



Making A Trail

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To The Virgin

If you have never hashed before, you are known as a VIRGIN. You are fresh meat, a prime candidate for hash indoctrination. Never fear, we have all been through it before. Follow the “defiled” ones, do as they do, and prepare to participate. You will be held accountable for your actions at the infamous Circle, the social ritual succeeding every run. If you make ‘mistakes’, you will pay for it. If you make no mistakes, you will pay for it. Don’t lose sleep trying to understand it.

The Art of Haring

There are no rules at a Hash. The closest approximation to a set of rules is setting a hash trail properly. This is the job of the hare.

The hash is essentially a 'paper chase' cast as a game of hare and hounds. The hare marks a set trail in some conspicuous substance – think Hansel and Gretel – and the hounds (harriers) follow. (Female hashers are known as harriettes.) It is generally noncompetitive, although Front Running Bastards are sometimes punished in the circle, of which the less said the better. The hare is encouraged to make the trail challenging by including way points (checks) that offer false alternatives to the true trail. Checks can also have special attributes, of which more later. Theoretically, all this slows down the pursuers.



Trails may be live. That is when the hares take their trail marker and set off with a ten or fifteen minute start and try to elude the pack. (Live naked hares have been known in the past, but not to my knowledge in the KHHH -- yet.) The live method is still popular in some hashes and is occasionally used by the KHHH, especially in a pinch or when bad weather has obliterated a preset trail.. As has just been implied, trails may also be dead or preset. In a preset trail the hares create a trail several hours before the run -- or even the day before if weather permits.

Trails are marked in the fashion that suits the terrain and location. Glow-in-the-dark nuclear waste is discouraged for marking trails. Nontoxic biodegradable substances are encouraged. Trail marking materials should also be economical. Here are some suggestions for different situations.

City runs. Use chalk if possible. The big kid's stuff is especially useful for marking trails. Buy it at toy stores. Bright ribbons tied to bushes or other small landmarks also work.. Conscientious Hares have been known to remove them after the run.

Note: The tradition of using flour is now discouraged in town because on occasion local authorities have responded with serious alarm and have even arrested hares for making strange symbols in suspicious white powder near public buildings. Think Anthrax. Horror stories abound from around the world in the past year. We even have some of our own nasty tales right here in Kiev. USE CHALK IN THE CITY. On some occasions pulverized paper from embassy shredding machines can be used. This is good for parks.

Countryside runs. Flour can still be used here. Be sure to explain to locals

what is happening. They quickly understand the idea of a sporting club running trail if the hare is polite and forthcoming. Local farmers and herders are sometimes worried about their stock eating what they think could be rat poison.. Flour marks alternated with chalk marks work well.

Snow. White flour does not work on snow. Corn meal has been used, flour mixed with paprika, cheapo ketchup, spray paint (discouraged), powdered chalk, spent coffee grounds, shredded paper from the embassy. Saw Dust is especially good if you can get a supply. Beware that birds and animals eat trails laid on snow with seeds and high contrast flour.

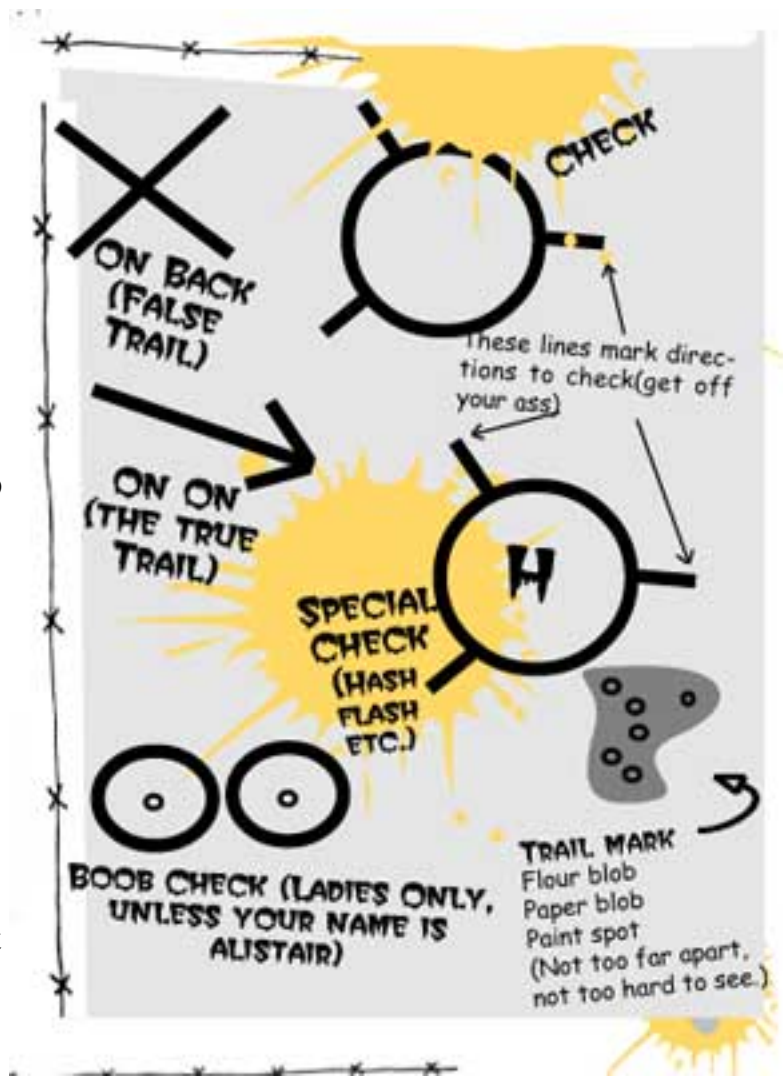
The hash will reimburse hares for trail marking material if purchased in quantity. Present a receipt if possible. Hares are encouraged to pass on their material to the next hares in line. Hares do not pay for the hash and often absorb the cost of their materials. Special prizes are offered to enthusiastic hares who set trails often.

