

How to Start a Running Club

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ESTABLISHING A CLUB

Starting a club can be approached in various ways, depending on the degree of interest among the local runners. If there is little activity in your area, interest in group runs might be generated as a preliminary or first step for a club. The easiest way to create interest is to schedule low-key events at the same time and locale, at regular intervals. For example, everyone might gather at 5:30 PM the local park (main parking lot) every Monday. A loop course probably is best, so that those who are strong enough to run multiple loops can do so.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

As soon as a small nucleus of interested people has developed, a short informal meeting right after a group run is all you need to start a club. The meeting, of course, doesn't have to be at one of the runs. Any convenient place to get the people is fine - the local high school, recreation department, somebody's house, etc.

One advisable precaution toward insuring a stable and successful start for the club is to do a bit of homework and preparation before that first meeting. First you'll probably get more done at the meeting if you invite only a select group of people whom you know are interested, rather than if you spend time trying to entice the general public to attend. Secondly, there are certain key individuals around the community who can contribute a lot to a running program. So, before calling the meeting, get in touch with some or all of the following, try to enlist their interest in the project, and invite them to the meeting.

1. The dedicated local distance runners whom you know.
2. The cross-country or track coach of a local public high school and, if any, college or university. In larger communities, approach the coaches of several schools. These people can often contribute free school toilet facilities, running-related equipment, and for track races, a track. In addition, schools are good places for a race site or headquarters. Explain to the coach that the proposed running events are not intended to conflict with their high school or college program but that the races will provide an excellent way to keep the kids in shape during the summer and will greatly increase the public's awareness of the sport.

3. The person in charge of the county or city recreation department. As explained elsewhere in this booklet, all clubs should put on fun runs in addition to competitive races. These low-key events draw people of all ages and both sexes, and this should appeal strongly to the community recreation department. The department can help get needed race facilities because it has some influence in the county or city. It can often provide ribbons for awards, assist in staging the races and help out in other ways.
4. A representative of the local Y. Not only can this person provide help in many aspects of the program, he can attract many YMCA members into joining the club.
5. Representatives of any other local clubs or organizations who may have an interest.
6. A representative from the state physical fitness commission, if one exists. This is usually headquartered in the Governor's office. The larger the potential number of runners, the more interested this office will be. It could help with printing, secretarial jobs and possibly funding.
7. For small towns, the Mayor's office, possibly the Mayor himself. Ask him/her for advice on funding and on which groups in the community might be interested in RRCA activities.
8. Representatives from local military bases ("Special Services" officers). Friendly rivalry between various branches of the military can greatly increase the number of people in races.

Many thriving clubs got their initial start from a handful of concerned runners, without involving any of the above people. However, your chances for a successful and appealing club will be much greater if you strive for a broad representation.

No matter whom you decide to invite to the organizational meeting, talk to each person in the days preceding the meeting and get an idea of his or her potential contribution. At the meeting follow these simple steps:

1. Discuss the overall purposes for the club (promotion of running for sport and physical fitness) and the general types of events the club will conduct.
2. Decide on specific details of the first few running events (dates, distances, time of day, etc.)
3. Declare yourselves the "Blanksville Road Runners Club" or whatever.
4. Decide on annual dues. These are usually about \$10-\$15 for regular memberships, less for full-time students or people below a certain age limit
5. Draw up a list of bylaws or a brief constitution (see sample in next section).
6. Elect some officers.

Election of officers is one instance of why the preliminary homework is important. Such homework produces some idea of who would be both willing and able to serve in various jobs. (Trial and error ideally is the only reliable way to verify a person's qualifications, but that probably will not be possible for this first occasion. Popularity or running ability are not reliable criteria for gauging a person's ability to be a club officer). The minimum possible number of elected officers is two - a president and a secretary-treasurer. Other positions that may arise are best filled by presidential appointment, since the president immediately becomes much more familiar with people's qualifications and interests than the voters do.

