

Planning for a Road Race (4/14/10)

Key Sports and Business Promotions, Inc

www.keysports.net

8902 Slagle Road Centerville, Ohio 45458-2645

Phone and fax: (937) 435-2633 Email: sales@keysports.net

We hope this information is helpful to you in planning and conducting a successful event.

Why host a running or walking event? Think seriously about your goals and your measures of success.

It is important that the group hosting the event generate interest and support from within their own community, organization, or business.

We included an information sheet we recommend be given to each participant.

PRE-RACE DAY ACTIVITIES

Date and Time: Pick a date and/or time where no other runs are planned. **We'll help you**, but cannot guarantee there will not be a conflict.

Location: Choosing a good location is important. Using your own facility provides a comfortable site. MetroParks have several nice locations which can be approved by the 5 Rivers staff. Many communities welcome running/walking events as wholesome, positive activities for the people. Time of the year plays a roll in the decision, especially in the winter months where indoor facilities make life a lot easier. Since many events are conducted on public streets please consider of traffic control requirements and duration you will be expecting streets to be occupied. Course marshals should be adults and positioned at as many locations as possible.

Insurance: Liability insurance is often required by organizations hosting events. *We have a process* to sanction events through USATF, which includes liability insurance.

Prepare the entry form: Include all the standard data you see on other forms. Make sure to include a space for people to designate a contact person and phone just in case of emergency. Also, ask for an email address. Email is a great way to contact people if information is missed on the entry form.

Directions to the race site: Place easy to understand directions to your race site on the entry form and, if needed, place markers along the way if people might not easily find the race administration area.

Volunteers: ***This is a critical element to help ensure success.*** Designate a volunteer coordinator for critical jobs which require dependable people. The number of volunteers depends on several factors. These are important jobs, somewhat demanding, and very necessary for success. We recommend a careful analysis of what needs to be done and how many people are required. Here are the primary volunteer areas: Course marshals, registration, refreshments, finish line, and clean up.

Publicity and Advertising: Assign an aggressive coordinator to spread the word and distribute information and entry forms. Use social media as much as possible.

Entry form distribution: Take forms to other races, and other primary advertising avenues you might consider:

- Groups affiliated with or within your organization
- Recreation centers, gyms, libraries
- Running stores
- Company/school/church newsletters and ask them to publish information
- Public service notices in local newspapers, on TV and radio

If contracted, we will publish the event on our web page: (keysports@woh.rr.com), and you should also consider: Run Ohio (runohio@ee.net), ORRRC (www.orrcc.org) calendars.

Entry form processing: Try to do this as the entries are coming in. We use an Excel spreadsheet to record entrant information which serves our purposes fine. ***Awards are determined by gender and age, so accuracy of this information is critical. If any is missing contact the person and try to fill it. If this data is incorrect or incomplete results will not be accurate.***

On-line Registration: More people are looking to register on-line. There are several companies which provide this service, we *have a favorite, active.com, and can help set this up for you.* There are generally 3 methods *for entrants* to pay for this service: People who register pay a small fee in addition to the entry fee; the event picks up the fee and it is deducted from the money they receive; or the entrant and the event split the cost. On line services send payment directly to the event after people begin to register.

Race number preparation: *Race numbers are critical for results processing and to assure you know the identity of each participant.* Each number needs to list at a minimum: Name, age, sex, and t-shirt size. We also recommend emergency contact and contact phone number. Labels are our way of preparing the bibs for preregistered participants. If the bibs are being hand written we recommend Ultra fine Sharpie type markers and good penmanship for use on the race number bibs.

Electronic Timing: We do not have this capability, but there are several companies who offer the service. There is value to electronic timing for very large events.

Marking the course and course management: We can do marking and measuring of the course. We have a limited supply of directional arrow signs if you need them. Critical needs for the course: lead pacer on a bike, motorcycle, or car, a trail person, and course marshals for direction and safety.

