

A newcomers guide to riding 'The Scottish'

These are the basics about course layout, route-cards, times, and a few simple tips. They should be read in conjunction with the supplementary regulations and any other information given to you by the club. Even if you have ridden the Scottish you might add some top tips to your knowledge.

As stated in the regs. You are allowed into the parc ferme (where your bike is kept) 20 minutes before your start time, remember after Monday when working out your start time that there may be bikes retired so you may start earlier than you think (the provisional results usually tell you how many bikes have retired that day so this gives you a clue)

Just before you start you will be given a **time card** this will give you your start time and allowed running times. *note* these may not be the same as printed in the programme check as it's the one on the card that counts.

Keep this card safe you will need it for **delay checks** and **time checks** it is made of waterproof paper but try not to get it dirty or too wet and DO NOT LOOSE IT.

Time is the one thing that gives a newcomer most worry. An example **time card** is shown below.

To work out your time, take your start time and add on the running time the 15min rest stop is compulsory and will be counted as **delay**. Delay time is added to your running time. Using the example below, your start time is 08:12, add to this the daily running time of 7hrs 30min plus delay of 20 min for final time control, 2 min for parc ferme, 15min for lunch stop and 19min section delay (7.30 + 20 + 2 + 15 + 19 = 8hrs 26min gives a finish time of 16:38

Scottish Six Days Trial 2019 Route and Time Card

FRIDAY

Name: J. Bloggs No: 123

Ref	Section	Route	Miles	Time allowed	Time of Arrival	Time of Departure	Delay Allowances	Initials
		Fort William				0812		
		Fuel Check						
A	4	Doirs Damh	20					
B	3	Pipers Burn						
		Fuel Check						
C	4	Roshven	31					
D	1	Glennig						
E	2	W D's	36					
		Fuel Check						
		Fuel Check						
		Rest Stop 15 Mins			1103	1118	15 min	RP
F	1	Laudale	64					
G	2	Laudale Cottage						
		Fuel Check						
H	2	Kingalioch	70					
I	3	Camasnacroise			1230	1249	19	
J	3	Meal nam Each	77					
K	3	Kilmalieu						
		Fuel Check						
L	2	Rubha Ruadh	84					
		Time Control Start	88	7h 30m				
		Time Control Finish	97	0h 20m				
		Parc Ferme		0h 02m				
		Fort William						
		(Machine Check)						

SSDT OFFICE Tel: 01397 702331 Rest Stop - 15 mins delay will be given at rest stop. No working on machines is permitted

Fort William Police Emergency Number **01397 709301 or 999** This is not included in Daily Running Time

Its easy when you get used to it and by the end of the week you can add up any number of minutes in your head. Your finish time of 16:38 is the time by which you must hand your bike into the park-ferme. For every minute late you receive one penalty point, its always a good idea to put your bike in a few mins early just to make sure.

Delay can be given at sections (19 mins in example card) where a long queue has formed once you are ready to ride the section, give your card to the official who will be standing at the bottom with a big pile of cards. When it is your turn to ride the section he/she will shout your number it is up to you to hear, take your card and ride the section. This is not as easy as it sounds as you usually have 20 bikes to get around/over/under to get to the section. Long queues usually only form at the harder sections so don't spend too long looking before you hand

your card in (once you hand your card in you should be ready to ride the section you can go back for another look but be aware that if your number gets shouted and you're not there, the official will just put your card on your bike and you are then on your own time.

Delay is also given at **Time Checks** this is when you are given a set time (20 mins on our example card) to complete a set distance, it is used to slow riders down when riding through

Fort William at the end of the day. There will be a time control start and a time control finish manned by officials (at the start of the parc ferme). There is then another 2 mins added to avoid speeding in the parc ferme. These times are printed in the "time allowed" column, the mins that you get to cover the distance and this is again added to your running time. The difference is that you can get penalised for arriving late (more than 20 mins in our example) OR early (less than 20 min in our example) at the time control finish. You do need a watch and you should check that it is reading the same time as the clock in the parc-ferme each morning.

After arriving at the final time check at the parc ferme, there is a corridor along the back wall, this is the only area you may ride your bike in the parc ferme. This corridor will allow access to each of the importers/manufacturers areas, should you have enough time, before your bike needs to be checked back into the secure area, by your finish time. Please remember to register directly with your relevant importer to use their service area.

