

First off let's figure what we need as far as computers and stuff go. You would want an operating system 2000 or higher, although not Windows ME, a decent printer, a set of photo cells (timing Lights), the cable to convert the lights to the decoder. If you plan on furnishing anyone with a results monitor (Rmon) then you need an additional computer and I would network the two. For the computer that is actually going to run Orbits (AMB timing) I would make sure it is designated solely for this. That way you can control what is on there and that makes it about as stable as one can get.

IMPORTING COMPETITORS FROM REGISTRATION

If your registrar is entering competitors to Excel it is very easy to import that information into Orbits. The file would be saved as a Tab delimited text file.

Here are the fields (cells in excel) and their order.

Car Reg
Driver Reg
Car #
Class
Transponder #
2nd Transponder #
First Name
Last Name
Additional Data 1
Additional Data 2
Additional Data 3
Additional Data 4
Additional Data 5
Additional Data 6

For the first two I would just use random numbers and there is no need for a second transponder #.

If you are going to use the print out from AMB for Race Results that have all the necessary SCCA info on them then you need to copy to the Documents file under letter the new RaceFull.pmt. First Rename the old RaceFull.pmt to RaceFullOld.pmt, and then copy the file. You will need to use the exact fields exactly as they are shown below to generate compliant results:

Add Data 1	Member Number
Add Data 2	Sponsor
Add Data 3	Car Make and Model
Add Data 4	Hometown (city & state)
Add Data 5	SCCA Region
Add Data 6	Car Color (not on Official Race Report but useful for the field)

ORBITS

When you install Orbits on your laptop or computer you will see two different icons, one is called the Administrator and the other is called the Operator.

Everything about the event is on the Administrator, from the track info, general system defaults for that weekend to the actual competitors. The Operator is just like it sounds. This is where you go to actually time an event.

The first thing for the weekend that you want to do is open the Administrator. You will see an icon on the left that looks like a track configuration. Move your mouse there and click on it. You will then get a window that says "Please Select a Track and Event". On the bottom of that window you will see New, Edit and Delete. If you are entering a track for the first time then click on new. Now you will see a window that says "Create a New Track". Fill out the information it asks for and then click OK. If you have a track where there are multiple configurations you can just go to edit and change the info on the track. After you do this you are still on the window that says Please select a Track, etc. Go to the right hand window and under the "Select Event" you will see New, Edit and Delete. Click on New and enter the information for the event you want to create and click ok when done. The icon that looks like someone holding a credit card is actually the registration page. The icon that looks like a pen is where you can do your results, point and grids. I would then go to the task menu at the top left and click on file. Go to the General Settings. Here you can name those additional data fields that you imported. You can then go to Run Defaults and select what you want the system to do. Click start on flag, Count first Passing should be NO, if you say yes you will have 1 more lap than what you wanted. The Starting Grid tab left you select how you want you grids to look. Click OK when you have all the info you want. Take a look at the Administrator page. You can see it is basically broken in half. The top half is a PERMANENT DATABASE. On the left side you will see a window "Select a Class". Right click here and enter each class that your region will run, whether it is regional or national. Now we can Import that Text Tab Delimited file. Go to the top task bar and click on file and then select Import & Export. Then select "Import Competitors". If you do it this way then you will want to name those additional fields after you import the information. Tell it where you want the competitors to come from. If on disk then it is A and if it is a cd, your cd drive etc. That's it. Now if you want to add a competitor manually you need to Select the class and then right click and enter the info for the competitor. Not bad. If you want to have your registrar do this you can. If you have a driver and there is no transponder or incorrect transponder you can correct it here by right clicking on the competitor and entering the correct info.

After you have entered the classes for the first time and your competitors you can start to enter the schedule for the weekend. Go to the bottom left window and you will see the EVENT. First thing you want to do is again name the weekend. Right click and select NEW GROUP. Then you can start to enter the schedule for the weekend. In the box under select a Group or a Run Right click and select Create a Run. Runs are what we usually call sessions or groups by our entry form. Fill in the info for that session. Enter the Group and if it is practice, qualifying or race, the date and I would estimate the time. Start method is again, start on flag, count first passing is no, count during yellow is yes. For a race you can tell it to auto finish for # of laps or if it is a timed race for that period of time. I don't do anything with the last two for club races. Click OK when done. Complete this step for every session of the weekend. When you are finished with this then you need to make up the Groups for the weekend. Right click again and enter the info for each group, FP,EP, HP, GP. When you have entered your race groups you can

now click & drag those competitors from the main database into the groups. Once you have your competitors in the groups for the weekend you need to Click and drag that Group into the actual schedule for this weekend. If you don't do this all competitors will show up as unrelated transponder. When you right Click on either the runs or the groups there is always an edit selection option. Say you have too few of one class to run in a group and the stewards want you to put it somewhere else. Here is where you do it. If you want to know if your click and drags worked and that you populated your runs or groups on the bottom just select one of them and you should see all of the competitors. If not try again. This is probably the hardest thing to get used to. Remember the top part of the screen does not relate to the actual weekend until you take that info and drag it down to the weekend.