Deciding on the distances, locations and time of day for the first few events is an important step. Short distances are advisable in the beginning - one or two miles for the fitness runs and 2-10 kilometers for the competitive races (on every occasion have one event of each type). You'll need several weeks between the organizational meeting and the first race, in order to spread the word and take care of race preparations.

Some jobs to be filled at the meeting are: (1) publicity (someone must make up and distribute an announcement of the forthcoming running events), and (2) an event director and several helpers for each event. Emphasize that all of the jobs are easy and that no job is overly time-consuming or requires much previous training, as long as the work load is spread out over several people. The discussion leader (you) should immediately volunteer for a major job, such as director for the first day's events. (Bring to the meeting a few copies of a handy checklist telling the event director everything that has to be done.) If no one volunteers to be director for subsequent occasions, try getting a co-director whom you could train and who could then take the third event by himself. The director's helpers take care of such duties as registration (sign in) for runners, timing and recording. (See RRCA HANDBOOK for further details.)

A couple of final tips: (1) make the run administration as simple as possible, e.g. courses with a minimum of turns and which start and finish at the same place; (2) be sure that the finishers get their time and place; (3) in the publicity announcement be sure to refer to the fun run as a noncompetitive physical fitness run rather than as a race; and (4) get the name and phone number of everyone who attended the first meeting, before the meeting is adjourned.

Operating funds will be scarce when a club first gets started. Some immediate funds can be acquired if the newly-elected treasurer can collect some first-year dues right at the first meeting. Also, inquire at the meeting about free access to a copy machine or other printing services and possible donation of a few prizes for the first few runs.

CLUB BYLAWS

Many existing clubs got a good start from only one meeting and a little enthusiasm. Unfortunately, too many of these clubs never did get around to attending to another highly recommended step-drawing up a list of bylaws. In addition to lending a greater degree of stability and professionalism to the club, bylaws are necessary in case the club should ever want to become incorporated or apply for tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. (The advantage to incorporating is discussed below. Tax-exempt status may be applied for by the RRCA on your behalf.)

One pitfall to avoid in the original version of club bylaws is this: do not insert a clause to the effect that a certain percentage of the membership must be present to change the bylaws, or that a quorum shall consist of a certain percentage of the membership. Instead, say a majority of the members present at the meeting, or specify a certain number of members, such as 7 or 13 or twice the number of elected officers plus one, or some other low number. The reason for avoiding a percentage as a quorum is that some day your club may have 600, 800, or even more members, and you will probably only get somewhere from 20 to 50 of them to attend a meeting. If the original bylaws specify that a certain percentage of the membership must attend, you will not be able to hold an official meeting or change the bylaws.

Here is a sample of club bylaws (not necessarily ideal or perfect):

BYLAWS OF THE _____ ROAD RUNNERS CLUB

I. TITLE

The name of the association shall be " _____ Road Runners Club Incorporated," hereafter referred to as "this association" or "this organization".

II. OBJECT

A. The prime object of the association shall be the promotion and encouragement of long distance running and the education of the public to its benefits.

B. In furtherance of objective "A" this association may hold championships, races on the road or track, lectures, fun runs, other educational activities, demonstrations, clinics and social events; to print and publish books, magazines and newsletter; make awards; and do all such other things as may be conducive to the encouragement of running.

C. Other objectives are to engage in community activities, to publicize by appropriate means the benefits of long distance running as a means of physical fitness.

III. AFFILIATION

This association shall be a chapter of the Road Runners Club Of America, and all measures adopted by that body must be considered by this organization.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

Individuals who wish to participate in the activities of this organization shall submit dues and an application for membership.

V. MANAGEMENT OR GOVERNMENT

A. The management of this association shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.

B. Duties of officers:

1. President - to preside over meetings, represent this association in the RRCA, to call any special meetings, and to appoint committees and chairpersons thereof.
2. Vice-President - to assume the powers of the president in his/her absence, and to take on special assignments as requested by the president.
3. Secretary - to record minutes at meetings, to keep a file of such minutes, and, when requested by the president, to accept assignments involving correspondence and the keeping of records.
4. Treasurer - to administer all financial dues and to have authority to sign or disburse necessary appropriations, as directed.

