

EZ Rally Timing

by Gary Starr

Looking for a stock odo timekeeping technique that has the accuracy of a computer yet is so easy anyone can do it with just a clock and 4-function calculator? Try this proven one:

EZ Rally Timing Method

Step 1. At the odo check, compute and record the corrected minutes per 0.1 mile factors for all the casts of the entire rally in the following format:

T.TTTT0DDD (for 10 digit calculator)
or
TT.TTTDDD (for 8 digit calculator)

where TT . TTT (T) is the corrected min/0.1mi and DDD = 001 (DDD is distance in 10's, 1's, 0.1's miles).

Example:

CF (correction factor) =
your net mileage @ odo check / official net mileage @ odo check

$$CF = 10.25 / 9.85 = 1.040609137$$

Cast = 40

(Since corrected min/mi = 60 / (cast * CF), then)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CORRECTED MIN/0.1 MI} &= 6 / (\text{CAST} * \text{CF}) \\ &= 6 / (40 * 1.040609137) = 0.1441xxxxx \end{aligned}$$

Record for cast 40:

0.14410001 (for 10 digit calculator - truncate to 4 decimal places, add 3 zeros and a one)
or
0.144001 (for 8 digit calculator - truncate to 3 decimal places, add 2 zeros and a one)

Step 2. Enter into memory the factor for the first cast.

Step 3. Now clear the display (but not memory) and enter your out time in the same format where TT.TT is your out time and DDD is your odometer reading at the out-marker (or place where TT.TT is your out time).

Example:

Out time = 21.00, odo = 36.4:

Enter into display:

21.00000364

(for 10 digit calculator - out time in minutes, decimal, 5 zeros, odo)

or

21.000364

(for 8 digit calculator - out time in minutes, decimal, 3 zeros, odo)

Step 4.

Now press +, MR (memory recall), =

And presto - you have the TOD clock time TT.TT (eg. 21.14 min) for the odo mileage DD.D (eg. 36.5 mi)!!!

(display reads 21.14410365 for 10 digit calculator)

or

(21.144365 for 8 digit calculator)

Step 5. Keep pressing = to match DD.D to your odo, and wah-la, you can give hacks every 0.1 mile if you wish (like when approaching a control - eg. 21.28 min @ 36.6 mi, 21.43 min @ 36.7 mi, etc.) with accuracy that will rival a computer. You can easily get 2's or less with a steady driver (Dave Fuss and I got 8 points in 10 controls using this system with just a checkpoint TOD clock and stock odo!).

OR

Just press = enough times to match any odo reading at which you want the time.

Notes:

When the time exceeds 60 (the hour), just subtract 60. Then press +, MR, = to continue for the next 0.1 mi.

At speed changes, press = until the mileage matches your odo, record the result (entire display), enter the new factor into memory for the new speed, and go back to step 3 using the recorded figure as your out time to enter in the display.

Pauses/gains are done normally (+ pause =, - gain =) followed by +, MR, = to continue for the next 0.1 mi.

Equipment needed:

1. 0.1 mi reading odo (don't need or will use reset).
2. 0.01 minute TOD (time-of-day) clock (checkpoint clock is fine).
 - Alfa (led/lcd) - (603) 895-9429
 - Chronar (incand/lcd) - (206) 481-0748
 - Timewise (lcd) - (708) 291-1275
 - WesTek (lcd) - (219) 489-8855
 - Zeron (led/lcd)

The above clocks are available through the manufacturer or:

- Bob Radford Enterprises - (815) 398-0511
 - Competition Limited - (313) 464-1458
3. 4-function calculator with 1 memory (to be class S "unequipped" legal):
 - Separate memory store and memory recall buttons.
 - Battery (can also have solar but must have battery).
 - Memory not lost on auto shut off.
 - Constant memory operations (+, MR, =, =, = adds memory contents 3 times to display but leaves memory unaffected).

Other desirable but not absolutely essential calculator features:

- Large display digits.
- 10 digit display.
- $1 + 2 \times 3 = 9$ (not 7)
- = button in corner (eg. lower right) to minimize accidentally pressing/bumping the wrong button.
- Switch to keep power on all the time (good luck finding it) or at least a very long auto shut off time (most calculators turn off at 6-12 min of no activity).

Calculator recommendations:

- Sharp EL-480G (10 digit display - fits in a shirt pocket - \$10 at Office Max)
- Sharp EL-354LB (Larger 10 digit display - \$15 at Office Max)
- Sharp EL-334LB (Large 8 digit display - \$10 at Office Max)

Beware: Most calculators (except those above) lose their memory after auto power off.

A few usage notes:

1. The calculator MUST HAVE the constant memory operations feature: (+, MR, =, =, = adds memory contents 3 times to display but leaves memory unaffected).
2. I thought off course would be obvious so I didn't mention it, just: -, MR (memory recall), = and then keep hitting = until the mileage matches where you went offcourse (you can wait till you return to the place you went offcourse to do this). Then (now on course), add in a pause for your offcourse time allowance delay and hit +, MR, = and then continue hitting = to match your mileage as before. Of course it gets a little tricky if you had a speed change or an hour change during the offcourse but I think you can figure this one out (that doesn't happen very often anyway).
3. Remember the +, MR, = (or the -, MR, =) counts as one of the 0.1mi increments.
4. There's no limit on how many 4 function calculators you can have (so you can have a 2nd one preset up for the next speed if you like).
5. The accuracy is extremely high but the resolution is only 0.1 mi. This means speed changes between the tenths will get "averaged out" and so the time will not be exact (like a 0.01 or 0.001 reading odo will do). It is well worth this trade off, however, for class S or SOP since it is so easy and quick to just keep pressing the = button every 0.1 mi. (or to just match your odo when you want a time) as compared to other methods where there are additions (or watches to manipulate) which take more time, effort, invite mistakes, and/or can't be done as often. Also the times you get with this method are usually accurate enough to beat all S cars anyway on all local events.
6. The display right shifts when it zero blanks the rightmost digits (eg. when the tenths of miles flips over to xx.0 the display right shifts and blanks out the rightmost 0's). This takes some getting used to. I experimented with other ways (reversing time and distance on the display, putting the decimal in the distance instead of the time, etc) but I felt they were all more confusing and had many more drawbacks than this way.
7. When there is nothing but 0.1 mile digital odo cars around, this system may get more popular.
8. For legs which have only one speed this is a great system. Rene Ruel (national S champion) told me he uses this method on nationals for the 1st speed of the leg since it is completely accurate until a speed change. Also because on some events there ends up being only one speed on a leg (after a speed change he switches to a more accurate and labor intensive method needed to compete at the national level). Additions, subtractions, and watch manipulations all make stock odo rallying miserable and unenjoyable for most people (there are always a couple diehards of course).

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Email comments/questions to [Gary Starr](#)