

# Cantrak Show Guidelines

## Guideline Overview.

### **A) Train Length:**

1. Keep trains to a max length of about 8 feet (2 tables).
2. Work with Show Manager if you want to run longer trains.

### **B) Train Speed:**

1. Run trains at an average of about 65 Scale MPH (as per speedometer).
2. Work with Show Manager if you want to schedule other speeds.

### **C) Train Direction:**

1. Run your trains in a Counter-Clockwise direction. Front track runs left to right (spectator view) while rear runs right to left.

### **D) Train Parking:**

1. Do not leave your trains parked for longer than an hour.
2. When not running park your trains in the Fiddle Yard or on any available siding.

### **E) Turnouts:**

1. Remember to return all turnouts to the “through” position after using.

### **F) Run Schedule:**

1. Try to have a minimum of 3 to 4 trains running at the same time. More is fine.

### **G) Public Presentation:**

1. Engage with the public, ask them questions to get them to engage with you.
2. If you are running trains, your first priority is running the train.

### **H) Additional Items:**

1. Track Cleaning.
  - i. Use the Club cleaning materials to clean track every day.
2. Scenery Repair
  - i. Use the Club Material to repair scenery at the end of the day.
3. Security
  - i. Keep an eye on everyone’s trains.
  - ii. Make sure the barrier is kept in place.
4. Electrical
  - i. If there is an issue, talk to the Show Manager
5. Problems
  - i. If there is an issue talk with the Show Manager AND follow up with an email.

## Cantrak Show Guidelines

This document is designed to give members an idea of what they should be doing when running trains for Cantrak. While this is focused on shows, it is also applicable to play days although at play days you can expect more testing and more potential for issues, stopped trains, derailed trains, track fixes underway etc. Note that we have a "Show Manager" for each Show and / or Play Day, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please direct them to the Show Manager. While we have a number of guidelines below, the Show Manager may decide to change specific items (such as Train length, speed, direction etc.) as they see fit.

### **A. Train Length:**

- 1) When the viewing public comes by our layout they typically don't have a lot of time and will slowly walk by. Thus, in order to show them the most we can it is desirable to have multiple trains spaced out on the layout. To accomplish this, trains should generally be no more than about 2 tables (8 feet) in length. Longer trains, up to what will fit within the fiddle yard, are OK as long as they are running well and are not in constant need of attention (fixing derailments, stalls etc.). And shorter trains, including just running your engine around are just fine.
- 2) If you wish to run really long trains, talk to the Show Manager to schedule times to run your long train. All of the model train guys love to see long trains so we should schedule the running of these from time to time. When running your long trains, try to run at closer to mainline prototypical speed (50 scale mph +/-).

### **B. Train Speed:**

- 1) By necessity, all trains will need to run at the speed of the slowest train. Our viewing public is generally used to seeing toy trains and doesn't really understand the relative speed of our trains and so to keep interest, we need to keep to a decent speed. If we are running groups of trains (ideally 4 +/- at a time), those trains should be running around 65 scale mph (yes, this is a little bit faster than the "long train" speed above). If you are running and are holding up multiple trains behind you then you are running too slow (even though it may be prototypical).
- 2) Maintain a minimum of about a 2 table (8 foot) distance between trains. If you are running and there is one train right behind you but other trains are well spaced out then the train behind you is likely too fast so if you are running the train behind, slow down.
- 3) Unless otherwise noted, Train Speed will be judged based upon a speedometer. Either a portable or a built in one.
- 4) If you wish to run your train at faster speeds, you can slow down until the straight is clear and run quickly down to the other end however, you may wish to talk to the Show Manager and get a time slot to run fast trains, that way you can do multiple circuits at a high rate of speed.

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- 5) Similarly, if you wish to run your train at slower speeds than “normal”, please talk to the Show Manager and get a time slot to run slower trains.

### **C. Train Direction:**

- 1) Our normal running direction is in a counterclockwise direction with the outside (closest to the front) set of rails (at the 4 ½” mark) running from left to right (from the spectator viewpoint). Note that you may at times want to back up on the mainline for switching operations. If you are doing this, it is your responsibility to NOT impede the flow of other trains and if you back into someone else’s train, you get to pay the fine.
- 2) If you wish to do some switching on the mainline, you’ll need to work around other people running trains. Trains running in the normal direction, at normal speeds have priority over any switching operation unless notifies the people running the train and the operation only causes a minor delay. We do not want to have most of the layout empty because someone is switching.
- 3) If you decide you wish to run in the opposite direction, in the words of Elmer Fudd, “be vewy, vewy careful”. Or, better yet ask the show manager for a time slot when you can run in the opposite direction.

### **D. Train Parking:**

- 1) No parking of trains is permitted on the mainline. The only stopping of trains on the mainline is when you are waiting for another train (eg someone is rerailling a recalcitrant engine / car). Or, you are stopping to back up onto a siding.
- 2) If you wish to park your train on the layout off the mainline, we ask that you park for no longer than about an hour if there are no other open parking spots. The exception to that would be if you are running multiple trains and wish to park one while running another but again make sure that there are other parking areas open for other folks to park in. There are 3 potential parking areas on the layout:
  - 1) The fiddle yard:
    - a. The intent of the fiddle yard is to set up trains to go run them, then bring them in to take them off the track.
    - b. If you wish to park a train to go for lunch or for a break you can use the fiddle yard to do so. Please park in an area that is closest to the back board and again, if you are gone longer than about an hour, please remove your train to make room for others.
  - 2) Sidings:
    - a. Sidings have two purposes. One is to populate them with trains so that there is more for the viewing public to see and the other is to park trains temporarily so you can have a break.
    - b. When it is your module, you are free to do whatever you like.
    - c. If you are parking on someone else’s module and intend to be there for more than about a half hour, please talk with the module owner to make sure they are OK with that.