C. Eligibility:

Officers may be elected to succeed themselves.

D. Term of office

1. Term of office shall be about one year, beginning with or at the close of the first meeting held within the calendar year, and in no case beginning later than March 31.
2. Offices filled upon resignation shall also expire at the time of the first meeting of the calendar year.

E. Elections

1. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of those present at the meeting.

F. Procedural requirements

1. Parliamentary procedure will be carried on at meetings, and every effort will be made to discuss any measures coming before the group.
2. A majority vote of the members present is necessary to pass ordinary measures. All measures shall be deemed ordinary except those proposing a constitutional amendment.
3. A quorum shall consist of twice the number of elected officers plus one. No official meeting shall be held unless a quorum is present.
4. Bylaws amendment
 - a. A bylaw amendment may be accomplished by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the meeting.
 - b. Only those who have been members of this organization for 30 days prior to the proposal of such an amendment may vote upon such.
 - c. All members must be notified at least 7 days prior to voting that bylaw amendments will be discussed and voted on.
5. Meetings will be held at least once each quarter and more frequently if called by the president.

VI. FINANCES

A. Dues shall be as determined by a majority of the members present at a business meeting and shall not be changed more often than once per year.

*B. This is a non-profit organization. Dues, entry fees, and other monies received by the organization will be spent entirely for carrying out the stated purpose to the organization.

C. No part of the net earnings of the club shall inure to the benefit of its individuals.

D. This organization shall be empowered to participate in fund-raising activities.

E. This organization will submit a portion of the annual dues (described in A supra) to the RRCA as membership in that body shall require.

*VII. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of this association, the funds in the treasury, after all creditors have been paid, shall go to the Road Runners Club of America or other 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

** These two statements are requirements for membership in the Road Runners Club of America (I.R.S. rules).*

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Many Road Runner Club chapters state in their bylaws that they will only be a sponsoring organizations. These clubs devote their efforts solely to promoting running events, a big job itself, and do not field teams in competition.

By doing this they also encourage the formation of more competitive teams in their locality. The DC Road Runners, San Francisco Dolphin South End Runners, and the New York Road Runners are examples of some RRCA chapters that serve as purely sponsoring groups. At the same time we have many chapters that are both competitive clubs and sponsoring organizations. The choice is yours.

HOW AND WHY TO INCORPORATE A CLUB

Most RRC's traditionally have been content to remain as low-key as possible. The thought of becoming incorporated conjures up visions of unfathomable red tape. In fact, however, the trouble and expenses in incorporating as a non-profit corporation are minimal, and there is an important advantage: the club officers, race officials and other individuals have a certain amount of protection in the event of a lawsuit.

Incorporation is done in the state in which the club has its headquarters. State offices of corporations (usually located through a telephone directory or courthouse directory) or the Secretary of State's office (usually located at the state capital) can supply information about forming and operating a non - profit corporation. The procedure is simple, ordinarily only requiring that you fill out a one-page form, have it signed by several club members and notarized by a notary public (takes five minutes), and delivered to the proper office along with the fee and club bylaws. You will also be required to obtain a Federal I.D. tax number. In order to obtain a 501(c)(3) exemption from federal income taxes, the following paragraph must be included in any articles of incorporation:

DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the Club, the net assets of the Club shall not inure to the benefit of any private shareholder, individual or corporation but shall be distributed to one or more organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or other purposes as shall be the time qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as determined by the Executive Board.

TAX EXEMPT STATUS

The RRCA can assist you in getting 501(c)(3) tax exemption from federal income taxes. Such exemption allows for acceptance of deductible contributions to your club. Contact the RRCA National Office after you join.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

The RRCA offers its member clubs low-cost liability insurance, which covers all club activities including races, expos, meetings, etc. A one-time annual premium can resolve all your club's liability insurance sanction needs. The RRCA requires its members to have some kind of a club liability policy. The RRCA's policy is compatible with the USA T & F policy and will allow you to get USA T & F national and local sanctions, if necessary.

