

Bike MS FAQ's

Q. Can I work just one day and not both?

A. Sure! While we would like to have you both days, if you can only work one day that's OK. Just be sure to indicate that when you sign up.

Q. I haven't done this before, or I am a new ham, can I still participate?

A. You certainly can! All you need is a technician license and a willingness to help out. The net operations are all on 2 meters and this year, the net will be broken into two segments based on your location along the route so voice traffic will be lighter. This is a great event to learn about directed net operations. If you are still nervous, we have experienced operators that we can "pair" you with for your first event.

Q. What Equipment do I need?

A. You will need a 2 meter rig that's at least 25 watts. If you are in a vehicle, you will need a magnetic mount antenna (5/8-wave antennas are strongly recommended.) APRS would be helpful too! If you are at a rest stop, you might want to bring you emergency set up with a mast and try it out.

Q. How do the nets operate?

A. The nets for the event are all simplex, directed nets run on 2 meters. NCS will have remote sites along the route both days to assist in route coverage.

Q. What will be different this year from years past?

A. This year we will be running two separate nets at all times. The nets will be separated by locations along the route and your information packet and training this year will explain in more detail. This should help to eliminate the voice traffic congestion.

Q. What will I be doing?

A. We need people to ride in "SAG" (Support and Gear) Vehicles, operate at rest stops and even a few to drive their own cars to carry MS Staff and support personnel (e.g. medical staff, rest stop coordinators and situations resolution personnel). Please let us know if you have a preference.

Q. What else will I need?

A. Please bring along anything that you may want during the course of the day. If you are at a rest stop, you may want a chair or a tent to get you out of the sun. A small cooler for something to drink and snacks are also advisable.

Q. What are the routes like this year?

A. We don't know yet, but we are going to try to keep the much the same as this year if possible.

Q. How do I sign up to participate?

A. You need to register on our website www.bikemshams.com so that Net Control will have your capabilities and all your equipment availability, if some difficulties arise. You will also need to register with the MS office so that they have you listed as a volunteer for their insurance. The MS form is available on the BikeMSHams website or you can register by going to <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/MOS/index.aspx>.

Q. When will the route be published?

A. There is not set deadline for when the route will be published. Usually the route will be finalized in July, but many things come into play, road construction in the area, permission to use public parks, and rest stop approval to name a few. We will get the routes to you as soon as they become available. You will definitely receive them at the training.

Q. When will the frequencies be published?

A. The frequencies do not change much from year to year. The official frequency list will not be given out until the training class.

If you have additional questions please email bikemshams@aol.com or call Rebecca at 314-496-7271.