YuKanRun Half Marathon CAARA Radio Net
Roles, Goals, and Guidelines

Contents

Mission

The mission of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association's support program for YuKanRun half marathons is to support the safety of participants in these races by providing a radio net to bring together reports from the start of the race until the last runner crosses the finish line. The reports will inform race personnel of developments that need attention, including but not limited to; the location of the lead runner and the last runner throughout the race; medical emergencies, dangerous traffic situations, disabled runners in need of attention or transport, runners deviated from the race course; and situational circumstances that could be important to the YuKanRun race administrators; or important to law enforcement, emergency medical services or fire officials. This mission is carried out in the name of public service to the community, an important role of the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association.

An important part of our mission is to practice Emergency Communication (EmComm) in real situations. Our race volunteer work allows us to test and practice with field setups, operate from power sources off the grid, and to practice teamwork and radio communications skills as required by emergency communications.

CAARA Race Volunteer Website Link

Radio Net Personnel and Role Definitions

<u>Net Controller</u>

- Runs the CAARA Race Net as a *directed net*
- Leads enforcement of protocols and guidelines
- Is the <u>one</u> direct liaison to YuKanRun race directors/coordinators
- Shares emergency situation and other important information with YuKanRun Race Director
- Is usually stationed at Start/Finish Line
- Directs movement of CAARA Net personnel, ex., permission to secure or leave checkpoint, move to new location, or function as Rover
- All radio traffic goes through the Net Controller who may grant permission for two stations to talk to each other directly
- Checks volunteers into and out of Net
- Provides post-race report to CAARA Race Coordinator as needed
- Relays post-race feedback from YuKanRun administrators to the CAARA Race Coordinator

Checkpoint Volunteers
- Checkpoints include the Start/Finish Line and Checkpoints, typically 6, (CP) 1-6. Volunteers are assigned to these positions by the CAARA Race Coordinator

- Report the progress of the race to the Net Controller by identifying when lead runner passes CP or when last runner crosses CP

- Report important information to the Net Controller such as vehicular traffic impeding runners, lead or trail vehicle passing the CP, etc.

- Identify runners who are having medical or other serious problems to Net Controller

- Direct runners to the side of the road and out of car paths where possible. In races that double back over the same course, direct runners going in opposite directions to opposite sides of the road

- Are authorized to call 911 if radio communication fails or a situation is critical such that immediate action is needed (then informs Net Controller of action taken, e.g., called 911, asked police officer to summon EMS, etc.) See Medical Emergencies/911Calls at end of document.

- Checkpoint Miles are Approximate, Use Cross-Streets (intersections) to Identify Location for Assistance. CAARA Checkpoints are at strategic locations, not at the race mile markers. If you have an emergency at your location or need other assistance, identify your location by its cross-streets, or street number. (CP2 to Net Control, runner in need of EMS at Lake Street and Apple Street. Runner is down and is conscious and in distress, complains of chest pain.)

- Lead and Trail Vehicles call out mile markers passed, Checkpoints report lead and trail runners passing their check points (Lead runner and lead vehicle have passed CP5), CPs do not announce miles but refer to checkpoints.

Vehicle Volunteers

- Lead Vehicle - The CAARA lead vehicle leaves the start line ahead of the runners and positions just ahead of the lead runner. The lead vehicle may be the only vehicle leading the race but will usually follow a police or fire vehicle. The CAARA lead vehicle provides the Net Controller with periodic reports as to situation at the front of the race such as the lead runner passing course mile markers or other important observations. When the lead vehicle completes the course and returns to the Start/Finish, the driver should check with the Net Controller who may request that you redeploy as a rover for mile 10 to the finish line (this is where runners get into trouble), or in some other capacity. If the racecourse is new or the lead vehicle volunteer is unfamiliar with the route, it is strongly recommended that the lead vehicle driver physically run the course prior to the race, to familiarize him/herself with the route and YuKanRun signage.

  - Trail Vehicle - The CAARA trail vehicle leaves the start line behind the pack and sorts out its position to continue on the course just behind the last runner. The trail vehicle is usually the only vehicle following the last runner in the race but would follow a police or fire vehicle or YuKanRun vehicle who is or becomes the trail vehicle for the race. The CAARA trail vehicle provides the Net Controller with periodic reports as to situation at the back of the race such as the last runner passing course mile markers or other important observations. The CAARA Trail Vehicle may also be the first to observe disabled runners and will report the nature of a situation and its location to the Net Coordinator.