EQUIPMENT INSURANCE

Every club has some equipment. It is probably a club's largest capital expenditure. That equipment can be protected by an insurance policy offered through RRCA for its member clubs. One small annual premium allows you to breath easier every time equipment goes out to a race.

PLANNING THE RUNNING PROGRAM

COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

How often should you have a race? Probably no more than a couple times per month for sponsored events. However, fun runs or estimated-time events can be held weekly without putting a strain on most club's resources or manpower.

KINDS OF EVENTS

Race distances depend on the background of your runners. If your group is mostly beginners, with few marathon (26.2 mile variety) types, concentrate on shorter distances - 3K, 5K, and 8K. These races should emphasize participation rather than cut-throat competition. Try to build expertise at race organizing and execution on a low-key level. The main purpose will be to give your group the confidence needed for larger events while building a good base of participants.

Let the weather in your particular area help guide you as you put on longer or larger-scale races. Your big race of the year, a 1/2 marathon (13.1 miles) for example, should not be planned to coincide with your town's July 4 celebration. The heat will limit participation and complicate your plans. Generally, summer is the time for shorter races. Fall and winter are best for long races of 15K to the full marathon distance. 5K and 10K are very popular distances that can be safe and fun throughout most of the year with careful planning.

Other competitive races which are lots of fun are handicaps, predicted-time races, relay races and track events. You might also consider children's and women-only events. These are two areas from which you can draw many new participants for your other events once they are hooked on racing.

Try to provide a variety of race sites in your program. Find several areas that might provide good courses. The main requirements here are (a) paved roads or paths that are not heavily traveled and (b) buildings that can serve as race headquarters, such as schools, community centers and park facilities. Cross country courses, if well marked, are also fun to run. Use of tracks should be limited to smaller events and short distances under 3K. For all races toilets are necessary, but locker facilities are not, since nearly everyone can come dressed to run.

Courses should be laid out so that the start and finish as well as the race facilities (registration, parking and restrooms) are in close proximity. A loop course of 4K-5K can be repeated to create longer distances. Other course types include out-and-back courses, which are very simple to control and service, as well as keyhole (out, a loop, and back) and point-to-point, both of which require more planning and personnel.

Entry forms with a liability waiver are a necessity. Encourage early entry with a lower fee, and whenever feasible, also accept race day entries at a slightly higher fee. Mailing forms to entrants of your previous events as well as distribution at sports stores, YMCAs, fitness centers and at other races in the region will help draw people to your event.

Publish a schedule on a quarterly basis. For each race include the site, time of day, distance, and race director with phone number and address if possible. Your schedule should remain flexible and updated monthly, if necessary. There are often new events coming up and old ones dropping out. Inclusion of other races within your city or region

can help stimulate interest in all of the races. It is always wise to confirm dates and times with the race director prior to publishing the information in your own schedule.

Create a large group of workers in your club. One way is to establish committees to perform tasks. A large group of volunteers will help develop future directors and help spread the work around. If only two or three people always do all the work, you will eventually burn them out.

**** EACH RRCA CLUB RECEIVES A COPY OF THE RRCA HANDBOOK, AN INVALUABLE TOOL FOR ANY CLUB OR RACE DIRECTOR.**

FINANCES

Money with which to operate comes from 3 major sources:

- a. Annual dues for club membership.
- b. Entry fees from races.
- c. Sponsors. Try to seek out sponsors in your community. First approach those with ties to sports and health, i.e. sports stores, fitness centers, and hospitals. Then approach those with more general appeal, i.e. banks, groceries, drink companies and the well known, good corporate citizens. Your best approach will be to solicit cash and/or services from two or more of these people. That way if you lose one sponsor your race is not completely out in the cold and you do not have to start all over again in your sponsor search. Finding good sponsors, pleasing and keeping them is hard work, but a good sponsor base can help your club and races flourish.