Police, medical, public safety: Get permits and alert local medical services. Determine: Who, how, what, and where in case a medical need arises. Make arrangements to have medical support on site if possible. We recommend asking the medical services people to be positioned at the finish line. Some communities charge for these services, so ask the question and consider this in your financial planning.

Restroom facilities: If the location needs more facilities add porta-johns. Consider restroom facilities for course workers at each water stop for longer distance events.

Parking: Please make parking arrangements for volunteers and entrants. Make sure this coordinates effectively with the race course security and finish line operations.

Refreshments: Coordinator needed. Determine what will you serve after the race, where, and who will serve it. Water is needed in addition to whatever else is served. We recommend a selection of: sports type drink, fruit, breads, yogurt, pizza, plus whatever else you like. People remember this feature.

Entertainment: Music is a great idea, clowns, jugglers, movie stars...

Water stations: Designate an experienced leader at each site and at least 4 people; tables, cups, water, and transportation. Place a water station at start/finish area plus on the course. Add music at the stop for a special touch.

Registration and check-in (depends upon the number of participants, but plan on 6 people): Two separate sites, one for pre-registered people and one for race day registration. For race day registration, we recommend a person whose only job is to take money and separate people to prepare race numbers (please use Ultra fine Sharpie type markers and good penmanship on the race number bibs), t-shirt distribution, etc. On race day, volunteers will complete this information for each entrant and remind people to **check the accuracy of all data**. Same goes for preregistered people, ask them to **check information accuracy and make necessary changes on the bib**.

T-shirt distribution: Can be done several ways: bagged ahead, bulk at location of pick up, or bulk at a separate location. Segregate the pre-race registrants' shirts before the event. Separate volunteer shirts if they are being given.

Official time: We do the official timing at finish line. Pace timing on course (one person/mile) is your responsibility and is a nice feature if you have enough volunteers. Transportation may be required for timers on the course. Recommend using cell phones to communicate with course people to start watches.

Schedule: Create a time/activity schedule for activities on race day; give this to all key workers.

Course Map: Participants would like to know the course they are running, so create a large course map and/or smaller maps people can pick up

Items you will need: Race numbers, awards, timing watches, t-shirts or other incentives, refreshments, finish line, finish line clock, transportation, tables, chairs, markers, pins, pens, spare entry forms, ultra-fine permanent markers (Sharpie are good), a speaker system (or bull horn) if the crowd is large or you have important things to say, trash bags, cups, fluid containers, ice, signs. If you have any question about something you may need, bring it, or ask us.

Nice to have items: Door prizes, goody bags, sponsor coupons, and samples.

RACE DAY ACTIVITIES

This is when all the planning and preparation come together in a very short period of time. The better we plan the better these results.

Volunteers: Report at least 15 minutes before your expected time to start work at registration. Course marshals and refreshment people report 1 hour before the start. Finish line helpers report 30 minutes before the race start.

Registration: First area to be set up. Volunteers need to show at least 15 minutes before the published registration start time as arrangements will need to be made to position people, tables, etc.

Communications: This assures everything is set and the *race preparation is progressing as expected*. What is needed during the race depends upon the course. Race course communications is a benefit; tracks progress and alerts people if there are problems.

Race Course: Set water station(s), timers, and road marshals in place 15-30 minutes before the start. Race should not start unless you know these people are in place and the course is secure. Coordinate the race course, start, and finish times with the local police if using public streets. Remind the participants that public streets or recreation trails are not generally closed to vehicle traffic and they are to be cautious.

Medical Aid: On-site, accessible, establish communication. If on-site medical support is available they should report 15 minutes before the start. We prefer to have medical aid at the finish line. Seems this is where it is needed the most. Make sure what you planned for is in place, even if your solution is 911.

Start: Designated starter begins the race once all course arrangements are complete and timers are ready.

Finish Line: We'll help organize, train, and make sure it goes well, but volunteers are required: timers, tag collectors, stringers, pickers, bandit catcher, callers, and medical aid.