- Rover - Rover 1 is the tactical callsign of a vehicle assigned to "rove" the course by the Net Controller. This volunteer should identify as Rover 1, personal callsign (Rover 1, W1ABC). Rover 1 might receive specific assignments from the Net Controller or may be assigned to rove parts of the course or the entire course. The CAARA Rover 1 Vehicle may be the first to observe disabled runners and will report the nature of a situation and its location to the Net Controller. A Rover 2 or additional numbered rovers can be assigned by the Net Controller as CAARA vehicles are available and needed. The Lead Vehicle and volunteers assigned to checkpoints that have been secured after the last runner are potential rovers as available and as deemed necessary by the Net Controller.

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CAARA Race Coordinator

- Interfaces with YuKanRun leaders
- Places checkpoints on course map and identify cross-streets and town for each checkpoint
- Creates and maintains web site dedicated to Race Net volunteers

- Creates and maintains Races Staffing Sheets for all races
- Creates and maintains course maps on the dedicated web site

Radio Protocols

- Radio Net Personnel are licensed amateurs signed into the Net by the Net Controller
- During the Net ALL Net communications should go through the Net Controller unless a "direct to…" communication has been approved by the Net Controller.
- If you have traffic for the Net, call the Net Controller and ID with your tactical call, e.g., **Checkpoint 4, W1ABC**, then wait to be acknowledged by Net Control before you send your traffic.
- Keep all communications on the Net **as short as possible and do not use the Net for "chatter"**. Hold your HT antenna vertically and speak clearly. Use high power settings as needed.

Additional Guidelines for Volunteers

Checkpoints

- Park safely. You do not need to be at the exact posted location
- If directing runners to safer lanes or giving other guidance to runners, defer to public safety officers and coordinate with them. A common occurrence is a dangerous intersection where one or more police officers, YouKanRun volunteers and you, as a CAARA volunteer all need to work together to keep runners safer.

All CAARA Volunteers

- Arrive at your location by the "On Location" time indicated on the staffing sheet and call Net Control to report you are in position.
- CAARA volunteers should not have direct physical interaction with event participants. If you choose to interact with or transport race participants, you must sign out of the net. The Net will lose your station's service until signed back into the Net. Physically interacting with race participants or allowing participants into your vehicle has personal liability implications and is discouraged. CAARA cannot insure or indemnify volunteers.
- Remember that checkpoints are placed at strategic points and not necessarily at mile markers. All mile references on the Staffing Sheet are approximate.
- Refer to runners who are walking as Runners, not walkers
- Do not leave your post or assignment until your position is declared "secured" by the Net Controller.

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Medical Emergencies and Calls for Assistance

The CAARA radio net contributes to the efforts of many to keep race participants safe. One of the most important functions of the Net is to call for medical assistance when it is needed. It may be a runner, a by-stander, or vehicle incident that comes to your attention.

Any life-threatening situation, as examples only, an apparent heart attack, a person not able to breath, a runner or pedestrian struck by a vehicle, signs of heat exhaustion, signs of a runner exhibiting confused or troubling behavior, (and these are only some examples) require immediate reporting by calling 911 or, lacking cell service, a radio call to Net Control requesting emergency medical assistance.

If you call 911, stay on the line with the operator until released, give as precise as possible location, and follow instructions, if any, given by the 911 operator.

When released by 911 operator, inform Net Control that you called 911 and pertinent information about the situation and what 911 operator advised as to assistance on the way.

Other medical situations or needs may be non-life-threatening injuries or illness where the injured or ill person is fully conscious, coherent, but unable to continue the race or walk safely to the Start/Finish line. This situation should be reported to Net Control with location and nature of situation. Do not diagnose or guess about a medical condition. Report in non-medical terms, for example, runner is sitting on pavement in significant pain and says it is her knee, she cannot stand or walk. The Race Director will decide how the runner will be assisted.

When in Doubt about whether to call 911 (**IF IT __MIGHT__** be serious medical emergency), **CALL 911.** First responders would much rather show up and be unneeded than to be called later and be unable to administer timely aid and transport.