Trail Marks

At the beginning of the run the hare should explain his or her rationale for setting the trail to the pack. Frequently the hare lies or forgets the conventions he or she used in setting the trail. Below are a few guidelines meant to help in establishing the conventions that are usually ignored or misinterpreted by most hares.

All trails are marked with blobs (flour etc) or arrows (chalk). On On (the true trail) is often marked with an arrow at the end of a several blobs, but hares

occasionally use arrows on false trails. Theoretically if three (sometimes four) marks are seen then the trail is true, but don't count on it. Ideally there should be three marks and a final arrow that signals that the true trail is underfoot.



On Backs, the end points of false trails are marked with an X. This is probably the only convention universally maintained. Except sometimes hares forget to put an X and the marks just peter out.

Checks are marked with a circle. Sometimes the circle will have lines indicating possible directions for trails – both true and false. Sometimes not. A plain circle is known as a blind check. Hashers will wander around looking to pick up marks for a possible trail. Generally a check will have two false trails in addition to the one true trail.

Special Checks

Some checks have special requirements. This adds interest to the trail. Here are some as follows:

Boob Checks:

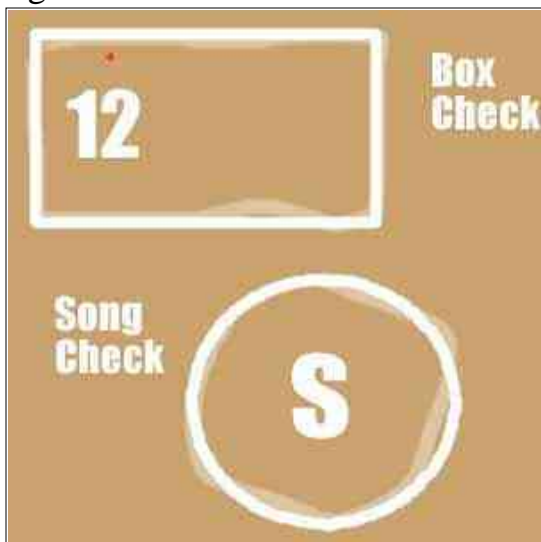
These checks (See diagram above) are marked by two circles with dots in the middle, crudely representing female breasts, AKA ta tas, hooters, jugs etc. Such a check means that the harriers (male hashers) must wait until the harriettes (female hashers) probe for the true trail and shout "On On" in their high, sweet voices.

Hare Checks.

These checks require all Front Running Bastards to wait for the slow and stupid before carrying on. They allow the pack to collect. It is marked by a circle containing an H for "hold". Hash Flashes are often taken at such checks. Limit these check on cold days when they force FRBs to cool down.

Box Checks

A square box with a number in it. Good if the hash is large. The number signals the number of hashers who must collect before moving on.



Song Checks

A circle with an S marks this. It can also contain a number. In the circle at the beginning of the run the hare should designate the song to be sung. The number can denote the number of hashers who must collect to sing the song. An S can also be combined with a Hare Check or a box check.

Underwear Checks

Self explanatory. Marks vary.



Here is Hash Crash's contribution.

Beer Checks

A nice surprise to organize.

Dick Checks

Gender sensitive alternative to Boob Checks. Harriettes have been very creative in producing trail art for these checks.



Planning The Trail

Drive and walk around the area several times to find all the suitable routes. Put in loops plus checks every so often. Don't always go in a big circle. Variants of a figure eight can also work if marked intelligently. Always walk the entire trail. Never assume that a road or a path goes where you want it to.

NEVER SET A TRAIL THROUGH A FARMER'S FIELD IF IT IS PLANTED. CROPPING IS A REAL NO NO. NEVER SHORTCUT THIS WAY EITHER.

Setting The Trail

Use flour and chalk or other materials accordingly. Each hare will typically need two kilos of flour; carrying a stick of chalk is easier. Mark every 30 paces on difficult ground - bush, grass etc.

Mark every 50 paces on easy ground - footpaths etc. Mark on walls if there is a likelihood of rain

Make sure the marks will not be cleaned away, walked off, covered over by parked cars or, if flour turds, eaten. Have a good loop, shortcut or an on-back near the beginning of the run so that late arrivals can catch up easily.

Some hares find it entertaining to hide marks, but try to resist this impulse. Even well placed marks can be hard to find when the hash is actually underway. Hidden marks can really slow things down and force the hare to divulge the trail. Worse, there is a chance that the hare will outsmart him- or herself and become a "lost hare". There is nothing more ignominious then getting lost on a trail you have set..

Beware of hare checks in the winter as the front runners will cool down quickly.

On The Run

Don't direct the pack unless they are having real real trouble finding the trail.

Fast Hares should run with the FRBs; one hare should be towards the back to guide the walkers

Have a water stop if it is a very hot day or, better, stick in a beer check.

At The Circle

Expect a down down— you deserve it. Return any chalk and flour to the next Hares.

Send all comments corrections and additions to The Flasher>
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