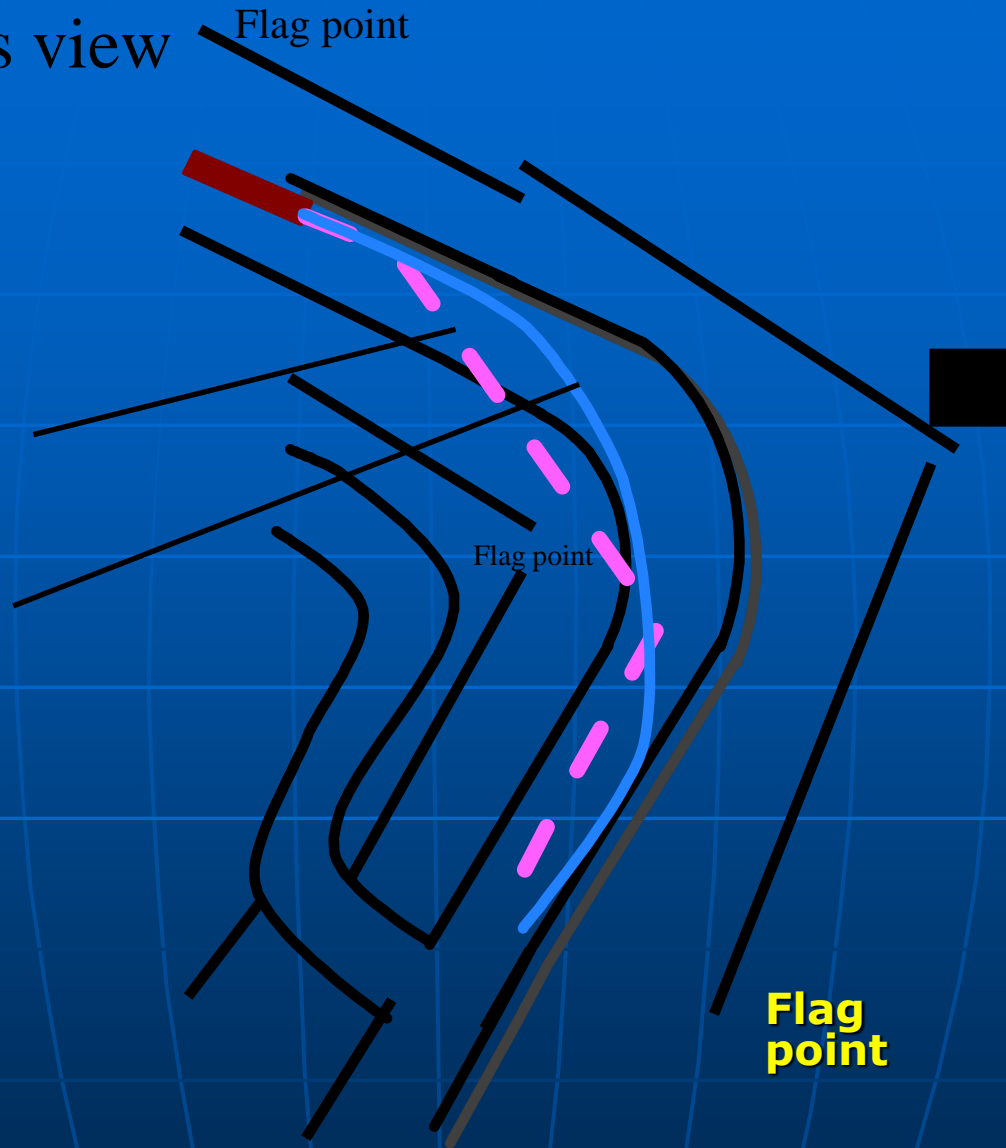
Flag point

Drivers view

Drivers line

Flag point

Flag  
point



# Lights





# Light Controller





# Blue Flags send the signal





# To the driver who needs to get it



# The End

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