



The Quarter Midget Racing Day

Once you have your car ready to go, all your safety gear, and your family has gone through novice training, the next step is to race! This is where the real fun begins. The following paragraphs are intended to help walk you through all the steps of a typical racing day.

The first step of course is to arrive at the track and find a parking space. Most club facilities have open trailer parking available on a first come first serve basis. There are often exceptions for reserved vendor spaces or a few spaces for some particular volunteers.

Each racing day you must have your car inspected for safety by the club Safety Director or their designee. This is done by bringing your car, driver, and safety gear to a designated area or in some case the Safety Director and some helpers will go from trailer to trailer. The Safety Director will check your car to make sure the brakes work, the driver's gear meets specs, and all other QMA safety requirements are met. For each car he or she will complete and sign a QMA Safety Sheet and then give that to you.

The next step is to sign in. This is done by completing the bottom portion of your safety sheet with your driver's information and QMA number and taking it to your club's sign in area, usually at or near the track tower. Here you turn in your sheet, sign the appropriate insurance waivers, pay your entry fee and make your "pill draw".

Most race days are comprised of either heat races with main events OR qualifying with main events. Heat races are shorter races used to determine your main event positioning while qualifying is single car runs to record a lap time to position your driver for the main. The pill draw is where you reach into a bucket and blindly draw a chip with a number on it that then determines your heat race line up or qualifying order.

Prior to every race day most clubs will host a Pit Meeting, sometimes called a handler's meeting. This mandatory meeting is usually mandatory and is conducted by the Club President and / or Race Director. Here they will go over all pertinent information for the race day and talk about things that they have seen in recent races that need to be brought to everybody's attention.

After the pit meeting the race director will often have a driver's meeting where they meet with the kids to remind them about how to line up and start the race and to make them aware of any special things the officials will be paying attention to.

Sometime between sign in's closing and the first race, the tower staff will complete and post the line ups for the heat races or qualifying order. Once this is done you should check which race number you are in and the number that has been assigned to your driver. This number determines where they will start in the race and you are required to put this number on your car before you stage to race. Paper copies of the numbers are available near where the line ups are posted, grab 3 of copies of your driver's number and then affix them to the car so that there is one on each side of the tail cone and one on the left side of the car in front of the driver's compartment. Most people do this by using blue "painters" tape because it easy to take off after the race.

When you know your race number make sure you have your driver and car in the staging area in plenty of time to be lined up before your race is pushed off. Once your car is in staging there is no more running of the engine so if you would like to warm it up (a very good idea) then do so before you get up there to line up.

When you arrive at staging with your car and driver there will be a volunteer club official called the pit steward there to direct you to which lane you should line up in. Each race that is getting ready is assigned to a specific lane to help keep it organized. Take your car off its car or stand and put it in line then have your driver get in the car and begin buckling in. Please have your driver all ready to go when the race before yours is finished. It really helps the raceday go much smoother when we can push one race off right after the other. If you are race number 1 then have your driver ready to push off right at your club's designated starting time.

When the tower staff and all the other officials are ready for your race to enter the track you will be signaled to push your driver off. This is done from the staging area one at a time from the front of the line back. Please make sure the car in front of you is running under its own power before you tap your driver to flip their switch on. This is for safety all the handlers and their ankles!

While the cars are being pushed out the flagger will have the yellow caution flag displayed. Once all the drivers have safely entered the track the green flag will be displayed and the warm up period will begin if your club has warm-ups in the format. During the warm up if there are any on track accidents or cars that go Dead On Track ("DOT") the flagger will wave the yellow caution flag. For serious accidents, injuries, or required wall repair the flagger will wave the red stop flag. The warm up timer continues on for any yellow flag and stops for any red flag.

During a timed warm up period it is completely okay to bring your driver into the hot chute for any repairs, car adjustments, or pep talks. The only requirement is that your driver has their car back on the track or at least past the "out late" line at the end of the hot chute before the warm up time has expired. If they are out after this then they will be required to go to the back of the starting line up.

When the warm time expires the flagger will wave the yellow caution flag until all the cars have slowed down and then they will call for the initial line up. They signal for the initial line up by holding the rolled up green flag in one hand and the rolled up yellow flag in the other flag and moving them up and down in an alternating fashion. At this time the drivers are expected to

pull into double file position based on car number with car number 1 being on the inside of the front row and car number 2 on the outside and so on and maintain a slow pace.

Once the drivers are all in position the flagger can throw the green flag. The QMA rules actually only require the front four cars to be in position but the flagger will always try to get the hold field together before they opt to start with less than that. During the line up process it is important that your driver knows where they are supposed to be, maintains a tight proper distance behind the car in front of them, and pays attention to the flagger for any information they may be trying to convey to them.

While not required to, the flagger will usually signal the drivers with a "one to go" signal once the field is line up properly so that the drivers know to expect the green flag the next time by. This does not mean that the green flag will for sure be thrown the next lap because if the field does not stay together or the leader or other car jumps out early the flagger can elect to wait to throw the green. There may not be another "one to go" signal after the initial one so let your drivers know to always be ready.

When the green is thrown the race begins and the drivers start competing for position on the track. They keep racing until the next flag is thrown which could be yellow, red, or white which would signal one lap to go until the checkered flag. If the caution yellow or red is thrown and the races time limit has not expired then a single file restart will take place.