FUN RUNS

A fun run program is an absolute must for every club. Besides offering organized events of the whole spectrum of beginners and low-key runners, these runs provide a springboard for developing runners. After participation in 1, 2 or 3 mile fun runs, many of the fun runners will graduate to longer distances and more competitive events. Fun runs are also an excellent way to involve whole families in an event, thus increasing revenues to your club. Many times, out of the fun or fitness runners, a club will find interested and enthusiastic race help, as well as potential sponsors. Many executives use running as their means of exercise and will become excellent event supporters.

County or city recreation departments and local YMCA's will often agree to assist in sponsoring and conducting fun runs as part of their commitment to the community.

Fun runs should always be open to all ages and both sexes. Participants are often beginners or dedicated non-competitive types. The psychology behind arousing and maintaining such people's interest in running is complex and challenging. Experience thus far has revealed the following two basic principles;

1. NEVER refer to these fun runs as "races." Beginners are scared to death of the idea of getting into a competitive race with other runners. Basically, they are afraid they will look ridiculous finishing near the end of the pack, or last. To cope with this very real problem, every effort must be made to encourage the slower people and to make these runs non-competitive and free of pressure. The emphasis should be on participation and completion of the event. Call the event a fun run, fitness run, novice run or something similar.
2. RECOGNITION is very important. Many of the people taking part in this type of event will not be athletically inclined. Many have never taken part in athletics at all. And a large number of participants will be people who have not won many awards for various endeavors in life. For people of this sort, a material award for finishing a run is one of their biggest thrills. It may be difficult for a successful competitive runner to put himself in their shoes, but experience has proven that token awards (certificates, patches, pins, ribbons) to beginners and fun runners make all the difference in the world as far as stimulation and motivation are concerned. To achieve this purpose, the awards must be given out on a basis that provides every person an equal opportunity of "winning." That means strict avoidance of offering a limited number of prizes, i.e. to just the top finishers. Awards or at least recognition should go to all finishers in this type of event.

Examples of various types of fun runs and fitness events.

- The St. Louis (MO) Track Club offers a series of pace runs (estimated time runs) weekly from June through October. This successful program has run for over 15 years. The distances are 2-4 miles on mostly flat, loop courses. These events, held on Wednesday evenings (6:30) attract over 100 participants weekly, many of whom participate in no other events during the year. Cost is a mere \$.50 per week which covers monthly trophies and ribbons. The emphasis is on predicting your time for the week's course, so you are only competing against yourself in these events. The runners go as fast or as slow as they wish. No watches are allowed. At registration each runner writes his/her predicted time on a card. Times are read, recorded and turned in at the finish. The runner who finishes closest to his/her pace is the "winner". Knowing yourself and your pace is the only ability that breeds success in this type of event. Scores of 0-10 seconds off the predicted times are not uncommon. Awards are given on a monthly basis with your worst score thrown out. The participant with the lowest total seconds off is the winner. Awards are also given at the end of the 5-month series to recognize the best "pacers".

Probably the most unique aspect of the pace series is that the awards go to the best "pacers" whether they are male or female, young or old, fast or slow. This equality makes it a very attractive type of fun run.

- Perhaps the simplest kind of successful fun run is the type begun in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1970's. The basic features of these events are:
 - A. Runs every week, on the same day, starting early enough that the traffic is still light.
 - B. Starting every week at the same time and place so that frequently announcements are not needed.
 - C. No registration before runs.
 - D. No entry fee. (A club that does not have a sponsor for such runs and does not have lots of money may have to charge a nominal entry fee.)
 - E. No restrictions on entries, but runners are cautioned not to run hard before they are capable of handling the distance.
 - F. Distances from a half mile to 5 miles, all on accurately measured, easy-to- follow not too hilly courses. Out-and-back courses, well marked, or 1-2 mile loops might be best.
 - G. Three runs each Sunday: a half mile and mile on the same course every week with the third event being 2,3,4, or 5 miles.

