

The Spotters Evolution in Winning and Coaching

Success Words

Focus

Dedication

Commitment

Evolution of a spotter

- 1970 - NASCAR uses two-way radios for first time
- 1971 - Bobby Allison wins June race at Riverside claiming he was wired for sound (Crew chief only)
- Mid 1980's - Spotters are utilized by NASCAR teams (On top of transporters only)
- Late 1980's - Spotters mandated by NASCAR
- 1990's - Spotters role more defined (Coaching, advising)
- 2000's - ???

A spotter is:

- Blind in one eye and can't see out of the other
- A person to blame when the driver wrecks
- A person that doesn't have a job on the pit-crew
- The driver's best friend, girl friend, wife, father, brother, etc...

Glossary

- Role of a Spotter
- Techniques of a Spotter
- Coaching
- Tools of a Spotter

Role of a Spotter

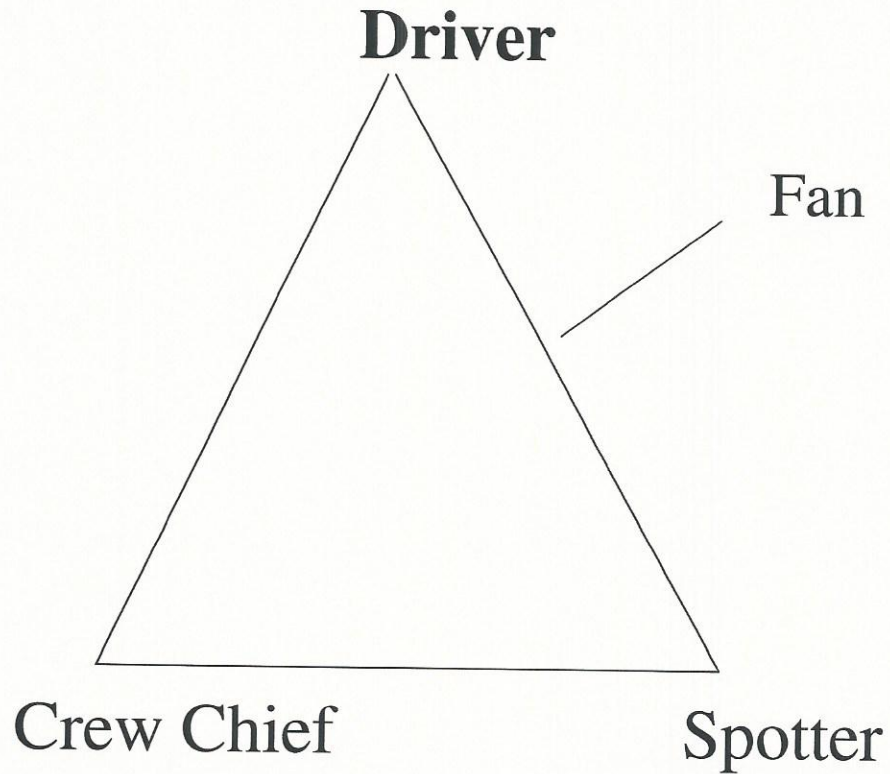
The role of a spotter is to:

- Keep the driver safe
- Protect the equipment
- Coach the driver
- Assist in race strategy
- Bring the car to the best possible finish

The team and team leadership need to identify the role of the spotter as a serious position that can help the team consistently win!!!

Techniques of a Spotter

Communication



Techniques of a Spotter

- Short Track
 - No pit stops
 - Conserve car
 - Split race into ¼'s (40-lap race, call 10-laps, 20-laps and 30-laps and drivers' position)
 - If the driver gains a lot of positions in a few laps, but no more in the next few, have driver conserve car for end
 - Call pace car "off"
 - Record lapped cars and cars out of competition
 - Emotions - Don't let emotions get into your technique
 - Usually a relative or owner is too emotional (Not always)
 - Work with other spotters
 - No spotter, no car on track
 - If the spotter is excited and it reflects in his/her voice, it will get the driver excited
 - Watch your car, not the race!

Give Respect - Get Respect!!!

