

2011 ATA NTDC / NSVDC GENERAL INFORMATION

DATES: Tuesday, August 9 – Saturday, August 13, 2011

LOCATIONS: Contestant registration, briefings and competition will be held in the South Concourse of the North/South Building of the Orange County Convention Center* in Orlando, Florida (see Diagram #1). The Breakfast of Champions (Thurs., Aug. 11) and the Awards Banquet (Fri., Aug. 13) will be held at The Peabody Hotel's Grand Ballroom (see Diagram #2). [*The Orange County Convention Center is actually two buildings. You will want to go to the North/South Building which is flanked by the Hilton and the Peabody Hotel, not the East/West Building.

NO SHUTTLE BUS: Given how close the Convention Center and hotels are to the airport, an NTDC/NSVDC shuttle bus will not be provided this year. Please refer to the Schedule of Events for all of the different transportation options.

EVENT REGISTRATION: The first NTDC/NSVDC function that you and your fellow Championships Contestants (Drivers) must attend is the Contestant Registration, Equipment Briefing and Viewing scheduled for **11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 10**. Contestants should plan to arrive in Orlando with enough time to check into their hotel room and report to their designated class bullpen by **10:45 a.m.** (see Schedule of Events). All bullpens are located on Level 2 of the Convention Center's South Concourse. There's a skywalk from the Peabody Hotel that will place you on Level 2 of the South Concourse – walk half way down the foyer (hall). Contestants register in the bullpens not at the Registration/Information Booth. At Nationals, promptness matters. Please do not be late.

During Registration, Contestants will receive, among other things, their driver bags containing their name badge, NTDC/NSVDC on-site program and registration envelope which will include one meal ticket each for the Breakfast of Champions on Thursday, August 11 and Banquet on Saturday, August 13. Please let your Den Mother know if you are missing any of the above and/or if you need a Breakfast and/or Banquet ticket for your spouse/guest.

MANDATORY EVENTS: We encourage you to go through the enclosed Schedule of Events very carefully. Promptness to all NTDC/NSVDC functions is essential. Some of the key mandatory functions, changes and things to know for Wednesday, August 10 are:

- (1) Registration and Equipment Briefing at 11:00 a.m. Contestants receive their registration materials and receive a briefing about the competition, competition rules and equipment.
- (2) Equipment Viewing. New in 2011 – Unlike in the past and much like many of the state TDCs, Contestants will not be given a choice of equipment from which to choose. After registration, each class of Contestants will be given an opportunity to look over and sit in the equipment designated for their particular class. All equipment will be generic so you do not have to worry about violating the rule about not driving your company's equipment. Also each driver will be allowed to drive the truck to the start line (a short distance) to get an idea of the equipment's handling capabilities.

- (3) Review of the Course and Pre-Trip Inspection at 1:00 p.m. [Note: Like last year, the Review is again prior to the Walk Through. During the Review, detailed instructions about the Course and Pre-Trip Inspection competition will be provided and Contestants may ask questions. Judges will be present for the Review.]
- (4) Walk Through of the Course at 2:00 p.m. [The Walk Through will take 15 to 30 minutes and Contestants may not ask questions during the Walk Through. You may not pace off the course or measure problems or between problems. Based on input from past competitors, we will have people watching for any violations of this rule. Also, you will not be able to rely on the position of cones and other objects for measuring points, as judges will be instructed to constantly shift those objects. You wouldn't want us to make it easy on you, would you?]
- (5) Written Exam & Briefings at 3:30 p.m. [The Written Exam will again be held in each class bullpen. If all Contestants have returned from the Walk Through and are seated and ready in their respective Bullpens prior to 3:30 p.m., the Den Mothers may begin the Written Exam earlier. Contestants may – with the Den Mother's blessing – leave for the day once they have completed and turned in their Written Exam. Note: This year you will have lots of room to spread out in the bullpens]

Consult the Schedule of Events for those activities required on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

WHAT'S NEW: (1) The Bullpens used on Wednesday may shift on Friday to put those classes furthest from the escalators closer to the escalators – for now we intend to keep them the same. (2) Five of the classes will compete in both the Skills Test and Pre-Trip Inspection competitions on Thursday; the other four classes will compete in both on Friday, so that all contestants will have a day off from competition – despite this, we are hoping that everyone will still come to the Breakfast of Champions. (3) Personal Interviews will again NOT be conducted. (4) The Step Van competition will again be integrated into the running order, this year on Thursday (The forms and rules will remain the same for the NSVDC contestants.). And, (5) National Champions will again be announced at the Saturday evening banquet rather than the Saturday afternoon ceremony after the Finals.

