

Mid-Atlantic Trials' Gate Trials Series Rules

Mid-Atlantic Trials' Series of Observed Gate Trials is fashioned after Observed Trials of the 1970's and early 1980's before the implementation of rules allowing a rider to stop and set up before attempting the more difficult obstacles. With riders needing to maintain forward motion, it is somewhat easier to challenge them without using "extreme" obstacles. The ultimate goal of MAT events is to provide a venue that focuses on all riders having fun, and having their abilities challenged without endangering them. To that end, all MAT events will not have ability lines, but will have obstacles of varying degree of difficulty in each section. All riders may choose at each event, the obstacles they wish to attempt, or not attempt, and that can change at each section, each loop.

The Trial

Our Trials take place on a course called a loop, which is made up of a series of sections observed by a "checker", or in some cases there will be self or peer checking. These sections contain natural obstacles such as mud, rocks, water and/or logs, etc... The participant's goal is to ride through each of these sections, accruing as many points as possible by "cleaning" obstacles without losing forward momentum, "footing", going backwards, or going out of bounds. The obstacles or "gates" in each section must be clearly marked and not less than one meter wide at any given point. Wherever possible, natural boundaries such as tree rows or stream banks should be used to border sections. Sections should be adequately marked with colored tape or other media that clearly define the boundaries.

The Loop

The loop must not contain impossible turns, ascents or descents nor be too hazardous. It should be set up with the beginner rider in mind so that all riders will be able to get to all of the sections with relative ease. It should not be so long as to cause undue pressure for riders to finish on time. The effect of rain or other inclement weather should also be considered when designing the loop. The loop should flow from one section to another without cross-traffic or splits and should give enough room between sections to avoid exiting riders from one section interfering with riders at the next section. The loop should be clearly marked with arrows pointing the way to the next section. Ideally, when a rider passes one arrow, the next arrow should be in sight or it should be obvious as to the route.

The Sections

Sections must not contain impossible turns, ascents or descents. They should not contain obstacles that are dangerous. All sections should have obstacles of various degrees of difficulty to accommodate riders of different abilities. Sections must be clearly marked with signs denoting their beginning and end, with the number of the section included. Sections and gates must be at least one meter wide at all points. The left and right boundaries of each section must be clearly marked, with red ribbon defining the right boundary, and blue ribbon defining the left boundary. Adequate use of ribbon to avoid rider confusion is highly recommended. Ribbon should be placed securely on items such as trees, that are not easily moved, broken or disrupted. All "gates" within the section must be clearly marked on medium that is at least 6" wide by 8" tall and placed where approaching riders can easily see them. Gate markers should be white with a black vertical line through the middle denoting the gate. Each gate will be worth one or two points and the gate markers will have the value of the gate on the appropriate side of the marker. White or yellow tape may also be used to further designate the split. Section length should be determined by the time needed to complete the section. In general it should take about thirty seconds to complete each section, and not more than about forty-five seconds. Each section must be test ridden by as many riders as possible on vintage bikes to determine the appropriate difficulty of each gate and to ensure the section will not deteriorate during the event. Sections should be designed to allow new and novice riders to obtain about two to three points, intermediate riders to obtain four to six points, better riders to obtain six to eight points and the best riders to get up to ten points, which will be the maximum points possible to obtain in each section. Note: Riders will only have three or four chances (Depending on the number of loops) to try obstacles, so that should be kept in mind by the hosting club to keep the difficulty levels appropriate.

Points Event Requirements

The Start and Stop times of the event must be stated at the rider's meeting before the start and should not be changed unless it becomes absolutely necessary. There must be between seven and ten sections per loop, with a total number of section rides between twenty-seven and thirty-two. Time allowed for the event will be at least three hours, and no more than four and a half hours, and must provide adequate time for riders to finish. All MAT events will be a part of the "Gate Trial Series" and no other series.

Stopping or Postponing an Event

If at any time the loop and/or sections are determined by the course marshal to be too dangerous, and cannot be fairly adjusted for all riders' safety, the event must be ended. It may be stopped temporarily while "adjustments" are made with consideration given riders for the time it is stopped. If an event must be ended, the number of sections counted will be determined by the rider who was still competing, with the least number of completed sections. Once an event is started it will be considered "complete" unless there are riders who were unable to earn any points.

Equipment and Classes

Competing motorcycles will be broken into three major classes: Vintage/Air-cooled Class, Modern/ Liquid-cooled Class and Open Class. A subclass of "Relics", for pre 1972 motorcycles may be added to the Vintage classes if so desired. A Trial Bike Class may also be added for non-Trials bikes of any age. To qualify as a Vintage Class motorcycle it must have an air-cooled engine. Vintage Class motorcycles may also compete in the Modern Class if they so desire. Motorcycles that have liquid-cooled engines will be placed in the Modern Class. Riders not interested in competing, may sign up in the Open Class. These classes, with the exception of the Open Class will be further broken down by rider ability. Riders will sign up in a class to compete with other riders of the approximate same ability. Vintage and Modern classes will be 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0 ranging from the beginner class (4) to the expert class (0). Riders in the Open Class may ride any given line in any section, but may not switch lines within a section. All motorcycles must be equipped with "Trials" competition tires that are no more than 4" wide. All riders must wear approved motorcycle helmets and motorcycle boots for safety. Other attire such as gloves and other protective apparel is recommended. The course marshal may disqualify a rider or suspend his/her riding for "unsafe" apparel or in the case of the motorcycle, knobby or other tires with "an aggressive" tread.

Riding and Scoring the Event

Sections must be ridden in their designated order and a section may be attempted just once per loop. Riders not adhering to this rule will be subject to disqualification.

Scoring begins for the section when the front axle passes between the start markers and ends when the whole bike (with rider aboard) passes between the end markers. Riders will accumulate points by "cleaning" gates. This means their whole bike, with them aboard must complete the gate to earn it's points. They will continue to accrue points until the rider dabs, uses something for support, loses forward momentum for more than one second, falls, or goes out of bounds. If a rider goes out of bounds by riding through a gate marked with "Xs" he/she will also stop earning points in that section. If a rider crosses his/her path within the section they will stop earning points as well. A rider not on their bike, with both feet on one side of it will be considered to have lost forward motion. Riders will not lose their obtained points once they foot, etc... but will lose the ability to earn more points in that section. If riders do not wish to ride a section, they must give themselves, or have the checker give them, a zero for that section. Riders may start and/or stop riding at any time. Their score card should be handed in so the host knows they are not still on the loop. Regardless of sections attempted, section scores will be added for a total score. Rider placement in each class will be determined to give the highest score first place... Ties will be broken by age, the older rider taking the better place.

Sections may not be closed or altered without the consent of the Course Marshal except when a change takes place within the section making it unsafe for any or all riders. At that time, the section may be adjusted so that it is again safe for all riders.

Protests

Protests must be filed with the Course Marshal within fifteen minutes of the finish of the event. The Course Marshal's decision will be considered final.

Series Placement

All riders will be given a placement, at each event according to their score. Ties will be broken by awarding the best placement to the older rider. At the end of the season, riders scores at each event (in each class) will be added together for final placement within their class.