

2005 Miami Tropical Marathon Communications Mile Captain's Manual

THANKS FOR BEING A KEY PART OF THE 2005 MIAMI TROPICAL MARATHON COMMUNICATIONS TEAM!

Welcome to the 3rd running of the Miami Tropical Marathon. You will play a key part in the day's activities and help show amateur radio at its finest. An incredible amount of information must be communicated around the course. Good communications and personnel management must be used to accomplish this Herculean task. You have been chosen to be an aid station radio operator because of your ability to do both.

As an aid station radio operator, your primary job is to **be on the radio**, available to the **Logistics Net Control**, at all times.

You will work with the Aid Station captain, medical personnel, and race officials to make sure things go well and communicate for them. You will need a **dual band** (144/440) hand held radio this year, although our primary communications will be on 2 meters. Be sure to bring extra batteries and a high gain whip antenna, if possible.

To help you manage the communications and radio operators required by the race officials, Medical and Police officials I have compiled this short manual, providing most of the information needed on race day. The information that follows is a compilation of the questions asked by hams and other volunteers over the past 26 years, and was kindly provided by Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML, Communications Director of the New York City Marathon.

Please read this manual carefully and bring it with you along with the manual for your own radio on race day. You'll find it a useful reference guide to answer questions you will be asked by others on race day. PLEASE PROGRAM THE TWO REPEATER FREQUENCIES AND PL CODES BEFORE RACE MORNING, AND VERIFY THAT YOUR RADIO IS WORKING PROPERLY.

Other Important Documents

1. Emergency/Drop Out Codes
2. Parking Information and Parking Pass
3. Credentials

Many thanks for taking a day out of your life to provide management for this crucial public service. -73-

Ben Nemser, WA4DZS
Miami Tropical Marathon Communications Coordinator

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR 2004

<p>BRING THE MANUAL FOR YOUR HT OR RADIO WITH YOU ON RACE DAY Be Prepared to Be flexible on Parking and Radio Locations due to security concerns. Please do not argue with local police officers.</p>

THE 2005 MARATHON WILL FEATURE 2 DIFFERENT START TIMES SUNDAY, January 30th

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At 5:45 AM The Wheelchair Start

- At 6:00AM The rest of the field Start

You **MAY** be asked to help report on the position of the wheelchairs this year. Please listen to the Logistics Nets and be prepared to help with position reporting should NCS request it.

In many areas crowds make it very noisy and bands may be nearby. We can change neither of these facts of life. Bring full earphones, not just a button type earpiece. Use a remote speaker mic, but not the tiny "surveillance" mics. They distort terribly in high noise environments. If you don't own such equipment, borrow it for the day from a friend.

Before You Leave The House Race Day Morning

Take a few minutes the night before the race and map your route to your assigned location. Although you may be familiar with the area, it's always a good idea to go over the route in advance of the day. Be sure to bring your parking pass, and review the list of suggested parking for your aid station location. For several days before race day put all of the equipment you will bring in a single "staging" area in the house. At the end of this manual is a convenient "check list" of items to bring.

This race is in **late January**. It may be cold at 5 in the morning and then warm up during the day. Bring a sweater or light jacket to keep warm until the sun comes up. Get up a bit earlier than normal and have a good breakfast. Then pack everything in a box or bag and off you go to your assignment.

Your Specific Job As An Aid Station Radio Operator

As the aid station radio operator you are the PRIMARY communicator at your aid station. Walkie-talkies are the primary means of communications. Repeaters are selected to be near the course. Hams are not usually able to operate from their vehicles but if the situation permits and if necessary, it may be possible at certain aid stations. It defeats the purpose if we not immediately accessible to aid station captains and medical personnel.

Your primary job must be to communicate for the Aid Station captain and medical personnel. Your ***first allegiance must be to your radio***. Setting up water tables, acting as a traffic cop, crowd controller, etc., is not our job. ***Our job is to act as communicators. We are the only people licensed to handle radio equipment.***

Please remember to stay in communications. Don't turn a radio down to answer crowd questions. Find a volunteer to handle that task. **Remember to check your batteries each hour.**

CHECKING IN WITH NET CONTROL

When you arrive at your mile point ***personally check in with Logistics Net Control***. The NCS may have specific information for you and you only. When you arrive at your assignment check in with the applicable logistics net control in person.

ROLL CALL – YES, WE REALLY NEED TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE.

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If initial logistics traffic allows the NCS will initiate a roll call. From that point on, ***only use location as an identifier*** when you call into the net. I.e. "mile five to net" or "net from mile 21", and end the exchange with your callsign.

Brevity of communications has always been our strong point. If you must say something on the radio, collect your thoughts and get all information ready before you transmit.

There is a tremendous volume of traffic transmitted during the event and a long series of Uhhs and Ummms followed by "now where did I put that paper" slows things down. And always remember that thousands of people are listening to what you are saying.

**IF YOU HAVE PRIORITY TRAFFIC ANNOUNCE YOURSELF WITH THE SINGLE WORD
"PRIORITY"**

NCS will stop all activity and service your problem immediately. But please make sure, in your own mind, that you really do have something that needs immediate attention. Don't leave any net for any reason unless directed by net control.

