

February 28, 2017 (Revision D)

Excessive Vehicles on the Course.

INTRODUCTION

This year I was at several aid stations where half dozen vehicles were parked 2 feet over the “white fog line”. CHP were prepared to write a ticket on those vehicles, if we did not move them. Luckily, we got the crews to move their vehicles.

We had three problems:

- (1) vehicle used to crew and pace runners that were parked over the “white fog line” created a safety issue,
- (2) finding out who owned the vehicles and
- (3) in order to put on the race, I need the CHP to write a letter to the USFS assuring safe passage of both vehicles and runners along Highway 2.

CHP will not allow me to put on the race due to incorrectly parked vehicles along Highway 2. The reason cars are parked along Hwy 2 is because the aid station parking lots were filled. And pacers park their cars in the parking lot for over 12 hours!

After the race was over, I met with the CHP which patrol Highway 2 during the race, to discuss how I am going to handle the “excessive vehicle problem” we are having on the course. I discussed my plan to have:

- (1) only one car per runner for crew and pacer on the course
- (2) only one pacer per runner starting at Chilao,
- (3) ID on every vehicle thats is used to crew or pace a runner
- (4) we will begin a Solo Runner Program. The Solo Runner will not use a crew or a pacer and have no cars on the course. The Solo Runner will only have one car at the Start in Wrightwood or at the Finish Line in Loma Alta Park.

The CHP in the area like the race and the aggressive way I am dealing with excessive problem. The future of the race depends on it.

The CHP also mentioned that one his patrol vehicles attempted to drive into Chilao aid station area this year, just to see what was going on. What a mess!

He couldn't get in because there were so many cars both: parked at the aid station parking lot and trying to pass through. He said, if there was an emergency and they had to bring an ambulance into the aid station area, the ambulance could not get in or out because of both the parked vehicles and vehicle passing through tend to block traffic.

This year some runners had as many as 3 cars crewing a runner, creating a small circus at each aid station. In one small parking lot, we had over a half a dozen pacer vehicle parked over 12 hours taking up valuable crew parking space. At Chilao, several runners brought their entire family's along, picnicking with their kids in the area. This has to stop or there will be no race!

We are incorporating several changes to accommodate the vehicle problem, as the popularity of the race grows. These changes will allow me to open up the race to more runners in the future. Excessive parked vehicles limit the number of runners that I can accept every year.

DISCUSSION

Car & Pacer Rules for the 2017 AC100:

(1) Cars: only one car per runner for crewing or pacing on the course, including Wrightwood and Loma Alta Park.

(2) Pacer parking car on the course: pacer will not be allowed to park their car at Chilao, Chantry Flats or at any aid station on the course. If pacers park their car at an aid station on the course, their runner will automatically be disqualified.

(3) Pacer Rules: pacers will only be allowed starting at Chilao and Chantry Flats. Only one pacer per runner.

Problem: Normally parking is 'very limited' at both Chilao and Chantry Flats (CF) and on the shoulder of the road leading to CF. This year we will have 50 more runners, so the parking at all aid station will be extremely difficult.

Only 'crew vehicle' with 'Car ID' will be allowed access to the aid station parking lots and on the shoulder of Hwy 2 parking near the aid station, especially at Chilao and CF.

A 'Car ID' will be given the runner when the runner registers in Wrightwood on Friday morning.

Recommendation: If you are going to use two pacers, one at Chilao and a second one at CF. Have the crew with the 'Car ID' drive the first pacer to Chilao, then drive the second pacer to CF and exchange pacers at CF and leave with second pacer, without parking your vehicle at CF.

Vehicle ID: every runner will be issued a "car bib" that will have the runners name, his bib number, drivers name and drivers license number. This information will be used by AC100 and the CHP. One car bib will be issued to each runner as they register at the Start in Wrightwood. These bibs will hang on the front mirror and be easily visible to aid station personal and the CHP. Only those vehicle with a "car bib" which will be allowed to park at aid station parking lot and adjacent parking space on Hwy 2 near the aid station.

Penalty: we will hold their runner for 1 hour for the first parking infraction, where the vehicle infraction occurred or at the next aid station, if the runner has already left. Their runner will be disqualified on a second parking infraction.

Solo Runner Program: Several popular 100 mile trail runs are starting a Solo Runner Program to deal with the excessive vehicles on the course, rewarding those runners that choose to run solo (running without crews or pacer) with no cars on the course and only one car at the Start or the Finish.

In the old days (20+ years ago), no one used crews or pacer, so I know it will work. Over 10% of the more experienced runners have been running AC100 solo for years. And many of them do not even use drop bags. We have well stocked aid stations and complete drop bag service to accommodate the solo runner.

In **2016 AC100**, we began the Solo Runner Program and provided a unique bib identifying the Solo runner and a Solo Finisher T-shirt.

For the **2017 AC100**, we allowed the Solo Runner priority in the lottery. However, we have to balance the field with both solo runners and runners with crews and pacer. This year we will have a Solo sub-24 Hour Solid Sterling Silver buckle and a Solo 33 Hour Solid Bronze buckle. And a Solo Finisher Shirt.

CONCLUSION

Several weeks after the race was over, I have had several discussions with the CHP that patrol the area (who gives me my one of my permits and they like the race) and we both agree that I need to be more aggressive in dealing with the “growing vehicle problem” during the event or the event may eventually be canceled because of safety issues. On the plus side, if we can get more vehicles off the course, we can open the race to more runners.

Ken Hamada

Race Director