H. Times for each runner read from a running watch, with nothing recorded. Be sure to emphasize to runners that they must listen for their times as they cross the line, or else they will not get a time.

I. Printed certificate or ribbons to all finishers each week.

J. In Lieu of individual awards, you may want to publish the results in your newsletter. You can provide a sheet at each race for the runners to record their times and distance.

The simplicity and attractiveness of this system is evident - no signups, on entry fees, one official reading times from a running watch with nothing being recorded, except by the participants on the honor system. Awards are given on the basis of participation rather than place. Some clubs give no award at all at events of this sort, still get good turnouts, and get together afterwards for brunch or pizza.

- Nearly the same enviable degree of simplicity is shown by the Delco RRC in the Philadelphia area. These thriving programs have the following characteristics:
 - A. Non-competitive group runs are held 3 times every week in Springfield, PA and 2 times every week in a couple of Pennsylvania communities all year round. The meeting time and place are always the same.
 - B. Men, women and children of all ages are invited to participate. They sign up at each run on a clipboard. Newcomers also put their address down.
 - C. Everyone starts together, then assumes his/her own pace. Frequent walking is encouraged for beginners. One official stands at the finish line and calls times to each finisher. Times are then recorded by each individual on the sign-up clipboard.
 - D. The running route is all sidewalks, fairly flat, and there is no need for protection from traffic. The courses are in the 2 mile range.
 - E. The club secretary-director keeps a card file - one card for every person who has ever come out to run. Attendance (date and time of run) is recorded on cards (for awards) after each group run.
 - F. Personal records are made and reported when an individual runs faster than he/she has ever run before. No mention is ever made of finish place.
 - G. All awards are based on participation. They are given for an individual running with the group one time (ribbon) 10 times (patch), 20 times (T-shirt) and 40 times (plaque). These special awards are presented just before the group runs, since this is the only time everyone is together.
 - H. Absolutely no entry fees are charged. Money for awards comes from individual contributions which are acknowledged in a quarterly newsletter.
 - I. Number of participants, newcomers, special awards and personal records are reported weekly in the local community newspaper (circulation 5,000)

SAMPLE RACE DIRECTOR'S CHECKLIST

(Every RRCA affiliated club receives the RRCA HANDBOOK after joining. the HANDBOOK has detailed information on club and race administration).

Location of Race:

Date of Race:

Race Director's duties are listed below. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS CALL: (fill in appropriate name and phone number here).

BEFORE RACE DAY

1. Get permission for use of facilities as soon as possible and inform your club president, unless he himself has already done this.
 - A. Get permission from school, city, county, or park board.
 - B. About three days prior to race check with school custodian, or with whoever will unlock doors, to make sure facilities will be open on race day.
2. Call up Awards Chairman at least 6 weeks before race and arrange to have the awards and/or T-shirts at the race.
3. If road course is involved, telephone local police department prior to publicizing your event, and secure necessary permission and pay fees, if any.
4. Make up a large map of course for display at starting area. (If previously used course, scheduling chairman will have a copy). Map should show start, finish, turning points, aid stations, major landmarks and distances. Also make page-size maps, possibly using one side for race instructions and the other side for the map.
5. Organize officials and equipment several weeks before the race. Do not expect to draft any officials from the onlookers a few minutes before race time.

6. PLAN AHEAD

RACE DIRECTOR WILL BE ONE OFFICIAL - HE WILL NOT RUN IN THE RACE

A. Officials (fill in names here):

Starter

Timer(s)

Registration Chairman (arrives 2 hours before race)

Recorder of finish times (if not using electronic means)

Chute workers (necessary if using place cards, pull tags or recording chest numbers)

Finish line coordinator (to help direct runners and oversee finish line)

Sentries (if needed)

Aid station workers

Finish area refreshments

Results tabulation

Awards coordinator

B. Equipment: Make sure the following items are delivered to race site:

Stop watches, timer, overhead

P.A System or megaphone

Entry forms and extra race numbers

(for race day registration and pre-registration errors) Pens, pencils

Safety pins

Tables

T-shirt or similar premium (if used)