WE LIVE AND DIE BY THESE THINGS

All communications are directed to, and by, Net Control. The only exception to this rule is when the race director requires and assumes net control of the net. When this occurs **ALL STATIONS MUST STAND BY UNLESS YOU ARE HANDLING LIFE AND DEATH TRAFFIC.**

Brevity; Keep all transmissions short and to the point. Speak clearly and concisely. Please do not get upset if the net control sounds abrupt with you or asks you to repeat something. This usually means that he is very busy with several people talking to him locally. There are several different nets being handled in the same control area and traffic gets quite hectic.

Don't start a side conversation with another mile point on the logistics net. If you need to pass some personal traffic please ask the net control if you can QSY to another frequency specifically to pass inter-mile traffic. If your traffic can be passed on simplex, all the better.

HINTS AND KINKS FOR A SUCCESSFUL RACE DAY

Make sure you stay on the radio at all times.

- Bring warm clothes and a flashlight.
- On arrival report immediately to the Aid Station captain and medical personnel and introduce yourself.
- Bring plenty of spare batteries for your HT.
- Be flexible. Situations change rapidly during an event as large as this one.
- Don't let little things get you "up tight" and prevent you from doing your best. Stay Cool.

- **Use tactical callsigns at all times.**
- All information must flow through net control.
- Stay on the Logistics Net at all times unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

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-If you must QSY let Net Control know and always check back into the Logistics net after you have finished your business on other frequencies.

PRECURSORS, OR WHAT GETS WHERE AND WHEN

A series of delivery trucks come up the course beginning at 3am at specified intervals to make sure that each mile point, water and aid station has time to get set up before the next vehicle arrives. These trucks will have UHF (commercial) radios on our business band repeater frequencies. Net Control may ask you to report on arrival of After the race, additional trucks will pass each aid station to pick up remaining items.

THE RACE; YOU KNOW, ALL THOSE RUNNERS.

Following the Wheelchair athletes will be the Elite men, then the Elite women and rest of the Pack. These people will be preceded by Police motorcycles, a timing car, press truck and the communications coordinator hanging out of a police car. Remember to look for the lead runners to take down numbers of the first ten men.

How can you tell when the lead female is coming? A police motorcycle escort is a good clue. After the lead runners go by you can return to the water station and resume communicating for the Aid Station captain.

WHEN THE RUNNERS GET TIRED

Sag Wagon (Sweep Bus). There will be a bus to pick up any runners unable to complete the race and who need a ride to the finish line area. It is up to the runners if they want to wait for the sweep bus or take public transportation to the finish area or home. If they have friends or family waiting for them at the finish area, we can relay a message to the volunteer staff advising that the runner is ok and on the sweep bus. At approximately a 16 minute per mile pace, the course will close and the streets will reopen for normal traffic. Once the sweep buses go by please don't ask to have them return. They can't get back down the course.

OF COURSE, THE PAPERWORK

When the race leaders near you, take the form that lists the first 10 men and women, and fill it out as the leaders pass by. One of our most important functions is the listing of the top 10 men and women at each mile. This is one of the checks that prevents successful cheating.

OTHER (NON-HAM) COMMUNICATIONS

The marathon staff will also use commercial (business band UHF) radios for set-up, tear down, and other commercial communications. As amateur radio operators, we are not authorized to handle these types of commercial communications. If someone asks you to transmit a message not suitable for amateur radio, please politely refer them to a race official. For reference, I have included those frequencies in the table below..

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

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If you need to report any medical emergency or other sensitive situation, you must use the codes on the attached list. All NCS and race officials will have a copy of this list.

Frequencies

We will use the following frequencies for the race:

Net	Frequency	PL	Callsign
Primary repeater	146.925	94.8	logistics
Backup repeater	147.000	none	backup
UHF Backup-1	444.850	94.8	UHF1
Commercial Band			
Repeater One (committee)	469.5500/464.5500	DPL205	Ch.3
Repeater Two (PEM)	469.5000/464.5000	DPL205	Ch.1
Repeater Three (if #2 inop)	469.5250/464.5350	DPL205	Ch.2

Bits and Pieces

- 1. Please program and test your radios prior to race day and** bring the manuals for the radios just in case a late minute frequency change is needed.
2. I have enclosed your credentials, parking pass, and invitation to the Saturday evening pasta party.
3. Please read this manual carefully. **Bring this manual AND the manual for your radio** with you on race day. You'll find this a useful reference and the manual for your radio invaluable if you have to change frequency at the last minute due to a repeater failure.

Start-Mile 2 are to be on course at 5:00
Miles 3- 4 are to be on course at 5:15 AM.
Miles 5- 7 are to be on course at 6:30 AM
Miles 8-19 are to be on course at 6:30 AM.
Miles 20-25 are to be on course at 7:00AM

Finally.....

Thank you for taking on one of the most complex jobs in this event and making us all look good. It is because of people like you that Amateur Radio has such a good name with the public.

If you have ANY questions, please call me at: Work: (305) 899-0900 Cell: (305) 439-7190

See you on Sunday January 30th

Ben Nemser, WA4DZS
Miami Tropical Marathon Communications Coordinator