On the back of the timecard is a diagrammatic map of the route, this is useful as it gives some info on roadwork, road numbers, section locations and fuel stops.

Route marking:

Road work will be marked with arrows as shown below. On straight main road sections there should be a SO arrow every few miles or so just to let you know that your on the right route.



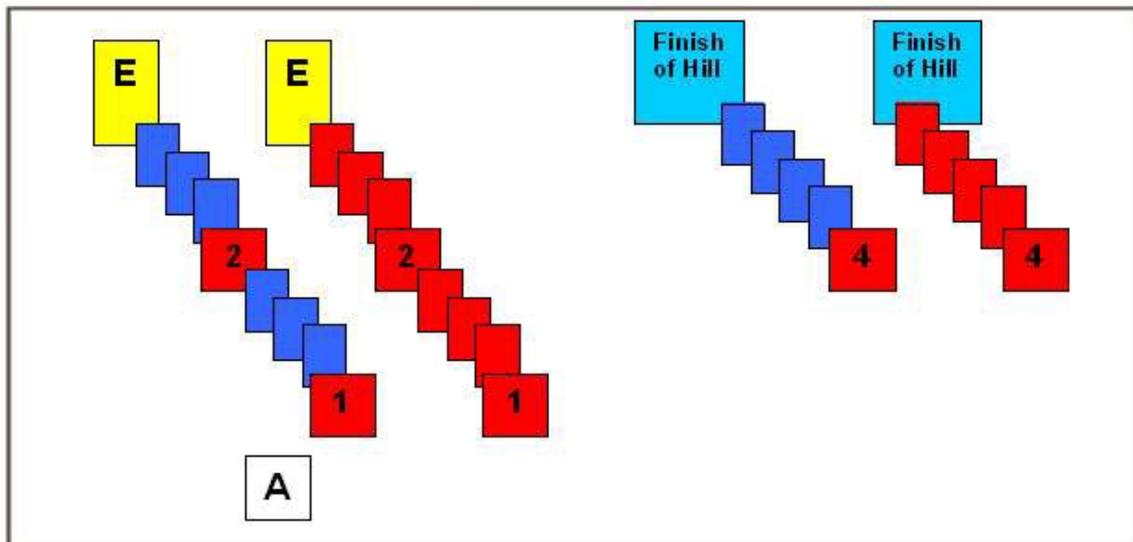
Keep your eyes peeled for L or R signs as sometimes the route just takes off the roadwork and onto the hill. At these locations there are usually a few orange flags to mark the start of the off-road section. All off-road (and some road) routemarking is done by orange flags. Where there is a change in direction there is a line of flags, after that there will be a flag every 100yds or so depending on the terrain. Tracks and well defined paths tend to have fewer flags until its time to change direction. Also there have been a few instances of people knocking flags over, just keep your eyes open!

Section Marking:

Sections are laid out in groups A, B,C,etc. with up to 5 or 6 sections in each group. The group letter should be marked at the bottom of the group although occasionally its missing. Ask an official if your not sure. There are a few locations where there are 2 groups close together (Check the map on the routcard) and you want to be sure that you do not miss a group.

Sections are laid out using Red begins cards (with the section number), red and blue markers and Yellow Ends cards. The last section will have a Blue ends card with "FINISH OF HILL" on it.

Where there are two continuous sections, the end of the first section and beginning of the second will be marked with the red section begins number ie. there will be no "E" card. see examples on the next page.