If you have an emergency at your location or need other assistance, identify your location by its cross-streets (intersection), or street number. (CP2 to Net Control, runner in need of EMS at Lake Street and Apple Street. Runner is down and is conscious and in distress, complains of chest pain.)

Radio Signals and Repeater Coverage

80-90% of the time, a four- or five-watt handheld radio (HT) with standard "rubber duck" antenna will do the job from checkpoints to the repeater. We use a couple of different repeaters during the season depending on town locations and, of course, the conditions differ. If you have access to a 10 watt or greater mobile radio and a vehicle-mounted or mag-mount mobile antenna, you will never have a problem.

A four-watt handheld with the appropriate adapter and cable to a mag-mount antenna will almost always get the job done. Another nice set-up is using your HT with a crossband mobile rig.

If limited to a 4–5-watt handheld, ask W1TAT to assign you to a checkpoint in better range to the repeater. Chris knows the Gloucester and Rockport terrain well.

Any checkpoint in the Newburyport races (Town & Country, IPA, and Port Run) is an easy reach to the K1KKM repeater that we use. The *By-The-Sea* race is in Manchester-By-The-Sea and Hamilton and has some more difficult checkpoints to reach the W1GLO repeater. Check with Chris. For the *Ocean View* in Ipswich, we use the Topsfield repeater, and it has good coverage for that course.

It is good insurance to have a back-up battery or the ability to tap into your vehicle 12V system should the need arise.

If you have one radio and it fails, there will be others carrying extra radios. Phone the Net Control Operator (cell phone numbers on Staffing Sheet).

CAARA Lawn Signs

CAARA Race Lawn Signs help to educate the public about who we are and what we do. "Ham Volunteers Helping to Keep Runners Safe" is the sign slogan. Part of our mission is to do just that. Of course, the broader mission is to practice Emergency Communication (EmComm) in real situations. Our race volunteer work allows us to test and practice with field setups, operate from power sources off the grid, and to practice teamwork as required by emergency communication.

When available, lawn signs will be issued to CAARA personnel assigned to checkpoints for use during the race. If issued a lawn sign, please keep it (don't forget to take it with you when secured) for the race season and remember to bring it to every race.

Text Group

A text group will be started before each race. The purpose of the text group is to share questions and information before, during, and after the race. In rare circumstances, the text group would be our back-up if both primary and secondary repeaters were not doing the job. Text group is optional for each team member – see Opt Out below. When texting the group, start each message with your callsign so others know who is texting. Example #1: *N1ABC to W1XYZ, I will arrive with another battery for you in 20 minutes*. Example #2: *AB1CDE to All Following both CAARA Vehicles on RaceJoy. Pretty cool!*

If we were to use the text group because repeaters were not working, messages would look like they would over radio in real time. The difference from radio would be that senders would NOT go through net control

Before the Race
- Email is the primary way that pre-race information will be distributed by the CAARA race coordinators. However, members of the race team may share questions and information in the text group. This may be easier than email for individuals and everyone in the text group will see the text.

During the Race
- The radio is the primary mode of communication during the race for all information or inquiries directly related to race operations, such as what is typically messaged from Net Control, checkpoints and CAARA vehicles. The text group can be used to make inquiries that are not time sensitive or important for all on the net to hear and know. Here are some examples: How many runners are there in this race? Where are the water stations along the course? Will I see runners come by in both directions? I forgot my printout of the course map, where can I find it on-line?
- If you are having radio issues and cannot get into the repeater, use the text group to let Net Control and others know what is going on and what you need.
- If Net Control decides to move communications to the back-up repeater, it will go out to the text group.
- If Net Control has issues getting to the repeater, look to texts to echo instructions for what is happening and what to do.
- Keep 100% attention on the radio and <u>don't feel you must keep checking texts</u>. Put your phone away if it distracts you from the radio and/or race.
- **<u>Use the radio</u>** for any message or inquiry critical to race operations, not the text group.

After the Race
- Post-race observations, feedback, suggestions and questions can be shared in the text group after the race. This can be helpful to the race coordinators for future planning.

Opt Out
- You do not need to be in the text group. You may find getting texts an annoyance rather than being helpful. By Wednesday of each race week, email <u>K1KL</u> to opt out of the coming race or all races for the season for which you are volunteering.