

## RallySport Ontario (RSO) VP Navigational Rally Report – 2016

The year has come to a close and it has been an honour to serve on the Board of Directors. It was the first year of my two year term on the Board and it has been a learning experience to say the least. My focus this year was to first assess the navigational rally environment and then work towards improving publicity to increase entry levels while retaining existing participants.

### Navigational Rally

At the beginning of the year, I had been participating in navigational rallies for three years and it had become clear that the core group of participants had been stagnating. The number of new participants per event was declining and those who did try it out, weren't coming back. This trend resulted in there being more Expert class entries in ORRC events than the Novice and Intermediate classes. To increase event turnout, we needed to improve our Internet presence and phase 1 was to update the RSO website so that it had a modern look and feel and to make upcoming events clearly visible on the homepage. The next phase (to be undertaken this coming year) will be into increase web presence through social media.

Since ORRC events are not considered beginner level, there's a greater chance that first-time participants will be discouraged by the difficulty level of the Novice instructions, perform poorly, and not return for another event. With there being so few beginner level events, ORRC organizers are being encouraged to offer a Touring class with easy instructions that act as a tutorial. This will help teach new participants and encourage them to try another event with Novice instructions and join the Championship.

Over the past few years, the Intermediate class has only had 2 to 3 entries per event and frequently only a single entrant. With only a couple of entries, organizers have been using the Expert instructions for the Intermediate class too. To encourage participation through competition and reduce costs/effort for organizers, the Intermediate ORRC class has been dropped for the 2017 ORRC season with Intermediate class participants moving up to the Expert class.

In the coming year, I plan to continue my efforts to grow navigational rally in the province by increasing awareness and therefore, participation and improve training for first-time participants so they are comfortable returning and enjoy the activity.

### RSO Website

As part of the RSO website update, it was discovered that we rely heavily on "friends of rally" who provide Internet services which piggy-back off their own service. Since RSO is an independent organization and without a formal arrangement with these providers, the new website was migrated to services controlled by RSO and are no longer dependant on the goodwill of friends. I'd like to thank all those who have helped us over the years for your support and generosity.

To help prevent malicious activity against the new website, a digital certificate was obtained to provide data encryption between visitors and the web server. This will prevent sensitive data, such as login credentials, from being captured during transmission. Having a certificate on the site will also help improve ranking on search engines such as Google.

As a rally enthusiast and IT professional, I've enjoyed contributing to rallying in Ontario and I thank-you for this opportunity to serve the rally community. I look for to the rest of my term on the Board.

Sincerely,

Darin Mayes  
VP Navigational Rally