Techniques of a Spotter

Definitions

- **Blocking** - When a front car is deliberately changing lanes to prohibit passing (Mirror Driving)
- **Chopping** - When a front car deliberately cuts off another car going into a turn
- **Dive-Bombing** - When a rear car deliberately "dives in" or cuts off a front car in a turn
- **Looking** - When a rear cars front bumper is not yet at the front cars rear bumper, but is "looking" inside or outside
- **Inside** - When a rear car has his front bumper beyond the rear bumper of a front car on the "inside" or the low side of the track
- **Outside** - When a rear car has his front bumper beyond the rear bumper of a front car on the "outside" or the high side of the track
- **Racing Room** - When you are racing side by side and you allow the other car room to maneuver. IE: If the other car is "outside" you keep your car low to ensure you do not move him/her into the wall

Techniques of a Spotter

Before the Race

- **Each spotter, driver and track are different - COMMUNICATE**
- Talk to your driver before the race (Each spotter is different, each driver is different)
- Attend driver / crew chief meeting / take notes
- Know your driver's capabilities and competition (Who you can trust and who to watch)
- Prior to start engine, radio check driver and crew chief, discuss who calls green flag
- Make disclaimer regarding language on radio (fans have scanners)
- Prior to race during warm-up laps discuss with driver:
Passing rules, race distance, scrub tires and make sure belts are tight
- At one to go, advise driver to be patient and to have **FUN!**

Techniques of a Spotter

During the Race

- If possible, talk to driver on straights only (Driver needs to concentrate in turns)
- Allow radio time for crew chief
- When driver is not in traffic always look ahead for incidents (Visually scan track)
- Clearing traffic
- No "Mirror Driving"
- Advise driver of faster cars approaching
- Advise driver when approaching car is two-lengths back

Techniques of a Spotter

During the Race (cont'd)

- Advise driver when approaching car is "looking"
- Advise driver when approaching car is "inside" / "outside"
- Advise driver when "clear"
- Keep driver calm (Cannot win race until last lap)
- Save car until last 20 laps
- Work with other spotters on passing
- To finish first, you first must finish!!!

Techniques of a Spotter During Cautions

- For on-track incidents
 - Call location (Turn one, back straight, etc...)
 - Call type of incident (debris, spin, wreck, etc...)
 - Call caution and advise driver to wave off cars in rear
 - Call track conditions (Track is blocked; track is clear height, etc...)
- During caution (With one to go) discuss:
 - Restart line
 - Passing rules on restart
 - Scrub tires
 - Make sure belts are tight

Techniques of a Spotter

Radio Brevity

COMMON

- Clear all around
- Four car lengths back to next car
- Leader start/finish line now
- Leader is at 20.19, you're at 20:50
- Green, green, green

PREFERRED

- All clear
- Clear by four
- Leader at line now
- Leader 19, you're at a 50 (i.e. lap times)
- Green flag

Techniques of a Spotter

Practice, Practice, Practice

- Practice to a spotter is like seat time to a driver
- Observe and monitor other spotters in different series
- During other races pick a car and pretend you are spotting for that car

Passing

- Look ahead for weakness (IE: If car in front is pushing, pass on inside)
- If possible use lap-cars for picks
- Ensure car is clear, error on the side of safety (If not sure, tell driver "Your call")
- Work with driver during practice or before race to identify "blind" areas or areas that are hard to call

Techniques of a Spotter

- Praise in public, criticize in private
- Evaluation - After each race while it is still fresh in your mind:
 - Have the driver evaluate your performance
 - You evaluate the drivers performance
 - Be constructive in criticism
 - Use a 1-10 Scale
- During race - Don't use profanity (Other people monitor)
- Use car numbers, not names (Don't call other drivers bad names)

Techniques of a Spotter Coaching

- Spotters can't drive car -- Can only make driver aware of conditions
- Keep driver calm (Can't win on 1st lap)
- Praise your driver
 - Good Job (After passing)
 - Good line (When his line is good)
- Advise driver if other lines are faster
- Encourage driver (After passing, get next car for position)
- Remind driver to conserve car (Get what you can, and then cruise)
- Remind driver to hit his marks
- Driver shouldn't have to use mirror (Spotter needs to let driver know what's behind and along side)
- If car is loose or tight, try different lines

Techniques of a Spotter

Coaching (cont'd)

- Advise driver of leaders position on track
- You will do more coaching with a rookie than with a veteran
- If time permits have a radio class before race
 - Discuss radio procedures
 - Spotter - communications specialist
 - Trouble-shooting
- Work with driver on different passing techniques (IE: If passing on inside isn't working, try outside)
- The higher the division the more chance someone will monitor
- If you are good as a spotter, it will be recognized, and you will be asked to work in other divisions
- Review each race - What you need to do to win next race.

Tools of a Spotter

Radio Bag

- Two radios
- Scanner
- Spare batteries
- Headset
- Timer
- Binoculars
- Notebook
- Rulebook
- Ball-point pens
- Sharpie pen
- Checkoff sheet
- Water
- Painkiller
- Sun-tan lotion
- Small screwdriver set
- Jacket / Sweatshirt

Tools of a Spotter

Scanning

<u>Method</u>	<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single radio with scan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Least costly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can't hear team & officials at same time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single radio + scanner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Next least costly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most scanners are subject to interference (No PL)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two radios	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicated radio for both team and officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More costly
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two radios + scanner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicated radio for both team and officials + scanner for other teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most costly and spotter must concentrate on three conversations