Adequate money for change and money box

Chute and finish line materials

Results sheets
Recording sheets
Water, cups and containers
course map
Race instructions/course map sheets
Awards (age group and finishers)
Refreshments
Bulletin Board or similar provisions for posting results

DAY OF RACE

1. Finish marking a road course at least two hours before the first race (can also be done on day before in most cases). All corners should have either arrows on the road or a sentry. Fun runs should have sentries rather than arrows at sharp turns, especially at a turnaround point, as participants are often inexperienced runners. Easily seen arrows can be painted on the street if allowed, or posted on signs. All mile or kilometer markings should be marked similarly.
2. Be at race site at least two hours before the first event.
3. Inspect facilities - toilets open, gates unlocked, etc.
4. Set up registration and number and shirt pick-up. Be sure to provide plenty of help so registration will not cause a delay in the start. Display the course map prominently. Have membership information available if a member of that committee will not be present.
5. Organize and assign all tasks, including finish line, split timers, aid station personnel and course sentries.
6. Touch base with police in charge (if necessary).
7. Announce 30, 15, and 10 minute warnings before each race and any other pertinent information.
8. Call runners to starting line and announce briefly: two-command start procedure, finish line location if different from start, where split times will be read, aid station location, and any special weather or traffic (course) warnings.
9. During race, read split and finish time loudly using megaphone, if a digital clock is not used.
10. Award prizes as soon as feasible after each race, advising participants approximately what the time will be.
11. The same day, call local newspapers with results.

WITHIN FIVE DAYS AFTER RACE

1. For each event prepare a list of final results for club newsletter for entrants and possibly for national publications. Make sure that results include full name, place, age sex, time, club (if appropriate) and home town.
2. See that all funds and bills are turned over to the club treasurer for final payments and accounting.
3. Write thank-you notes on behalf of the club to whoever provided the facilities, services and sponsorship.

RACE DIRECTORS ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR RUNNING PROGRAM! THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

AFFILIATIONS WITH NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (RRCA, USA Track & Field) RACE SANCTIONS/GUIDELINES

There are two national organizations specifically interested in amateur distance running. They are the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) and (USA Track & Field), formerly (TAC). Your club is under no obligation to join

any of these. However, many clubs do affiliate with one or both of them, for various reasons. Joining one organization does not prohibit you from joining the other. The RRCA recommends that you join both.

USA Track & Field, established in 1978, is an organization of individual athletes who register with their local (USA T&F) association. Clubs pay a fee ranging from about \$25 to \$50 per year to join USA Track & Field. Individual runners pay a fee up to \$20 per year to join. An athlete registers separately, even though his club may also be affiliating. The RRCA is an active member of USA Track & Field, along with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and other organizations which conduct national programs in athletics.

The purpose of USA Track & Field is to act as the national governing body for the sport of athletics in the United States, and to act as the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) member in the United States. Its primary roles are to develop interest and participation in the sport of athletics throughout the United States, keep amateur athletes active in the sport of athletics informed of policy matters, sanction amateur competition in athletics, provide for the participation by amateur athletes in amateur competition in the sport of athletics, and coordinate and provide technical information on physical training, equipment design, coaching and performance analysis in the sport of athletics.

In addition, USA T&F is instrumental in coordinating teams for the Olympics and our other international competitions.

The RRCA was established in 1958. The founders were distance runners who, because there were practically no distance races being staged at the time, decided to organize and put on their own races. The RRCA provides national communications, education, many varied programs and other services to their member clubs. The RRCA has multiplied the number of races in this country manyfold and has thereby provided a big stimulus toward amateur distance running. Today the RRCA is primarily an organization of runners of all abilities. To join the RRCA, clubs pay \$2.25 per member per year with a minimum of \$75.

Individuals who do not belong to a chapter club can join RRCA as members-at-large for \$20.00 per year, if there is no RRCA chapter club in their area.

