

Mystery! After Rallye Report

The coursemarkers are down and the results out but here are a few more words on the event. First off, I'd like to everyone who helped with the September 4th, 2004 rallye, "Mystery! Murder at Norman Mansion". These included Don and Rochelle Bess who pre-checked, Steve Beuerman who pre-checked, worked the checkpoint and scored the event, Ken Schott who served as assistant rallyemaster, helped post the CMs and worked the checkpoint, Steve Watt who printed the instructions, prepared the results and who, along with Nancy Hanna, worked registration. I'd also like to thank Bill Jonesi for preparing the Participation Fridge Magnets and publicized the event and to Nick Stefanisko for handling the awards. I'd also like to thank the 31 cars that decided to run a gimmick rallye on a very warm day.

A few words about the actual rallye. Steve Beuerman and I presented this rallye in December 5, 1992 and had a turnout of 16 cars. We thought the original rallye was too long so a few gimmicks were eliminated and a few RIs removed. Otherwise, the rallye was changed very little from 1992. The city removed a sign, which had repercussions during the rallye. It is interesting to note that the comments form the 1992 pre-check and rallye and the 2004 pre-check and rallye were very different.

For example, the language setting up the cookie gimmick at the second checkpoint was not altered. Yet this language caused grief to several cars over the "Berry" roads, Lime, Pimento, and the I-8 coursemarker. There was no hint of this being a potential problem during the pre-check.

In 1992, I scoured the neighborhood looking for an intersection that had two signposts, each with two street naming signs. I finally found an intersection where the top and bottom signs were reversed on each post. The "top sign is unreadable" gimmick was written around this intersection. I decided not to re-write the turkey route around RI 3 even though the city removed one of these signs. Since we were not using the "two named roads make a valid intersection" gimmick, a slight adjustment corrected for the missing sign. Unfortunately, the definitions for Turn, Opp, Intersection, R and L, were not linked as they typically are today and the "correction" we made allowed turns for Supps, Weapon and Room signs to be made at forced turns. This resulted in considerable confusion for some cars and several protests.

Since this was a gimmick rallye, we had some gimmicks on the Room signs. We also followed the current trend to tell people the relative location of the on course CMs, checkpoints, Room and Weapon signs. This led some people to believe there would not be gimmicks on these signs. (Oh please!) Although there will be controversy, I now believe we have gotten too soft. For my next rallye, the helpful advice on CM locations will be "There are CMs and signs between the Start and the Finish. Be alert and look sharp!"

I do, however, offer a very sincere apology to all who were inconvenienced by the holes in the GIs which we failed to catch. I hope that the protests corrected these problems to everyone's satisfaction.

Steve Beuerman and I wrote a second Mystery! rallye in 1993 which used similar GIs, gimmicks and featured more clues for solving the "who dunnit". I plan to re-throw the second Mystery! rallye in about a year. I will definitely incorporate all the "lessons learned" from this event for the next one. If you enjoyed this year's Mystery!, its gimmicks and concepts, I hope you consider running the next one and make an effort to decipher its clues and solve its mystery.

-Bob Schott, Rallyemaster.