ATTIRE: Every Contestant must wear the recognized uniform of his/her motor carrier throughout the competition if the company has a uniform; if not, Contestants are encouraged to dress in such a way as to project a positive and professional image. For the Saturday evening Awards Reception and Banquet, we recommend that Contestants wear semi-formal attire.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: ATA has reserved a block of rooms with the The Peabody Hotel at a special discounted rate. Attached is a Hotel Reservation Form; but before completing and sending in the form, we recommend that you check with your supervisor to make certain a reservation has not already been made for you by your company. If not, please complete and return the attached form to ATA on or before **July 7**. Also, please note that ATA is not responsible for hotel bills and other travel related expenses incurred by Contestants, Officials and/or their families. If you are covering the hotel expenses yourself without company support and would like to know if cheaper options are available, please call (703) 838-1861.

SPOUSE PROGRAM: ATA is pleased to announce that Disney World has designated Wednesday, Aug. 10, as “Championships Day at Disney World”. We have negotiated a number of discounted rates to Disney World for those attending the NTDC/NSVDC (whether they go Wednesday or any other day). Additional information on these discounts and transportation is enclosed. We also have a link from our website to discount tickets for SeaWorld and Discovery Cove [at <http://ntdc.truckline.com>] and are now working on trying to get discounts to Universal Studios. In addition, we will have a short program beginning at 10:30 a.m. at The Peabody Hotel to welcome Spouses/Significant Others.

Spouses/significant others (of Contestants) may register as early as Tuesday, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at The Peabody or wait until Wednesday beginning at 8:00 a.m. at the Convention Center. We hope you will encourage your spouse/significant others, family and friends to attend. Please note that the access to the Convention Center is VERY restricted on Tuesday and Wednesday. Everyone should consult the Schedule of Events to verify where they can be and when in order not to jeopardize the eligibility of any contestant.

Note to Contestants: If your official confirmation letter from ATA didn't mention your spouse/significant other by name but she or he plans to come, we ask that you let us know by calling (703) 838-1919 or e-mailing smc@trucking.org. As a professional, you'll understand our desire to be as prepared as possible and have the name badge ready.

OTHER: All Company Officials are welcome to come and cheer on Contestants so please feel free to pass along the enclosed Company Official Registration Form to your supervisor and/or any other Company Official you would like to attend. There is a modest Company Official registration fee to cover the costs of the Breakfast of Champions, Awards Reception & Banquet, badge, program booklet and other registration materials, as the form indicates. Regarding Souvenirs, sales will begin on Wednesday. Please consult the Schedule of Events for the exact times and location for the Souvenir “Marketplace.”

REMINDERS: We want you to achieve the highest point values possible at the Championships, so please:

- (1) When practicing for the Skills Test and Pre-Trip Inspection test, be sure to make entering and exiting the vehicle properly (3 points of contact) a habit and something you don't have to think about during competition. Most violations are just as you are about to sit so practice having either two feet planted and one hand on a handhold or two hands on a handhold and one foot planted during the sitting phase. Don't rush it – it's too many points to lose.
- (2) And, although we know you are in the habit of fastening your safety belt while on duty, we encourage you to practice automatically “buckling up” as part of your Skills Test practice – and practicing driving without moving the belt out of the way - the judges will be watching to make sure your safety belt is “worn” as intended. No moving it out of the way or behind you – points will be deducted.
- (3) Remember too that you will be disqualified if you have your cell phone (or other electronic communication device) on and with you during any of the tests and this year you will not be able to have your cell phone or other electronic communication device on your person

on Wednesday and on the day you compete – so no cell phones/smartphones/electronic devices while in the bullpens or outside the bullpens either, unless you are willing to have the Den Mothers hold it for you until you have completed your Wednesday responsibilities and competition day activities. Whether rumor or true, there were reports that drivers may have been using such devices to gain an advantage even if it was quietly texting their spouses in the stands. Sometimes perception is enough, so in order to maintain the competition's integrity, such devices are now banned. If you decide to allow the den mother to hold it, turn it over immediately when you walk in the room. Don't forget!

- (4) Study from the 2011 Facts for Drivers for the Written Exam – it was updated again this year and includes some new information so please do not rely on prior years'. The questions for the Written Exam are unique to the 2011 NTDC/NSVDC and will challenge your understanding, not just memorization, of the information. Given input from Contestants over the last couple of years, we will work harder to make the exam more easily read so that it tests your knowledge more than your reading skills. We will be using the scan forms again this year – although they may look a little different. If you have ideas on how to improve the competition, please don't hesitate to let us know. We do listen and have incorporated many contestants' suggestions in the past.

Questions? Please call us at 703-838-1919 or e-mail smc@trucking.org with questions and comments. For the "Schedule of Events," hotel reservation form and other 2011 Championships information, please visit our website: <http://ntdc.truckline.com> under 2011 NTDC Links. A listing of the State Champions (of which ATA has been notified) may also be found under this link.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN ORLANDO!