Group A. Sections 1&2 continuous

Section 4 finish of hill

Tools and tyres

Most riders carry small rucksacks these can be left at the top of sections when you walk them and picked up after you hop through the ends cards clean! Don't carry too much - strap as many heavy tools to the bike with cable ties and cut up inner-tube bands, remember to keep something in your bag to cut cable ties though. A front inner tube is essential and tools to change tube, also tubeless repair kit and a good pump (mountain bike shops are the place to get lightweight tools and excellent pumps) Keep tyre pressure a bit higher than you would for a one day. The difference it will make in the sections will be negligible (unless your up for a special first) and the risk of punctures is greatly reduced. For some of the long stretches of roadwork eg the run down Glen Coe first thing in the morning - it is worth pumping the back tyre up before you leave, so long as you remember to let it down when you go off road, most of the army fuel check points have facilities to blow up tyres. Tyres get worn down on roadwork and most clubmen change the back on the Wed night (or Thur morning if you don't have time at night). If you have time you can turn your tyre, manufacturers support teams have facilities to change tyres. Some do manage on one tyre for all week but by Saturday the knobsbles have started to fall off. The front will last all week ok. There are facilities to change tyres at the parc-ferme, it's ok to take your rear wheel out of the compound and you will have plenty of time to do it in the 20 mins in the morning. If you check nothing else, check your spokes every day the 70-100 miles a day seems to loosen them off, if you get a broken one it is worth fitting a new one.

Preperation:

The Scottish is probably the only time that you will ride your bike for six consecutive days of tough going. Not only does your bike have to be fit but you have to be too. The fitter you are the more you will enjoy it. Make a determined effort to get "bike fit" - it requires physical strength but also and most importantly, stamina. It is a fact that the better a rider you are the less energy you use, especially in the sections, so the average clubman does have to be reasonably fit, or by the end of the week you will be so knackered that you will not enjoy yourself.

Weather:

The Scottish can throw all weathers at you in one day, May can have some of the hottest days in Scotland but be warned the weather can change fast. It has been known to be riding through snowdrifts one day and then basking in glorious sunshine the next, take lightweight windproof clothing an unlined Gortex, or similar, jacket is best. It can get very cold on the long road runs especially if its raining. Take a pair of goggles, as 20 miles on the road in the rain or snow will be unbearable without them. If it is cold and wet, some riders stuff lightweight overmits in their bag as your hands freeze up!

If it gets really bad some of the high mountain passes can be above the cloud level the routemarkers place flags at much more frequent intervals but take your time, don't get off course.

Other tips:

Don't spend too long looking at sections an extra 2 mins looking at 30 sections adds up to 1 hour that's 60 points if your 60 mins late!

Don't ride too fast on the rough or tracks, the times are set so you don't have to ride fast just keep going steadily and you will be ok. Riding fast just wastes your energy and increases risks of punctures, crashes, and getting stuck in bogs especially watch out for front wheel punctures on the tracks and paths. Keep an eye on the riders around you there will always be ones who are faster but the majority should be within +/- 20 of your number. Don't spend too much time waiting for your chums you will all catch up at the next section. If you do have problems and have to make some time up ride a few sections with a very quick look at them. Some riders try riding sections without looking at them but unless you can see it all from the bottom it is not advised there can be some deep pools and big drops if you go way off line! - remember you have to make a "bona fida" attempt or the observer may not mark you and you'll end up with a "50" ie. don't just ride through the begins cards and out the side.

Whatever you do KEEP TO SPEED LIMITS on the roads - there are extra Traffic Police on bikes and in unmarked cars during the week if you get stopped for speeding (or any other offence) not only will you have to take the punishment of the law, but you will be out of the trial faster that you can say "*Ballachulish Bridge*"

On forest tracks there is a mandatory 15mph speed limit. This may seem slow but it is there for a reason and is enforced. One of the conditions of getting permission to use forestry land is that we control speed through forests. There will be travelling officials in the forest and anyone caught speeding will be dealt with by the Clerk of the Course and can lead to exclusion.

Remember that all of the land you ride over is private land, it is the good will of the landowners, tenants, gamekeepers, farmers, and shepherds, that lets the event take place, some of the land is environmentally sensitive and permission is only got to use it under very strict conditions, please don't abuse this trust

Consider other land users, including walkers, and especially locals going about their day to day life.

Slow down near livestock, especially lambs.

Stick to flagged routes.

Avoid erosion, take special care when on paths and when joining or leaving roads not to damage verges or ditches or not to get too much mud dragged onto tarmac roads.

Most importantly enjoy yourself take time to stop at the top of some of the hills and look at the scenery, to walk to some of the places you will get to, would take hours, or even days, feel privileged that you are allowed to ride a bike over some of the most spectacular scenery in Britain, in good weather it is awesome, in bad, it is wet, cold, miserable but still awesome!

Hope this was of some use and will add to your enjoyment of what will undoubtedly be an experience of a lifetime.

Good Luck.