

GUIDELINES FOR TOUR LEADERS

By Ron Harper and Sandy Thixton

Leading a tour consists of two major tasks:

- planning for the tour and
- conducting the tour.

Safety is the number one priority and the most important responsibility of a tour leader in carrying out both these tasks.

Successful tours require a completely thought out route, a plainly marked map, and complete driving directions.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR **PLANNING A TOUR**

Step 1 : Select an appropriate destination:

- TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS A GROUP OF SLOW MOVING MODEL A'S CREATE WHEN TRAVELING TOGETHER. For that reason, some destinations that might be fun in theory just are not appropriate for Model A's.

Step 2 : Determine a possible route:

- INVESTIGATE ALL POSSIBLE ROUTES TO REACH THE DESTINATION BEFORE DECIDING ON A POSSIBLE ROUTE. Use an on-line search or other resource to make certain that a route is not designated as a dangerous roadway or safety corridor.

Step 3 : Make an advance run of the route:

- NOTE ALL SAFETY CONCERNS:
These may include but are not limited to areas where cars may become separated due to traffic lights or congestion and where left turns are required on busy highways. Note any areas where there is little or no shoulder for pulling off the roadway.
- NOTE ALL MARKERS AND LANDMARKS TO BE INCLUDED IN DIRECTIONS:
Road signs, stop signs, mile posts, gas stations, and other markers help clarify the route.
- NOTE ANY AREAS THAT MIGHT CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR MODEL A's:
Mark construction areas, grades, travel on gravel or where fresh paving is a possibility and should be avoided.
- CHOOSE A DEPARTURE POINT THAT GIVES SAFE AND EASY ACCESS TO THE ROUTE.

Step 4 : Make adjustments to the route:

- CHANGE THE ROUTE TO AVOID DANGEROUS AREAS AND CONSTRUCTION ZONES:
This may include, for example, changing the route so that the Model A's do not have to make a left turn into oncoming traffic or eliminating part of a route where continuous braking might cause brake failure.

Step 5 : Write a rough draft of the driving directions:

- SELECT MARKERS AND LANDMARKS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DRIVING DIRECTIONS:
Even those who are unfamiliar with the locale should be able to navigate the route with little difficulty using the driving directions and map.

- SIMPLIFY THE DIRECTIONS TO INCLUDE ONLY WHAT IS NEEDED:
If a street or road has more than one name, use the name that will be seen on the signs on the route. Use the terms *right* or *left* instead of North or South or East or West.
- INCLUDE ENOUGH DETAILS THAT A 'LOST CAR' CAN FIND THEIR WAY BACK TO THE ROUTE AND ARRIVE SUCCESSFULLY AT THE DESTINATION

Step 6 : Determine arrangements for potty stops and lunch stops.

Step 8 : Select a map that will show the route most clearly:

- MARK THE ROUTE WITH A MARKER OR HIGHLIGHTER. Give preference to a map that shows the route in a way that those looking at it don't have to turn it upside down. White out unnecessary information so the map is relatively simple and easy to read at a glance.

Step 9 : Finalize the driving directions and add other helpful details that include:

- The CB channel on which drivers may receive important directions.
- Cell phone numbers to call in case of an emergency or breakdown.
- Departure time and an approximate return time.
- Total number of miles for the tour.
- Where cars need to fuel up along the route.

Step 10 : Make copies to provide to the participants.

Step 11: Write a short blurb for the newsletter describing what the tour will include, and what participants should bring.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR CONDUCTING A TOUR
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Conducting a tour involves organizing and leading the tour in such a way that everyone arrives safely and has a good time in the process. Besides designating a safe and convenient departure point, other decisions that a tour leader must include

- **What steps can I take as tour leader to avoid having all the Model A's on the tour pull over at the same time in case of an emergency to one vehicle or if cars have become separated ?**

Having a group of Model A's pull over to the side of a busy highway or on a curve is a dangerous practice that should be avoided at all costs. A group of up to a dozen Model A's or more requires a very wide shoulder area capable of safely allowing all cars to pull OFF the roadway. It also requires those same cars to renegotiate getting back onto the busy highway without impeding traffic or causing or becoming involved in an accident. **The tour should be organized well enough so that pulling over to regroup will be unnecessary.**

- **Who will be designated to be a "sweep" driver to help anyone along the route who becomes stranded or has mechanical difficulty?**

In the case of a breakdown, only a couple of cars should pull off – **not the entire group**. Having everyone pull off if one car experiences a break down is as dangerous as regrouping. It is the responsibility of the tour leader to determine the safest procedure everyone will be expected to follow in the event of a breakdown and to explain that procedure clearly during the drivers' meeting before departure.

- **What should be the number and order of cars who will travel as a group?**

The tour leader should determine in what order the cars should travel and which ones will be traveling as a group. Separating the Model A's into groups of faster traveling cars and slower moving cars, is advised. This is especially true if the route involves traveling up one or more grades where it is difficult for a faster Model A to be stuck behind a slower moving one. Depending upon the total number of cars, it would be best to divide into two or more groups to travel together, with the faster cars leaving first.

- **Where should any modern cars travel who want to be included on the tour?**

For safety reasons, some clubs do not allow modern cars to accompany the group of Model A's. They believe that a modern car among the Model A's or at the end of the line of Model A's traveling together creates a more dangerous situation than already exists with slow moving Model A's. These clubs say that modern cars should travel to the tour destination separate from the group of Model A's. It should be clear to the modern cars where they are expected to travel.

- **What does the tour leader need to explain to drivers about the safety procedures to follow while on the tour, what precautions they need to take, and what areas of the map might prove to be confusing?**
- **How can the departure of the Model A's be arranged so each will be spaced out enough to allow other traffic to pass safely including trucks and not be impeded?**

Note:

These guidelines have been compiled from the experience of driving my Model A to every Regional Meet during the past 15 plus years and several National Meets including Reno, Vancouver B.C., and twice to Calgary, Alberta.

During these experiences with touring, we have encountered numerous situations. For example, the rear end of our Model A had to be rebuilt in the parking lot of the Reno Hilton. We have had our Model A break down on a busy freeway in Portland requiring a tow truck. And we broke down outside of Sisters returning from a meet in Boise during 103 degree heat. That also required a tow truck.

Besides touring with groups of Model A's from the Enduring A's, we have traveled with groups of Model A's from Treasurer Valley A's of Boise, the High Desert A's of Bend, and the Rogue Valley A's, and the Santa Clara California A's. Traveling with these groups from other clubs have given us added perspective on what constitutes a successful and well-organized tour.

For this article we also consulted the High Desert A's and the Galloping Gerties to see what guidelines their clubs follow for touring. Both of these clubs have experienced fatal wrecks by members while on or returning from a tour.

The next issue of the Rattles will include Guidelines for Tour Participants.

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