Okay, now we are ready to go to the Operator icon, just double click on the green and checkered flags. On the left side "Select an Event and Run", click on your weekend. You should see all the runs, if you don't go to the bottom of that column and click on Show Schedule. The click on the session you want. You should see all of the competitors that will be involved in it on the right side under Official Results. This screen is split into a bunch of stuff. We went over the first column on the left. If you never get rid of any of your events you can go back to them here by clicking on them. The big space in the middle of the screen will be where you see the cars going over the loop. Here you will see the car #, Name, Laps, Lead Lap, Lap time, Elapsed time, Time of Day, Hits of the transponder for that passing on the loop, strength of the transponder, photocell time and the transponder #. Every time a car does this it is called a passing. Each passing has a line number. The last window on the upper part is the Official Results. This column shows you live results based on what you called the session. On the bottom left you will see an icon for a printer, a Stop Sign, very important, and a clock. The printer is self-explanatory. The Stop sign you will need to hit after you hit the checkered flag and all cars have made their final passing. The session doesn't end until you do this. The clock is an easy way to get back to the session that is running if you are doing something in another session. The purple flag is the coolest. Before a group goes out hit the purple flag, it is called a warm-up flag. This will let you see the transponders and fix any problems before the group actually starts. This only will work if the competitors have to go through the pits. For a race I would use it as a pace car lap. No need to stop it just hit the green flag to actually start the group. There is a yellow flag for full course yellows and I would use it also incase of a red flag. This will show up on the passing file, the big part of the upper half of this screen. When the field goes green again just hit the green flag. The last flag is checkered, no explanation is necessary. One thing about these flags, if you hit it too soon or too late you can drag that passing line to where it actually belongs, the time will automatically adjust. Next to the checkered flag is the icon to go to the Administrator page. On the bottom in the middle you will see car number and a count of them at the top of that box. These are basically tapes. On the lower left you will see a box marked Session time, how much time is in the session. With all of these boxes are sliders on the bottom that you can scroll through and see more info, whether it is past or present.

When you hit the printer icon you get a choice of what you want printed, Race results, results sorted on lap times or class or points, make a grid, starting positions, all the competitors in a run. Laps of competitors are time cards. Passings is the whole run with all the info for all competitors for every time they passed over the loop and lap charts. AMB is in the process of refining some of this to make it more user friendly for people

that want to move columns, etc. If you want to make a note, like records, penalties etc. go to View on the upper task bar but first select a run. You can enter your info here and it will appear on your result for that run.

So now you are running the system for a group. You get a pop up window that says Unrelated Transponder. You have the option of correcting that right in that window or on the OFFICIAL RESULTS column. If you do it in the window make sure you know what transponder you assigned to someone. Just pick the car # from the group of them that appear in the window. If it isn't there you will need to do it from the Official Results column by right clicking on the transponder and filling in the info. At the bottom of both, the Unrelated window and the edit window you will see two boxes, one is to update just your permanent database, the other to update just the weekend. Make your choice; I would do both if I new the transponder we are fixing is the guys permanent one. If you don't do this you have to go back to the Administrator screen and correct through there for the weekend for all runs.

On the Official Results column of the Operator window you can also select a competitor and mark them DNS or DNS, view and print an individual time card (passing) and edit time cards. You can edit by laps or time, or both.

Photo Cells (Timing Lights)

When you hook up your timing lights to the decoder, if a car has no transponder when he passes through the lights you will get a pop-up window that says UNRELATED PHOTCELL. Select the competitor from the list in the box and now you have a time for him also. This is a great backup tool. It's a bit difficult if the # of no transponders is great.

Helpful hints:

Pit time show up with a P and are marked by the lap in blue. The competitors' fastest lap of the session is always shown in a Purple color. Strength and low hits show up in yellow.

I would always suggest wearing the headphones. When a car crosses the loop you will hear a beep if there is a transponder. No beep – no transponder.

Always have a taper next to the operator. This is a must to determine unrelated transponders.

Never walk away from the system without someone watching the track and listening for all competitors to get a hit.

Make transponders mandatory on your supps. We use the working. A working transponder is mandatory on all cars. On the timing slip is a spot for the transponder #.

If you make any corrections during a run document it on a piece of paper for that run only. Also, if you send notice of no transponder or low hits to the stewards document that also.

If you have no lights set up and have a competitor without a transponder you can give them a manual hit by hitting the F10 key and filling in the blanks.

Run all sessions on the systems. Get the kinks out and corrections made at a ntl during practice and at regionals during qualifying.

When you have the system set up to do auto finish on laps or time the system will automatically check itself.

No two transponders will ever have the same # no matter how much you want to pay AMB to do this.

At this years' Runoffs we had approximately 20 cars that did not have transponders initially.

More to come from me about setting up a Results Monitor and running iCard.

The system will offer efficient, effective and correct results. In this day and age of the genY's we need to give them what they want. Fast, reliable and Dependable. You can print results as soon as you stop the system.

The system also lets you multitask, work on a previous or future run on or even go to another program.

** Since the writing of this AMB has developed a patch that will produce GCR compliant results. You can use the original AMB printout for provisional but the patch will give you the GCR compliant results. You can get the patch from myself by email or from Mark or from AMB directly. I will also email you the instructions on how to install the patch.

If you ever need to contact me you can call me at 1-440-442-4521 or cell at 1-216-256-5761.

Con Peplowski