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- d. If you are parking on a club module siding, we again request that you only park for an hour to let others park if they want to. If you are there for an hour and move to some other location, that's fine as long as you've freed up the siding for 15 to 20 minutes.
  - e. If you are parking on a siding which has a switch to turn off power to the siding we recommend that you use that switch so that your engine (and lit passenger cars) don't consume power.
- 3) Return Loops:
- a. Each of the return loops have 2 separate loops and either loop can be used. The "mainline" is the straight through loop which is reached by not throwing any turnouts. That section needs to be kept clear at all times.
  - b. The second loop can be used to park trains but as it is also used as a passing section, parking should only be used if other spaces (sidings, fiddle yards) are full. And if parking, as per the above guideline, please move within an hour.
  - c. Note that the engine repair facility return loop has switches to turn off power separately to each of the loops as well as the front siding and the repair area. We recommend that you use these switches assuming your train fits within the loop controlled by the switches.

### **E. Turnouts:**

- 1) Remember to throw any turnouts back to the mainline once you've crossed the turnout.

### **F. Run Schedule:**

- 1) Unless otherwise noted, you are free to run your trains at any time you'd like. We like to have a minimum of 4 trains running at a time (dependent upon layout size) to generate interest from the public so if you are at an event and there are fewer than 4 trains (and especially if there are fewer than 3 trains), then please put one of your trains out.
- 2) If you are at an event and didn't bring any trains or would like to try something different, talk to other members there. Many folks bring 2 or 3 or 4 or more trains and are fine with other folks taking them out for an hour or so.
- 3) Depending upon the show there may be a "run schedule" where the show manager has put together a daily (or part day) schedule indicating who is running at what time. If this is the case and you wish to run a train and you aren't on the schedule, please check with the show manager (or the folks currently running trains) to make sure it is OK to run your train. Normally that's fine.

### **G. Public Presentation:**

- 1) For our shows we are there for the public and need to maintain a professional and courteous mannerism. We should all be wearing our Blue Cantrak golf shirts along with a name tag that identifies us.
- 2) If you are not running trains, please consider walking around the outside of the layout and talking with people. All you need to do is to say hi, ask them if they

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have any questions and if they don't seem interested in chatting, move on. If you'd like to start a conversation with them you can get more in depth and ask them a few questions about what they like about trains or the layout or our layout or a specific engine and go from there. Yes, there are times when we are tired and want to just sit down for a bit and we should but we don't want to have a half dozen Cantrak folks sitting behind the fiddle yard chatting between themselves when there are lots of spectators. Play Days and other sessions are for when we want to chat amongst ourselves.

- 3) If you are running trains remember that your highest priority is running your train and running into the back of someone else will incur a penalty. Answering a couple of short questions can be done pretty easily while still running (as long as you weren't too close to the train in front) but if it becomes more involved than that you'll either need to stop your train (but as per the above we don't want trains stopped on the mainline) or move into a siding (this is where occupying the second return loop as a siding is beneficial).

### **H. Additional Items:**

- 1) Track Cleaning:
  - a. Our modules often sit for months in dusty conditions and the areas we run in are often dusty as well. As such, the track should be cleaned once the layout is set up as well as at the start of every day, at a minimum. Please use appropriate track cleaners (rubberized cleaners, Isopropol alcohol or other cleaners designed for cleaning the track or track cleaning cars), NOT sandpaper or files. Note that you may need to use a small piece of sandpaper inbetween the rails on a turnout that routes power as these connections can fail over time.
- 2) Scenery Repair:
  - a. As our modules age, they begin to show issues with the scenery. If it is a member's module then they should be doing regular maintenance to keep the module looking great. However, if it is a club module then it is up to the membership to keep it looking great. If you see a module that needs some repair, discuss this with the show manager and bring along a few scenery materials and repair the module first thing in the morning (or last thing in the evening).
- 3) Security:
  - a. Our little trains are valuable and we don't want to lose them. We put up a barrier to create a bit of distance between the modules and the public however the public tends to push this in over time so if you see this, please put the barrier back where it was. And, if you see anyone reaching across to "touch", please remind them not to. And, speaking of the barriers, they will often come apart, especially as kids try to lean on them. When this happens please reconnect them.
- 4) Electrical:
  - a. If, for some reason the layout quits working or is working erratically, please contact the show manager or a member of the electrical team. Also, if you

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have members of the public that would like to talk to someone about the electrical setup, please direct them to the electrical team / show manager.

### 5) Problems:

- a. If you experience a problem, please troubleshoot it to the best of your ability and then document it and give that documentation to the show manager. There is always a pen and some paper around to do so. We are all very busy at shows so it would help if you followed up after the show by sending an email to the show manager.

End of Document.