Day of Race Award Results: We'll do awards tabulation and help with awards distribution. A good idea: *Determine if and how awards can be picked up after the event. Perhaps one of the sponsors or the hosting organization will make the awards available for a week or so after the race for winners to pick up.*

Awards presentation: This is a great time for people who were the prime organizers, sponsors, beneficiaries, etc to present awards, thank the people for coming, and acknowledge major sponsors. We help. Also, door prizes can be given if you have any.

Take down and cleanup: Coordinator named ahead and an energetic group makes this an easier job.

POST RACE DAY ACTIVITIES

Complete results: Post on your web site and for Key Sports events we will list them on www.keysports.net.

Enter all remaining registrants' information into a spread sheet so they can be notified about next year's event, or for follow-up information.

Distribute awards to people who did not pick them up. Normally, if people want their awards they will stay or ask some one to pick it up. This is your call.

Within two weeks of the event, have a wrap up meeting with the committee to plan and go over lessons learned, and make changes for next time. **Relax** until next time.

T-Shirts or other gift ideas

We have the full capability to produce your t-shirts and any other gifts you might like to give away. We are experts at screen printing and embroidery and can even do ink jet processing on garments. Please ask us for more information.

Questions to answer:

Total quantity

Size breakdown

Style of the shirt

Color of the shirt

Areas to be printed or embroidered: Front, back, sleeves, and leg

Size to be printed: Full front, left crest (4" square), etc

Number of colors to be printed in each area

Need date for the items: We "plan" production time at least three weeks ahead, but print the week of the event

Artwork status: We like to complete the artwork ahead of time, so this is a priority

Cost is determined by several factors: Color of the t-shirt, style, quantity and sizes, number of print locations and number of colors printed. Our prices are very reasonable and we work closely with event planners to determine the best quantity to purchase.

Awards

Awards are recognition for achievement. They need not be costly and can be very similar in size. We recommend an award that identifies your event, organization, etc.

Here are some of the more popular items we can provide, and a few other ideas:

Medal Inserts- beautiful inserts using your logo design in stock medal shells with neck ribbons

Medals with neck ribbons and identification of the event-We keep a stock of medal awards that can be personalized with the name of the event, year, etc. labeling on the back

Plaques with personalized pictures and award designations

Ceramic items: cups, mugs, etc

Personalize ink pens, clocks, or other small "useful" items. How about an award flashlight which sits on a bookshelf and can be used in an emergency?

Photo frames

Gift certificates

Often the organization promoting the event has items which are representative of themselves. For example, at a police run we used McGruff dolls as awards; at the German Picnic we use German steins. These can be considered along with traditional award ideas .

Participant Information

(We recommend a version of this be available to participants)

Thank you for entering our event. We hope that you have a safe, enjoyable time. Please consider the following:

Make sure all of your personal information on the race number is accurate. If not, get it corrected at the registration area.

Electronic Timing: If this event is using electronic chip timing please place the chip in the appropriate location based on the timing method.

Please, **keep the number and pull tag together.** Wear your race number on the **front.** Pin the number in the 4 small holes-See the “Do not pin” note?

Line up at the start based on ability. Faster runners to the front, walkers to the back. Wheelchair and baby joggers please see the race director about starting.

There are __ **water stations** on the course, please take advantage of them. Refreshments will be available at the conclusion of your race.

Assume the **race course is open** to other traffic: cars, bicycles, walkers, etc. Please share the space and be careful.

Once you cross the finish line move through the chute. Your pull tag will be collected at the end of the line. Do not duck out before the end of the chute. Only cross the finish line **once, please.** If you are running with someone who does not have a race bib ask them not to cross the finish line.

Awards will be given shortly after the race is completed. Please allow sufficient time for this to be done accurately and with consideration of your fellow participants. Results are normally available on www.keysports.net within 24 hours.

Sponsors, participants, and volunteers are important aspects of this event: We'd like to thank all of our volunteers and sponsors. *(List these name here)*