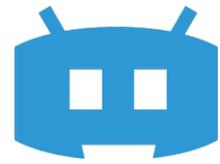


SPARC Getting Started Guide

Part 6: What to Expect at an Event



Everything's packed, the robot is done (this part is VERY important) and it's time to go to your first event. Now what?

Arriving

Typically the venue will open several hours before the first match of the day to allow time for people to arrive, set up, and get through inspection. You should try to arrive as early into this period as you are able as this will allow you to be fully prepared for your first fight well in advance of the start of the event.

Your Pit Space

Organizing your pit space is a great way to make sure you don't waste time while making repairs or performing maintenance. If possible, have a dedicated location for batteries that are fully charged and a location for batteries that need to be charged. This will help ensure that there aren't any mix-ups when replacing batteries between fights. Also be sure to have a specific "work" area where you can set your bot down with the wheels off the ground and perform whatever normal maintenance you need to between fights.

Inspections

Run your bot through inspection as early as you are able to. If issues do come up this will give you the maximum amount of time possible to resolve the issues. If there aren't issues, then you'll have time to relax or take care of other pre-fight preparations without having to worry about getting anything else ready for your first match. Most inspections consist of a weight check, a visual inspection of the robot, and a failsafe check.

Drivers Meeting

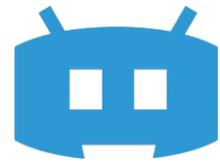
The majority of events have a drivers meeting shortly before starting the matches. Attendance is typically required at these meetings. Topics that are covered typically include the match format, key match procedures, event structure, and roll call to ensure that the brackets aren't missing any robots. This is also a time to ask any last minute questions you may have.

Your First Fight

Now it's time for your first fight. Many events will have at least the next few matches announced so you'll have a few minutes to prepare. If you've got a weapon lock or sharp edge covers, make sure they're still secure then take your robot, transmitter, and whatever tools/links/etc are required for power on to the staging area if the event has one. Once your fight is up you'll load in following the standard event procedures. (If there is a bot wrangler they will typically determine which robot loads first.) Once both bots are loaded and the doors are closed you'll be able to do a quick functional test to ensure everything is working as expected, then it's time for the fight to start. Once the match is over the bots will be loaded out following the standard procedures and you can return to your pit for maintenance and/or repairs.

SPARC Getting Started Guide

Part 6: What to Expect at an Event



Between Matches

Early in events there's usually a lot of time between matches, especially if you're running a single bot. That being said, the best habit to get into is to immediately take care of whatever repairs or maintenance you need to do following your match. Doing this means you'll have more time to fix any issues you discover during maintenance and you'll have more time to charge the batteries you were using for your last fight. Taking care of the between fight maintenance right away also means you'll be far less likely to be called up for your next fight while you're still trying to put things back together.

Closing Ceremonies

Many events have some sort of awards presentation at the end of the event. If you're able to, try to stick around for it to either receive your trophy/prizes or support your fellow builders.

Packing Up

Packing up can start as early into the event as you'd like. When possible, if you're pulling tools out to work on your robots, put them back in your tool box or keep them organized between uses. While that may add a bit of time to what you're doing at the moment in the long run it'll save you time looking for a specific tool you were using earlier and when you're trying to get packed up at the end of the event. Keeping only the essentials out and readily available during the event helps maintain a more open work area and reduces the chances of tools being obscured by other stuff on your pit table. Once your bot or bots are done fighting for the event then you can pack away the rest of your pit area and head out or watch the rest of the event depending on how far into the bracket you've made it.