The tower staff will determine the restart order and post the numbers in the window of the tower. Once the line up is ready in the window the flagger will signal to the drivers to look to the window to determine where they are supposed to be and then put themselves in that order. There is no passing allowed under yellow until the line up is posted and then only to put yourself in the right order. It is never okay to pass the leader under yellow.

Once the race is completed with the checkered flag all drivers are expected to slow down and exit the track safely including using their left hand wave to let others know they are leaving the track. Because the race is over the off-chute gate will be open so that cars can exit to the scale house. It is important to exit slowly, with caution, and to stop completely before arriving all the way to the scales.

At the scale house you will be required weigh your driver and car together and be checked for other tech items. Do not leave the scale area until you have been cleared by the scale operator to do so. When they have then you can load your car back onto your pit car and return to your pit area or trailer.

For special events such as region races or Grands you will also need to have your engine sealed before leaving the scale area as well. This is where a volunteer uses a unique paint color to mark your engine in various places to make sure that no changes are made to it between your heat race and qualifying and the tech inspection process.

When all the heat races (or qualifying) is completed then tower will then take all the results and put together the line ups for the main events. When these are completed they will be posted at the bottom of the tower as well. The tower will announce when the main events are to

begin. You should then check to see which race you are in, what your number will be, and make sure to be ready in staging before the race before yours is completed.

All junior division races have a maximum of 8 cars and senior divisions have a maximum of 10 cars. If there are more than this limits signed into a class for the racing day then there will be more than one main event. The feature main will be called the A Main, the next level down will be the B Main, then the C Main and so on.

When there are multiple mains your heat or qualifying results will determine which main event you are slated into. A specific number of cars from each lower main will transfer to the next main up depending on your club's format. Each lower main event will then be run starting with the lowest letter. So every driver still has a chance to make it to the A main event in their division regardless of how they qualify or finish in their heat.

When the A Mains are finished your club will normally have the top 3 or 4 finishers in each division take their car to the "impound area" which is roped off or marked off area. Here the cars remain untouched until they are either called for technical inspection or released from impound by the club's tech director. If selected for inspection the different things that may be checked are fuel, oil, and carburetors, and other engine components.

The engine rules for QMA are very detailed and intended to make sure that all the kids are allowed to compete on a level playing field. Messing around with those rules is considered a very serious offense and will result in severe penalties and suspensions.

While waiting for the tech to be completed it is a good time to look around the facility and help pick up and clean after ourselves. When all cars and engines have been cleared from tech inspection then it is time for the awards ceremony which will be conducted at the brick awards platform just to the west of the tower. After finishing the awards our racing day is complete and the only thing left to do is talk about all week and make stuff up until we come back the next time.

Race Day Volunteers

A successful race day requires volunteer efforts on part of all members of the club. You DO NOT have to work a position all day, just ask for a replacement when needed. All of the following positions are filled by volunteers, some of them are pre-assigned and others need people to step up every week. Don't be shy, help out where you can!

Pit Boss: Works in the staging area to make sure races are ready on time. Duties include making sure drivers are properly buckled into cars, making sure correct numbers are on car, and making sure all cars and drivers are present. You will wear a headset to communicate with the tower and flagger. The flagger will signal to you when he/she is ready for the next race to be sent out. You will be given a copy of the line-ups for each race to check number on cars. If any drivers or cars are missing, notify the tower to call that driver to staging.

Race Director: Wears a headset and stands in the pit area. Your job is to provide communication between handlers and judges. When calls are made, the race director notifies the handler of the call. The race director also opens the exit gate for cars after a race and closes the gate once all cars have gone through. (The next race cannot start until all participants from the previous race are behind the gate.)

Corner Worker: Two corner workers are required per corner of every novice race. You will be required to work a corner while your son/daughter is racing. Volunteer to work corners anytime.

Judge: Every race is required to have a minimum of three judges. Their responsibility is to make sure drivers are racing cleanly and not being overly aggressive. Judges sit on the judge's stand and communicate with a headset to inform all volunteers when calls made. (ALL NOVICE HANDLERS should spend some time on the judging stand learning from veteran handlers. Handlers are assigned races to judge which is indicated by names written on line-up sheets.)

Lap Checker: Works in the tower and keeps a running order of cars and their positions in the race. Usually three lap checkers are required for every race.

Card Flipper: Counts down laps in a race by flipping a numbered card each time the lead car completes a lap.

Snack Shack: The snack shack provides food and income for the club. Any help you can offer with cooking food or managing the till would be greatly appreciated.

Flagger: The flagger controls the race. Novice handlers are generally not encouraged to flag unless they have

Scales: All cars and drivers are required to scale *immediately* after a race. Workers are needed to monitor scales and assist with lifting cars. For some races, cars are required to “cross the board” at scales. On the board, car tire widths are checked and knerf bars are checked to insure the car is legal. Scale workers record car placings and weights and communicate with the race director when there is a problem with legality.

Fueling: For region races and qualifying races, track fuel is required. Volunteers are needed to fuel and seal cars.

Sealing: Motors are sealed with paint after qualifying and region heat races. Cars cannot leave the track exit area until they have been sealed. Novice handlers should observe veteran handlers to learn sealing procedures.