Both the RRCA and USA T&F sanction long distance running events. The RRCA sanction is meant to be a seal of approval, and is given as a right to member clubs to use in conjunction with RRCA races. The only fees involved are the payment of the club's annual membership dues. The club can then sanction any or all of its events meeting the RRCA Sanction Guidelines.

On the other hand, USA T&F "offers" sanction on a per event fee basis. USA T&F sanctions are available to anyone, but the fees may differ to USA T&F clubs and non-USA T&F clubs. International and "prize money" events must carry a USA T&F sanction. Contact your local USA T&F association for details. For further information regarding your local association, call The USA T&F National Headquarters at (317) 261-0500.

Again, excluding the two above-mentioned events, clubs may choose to have one, both or neither of the two types of sanctions. As you can see, RRCA and USA T&F have different requirements and criteria for sanctions. You should check with both organizations for their sanctioning procedures if you wish to have their sanction.

RRCA RACE GUIDELINES

Non-championship course accuracy:

Courses must be measured accurately. Preferably, the official RRCA certification process should be completed (in order for any records set on the course to be accepted, the process must be completed). The method of measurement should be made clear on an entry blank or schedule.

Entry fees:

Entry fees shall be reasonable for what the runners will receive.

Heat, weather, etc.:

Races held during the warm part of the year should be kept short and scheduled for the coolest part of the day.

Medical assistance:

Race directors should provide adequate medical assistance for the size of the event. Small local races are urged to have a local hospital emergency room informed of the event and to take other appropriate measures. Larger events are encouraged to have on-site medical personnel.

Facilities:

There must be an adequate number of toilets for both men and women. An indoor place for changing and showering is desirable, but not mandatory.

Pre-race publicity:

Announcements about your race should accurately outline what runners can expect—entry ceilings, awards, divisions, cutoff in recording times/finishers, fees, splits, aid stations, etc.

Course marking:

Whenever possible, courses should be marked with directional arrows along the route with sentries at key points. The sentries should be well informed of their responsibilities.

Traffic control:

The safety of the competitors from traffic is a primary concern. Whenever possible an attempt should be made to close roads for major races. Otherwise sentries should be informed of the need for traffic control.

Aid stations:

Particularly during warm weather. Aid stations should be located every 2-3 miles in races over 5 miles in length. Water should be provided with an electrolyte replacement drink as an option. Wet sponges are recommended.

Compiling results:

It is recommended that each entrant receive his/her time and finish place in races (fun runs excluded), in a reasonable time after the event. If, due to the size of the field, this is not possible, a large digital clock should be placed at the finish to enable finishers to record their times themselves. Furthermore, pre-race publicity should state how many times will be recorded.

Divisions:

The inclusion of Men's, Women's and Masters (over 40) is recommended (except in races specifically advertised as being held for one of the groups, i.e., an all-woman's race). Division into 10 or 5 year age groups should be left up to the discretion of the race director, depending on the number of competitors registered for each division or expected to compete in each division.

Splits:

It is recommended that intermediate splits be given to runners along the course. Splits at one mile and halfway are recommended.

Awards:

Awards should be somewhat proportional to the entry fee and must be distributed among the age and sex categories advertised.

Insurance:

All RRCA championship events must carry race liability insurance.

Eligibility:

RRCA sanctioned races must be open to all RRCA members.

Miscellaneous suggestions:

- a. Start on time;
- b. Qualified race director for big races;
- c. Full financial disclosure (books open for inspection)
- d. Reliable finish line systems.

Detailed information on all these points can be found in the RRCA Handbook.

WE HOPE YOU HAVE FOUND THIS BOOKLET HELPFUL AND THAT ONCE YOUR CLUB IS ORGANIZED YOU WILL WANT TO JOIN THE ROAD RUNNERS CLUB OF AMERICA.

PROCEDURE FOR JOINING THE ROAD RUNNERS CLUB OF AMERICA

Visit our "Join Us" Page to get information on membership or call our National Office at 703-525-3890 or email at: membership@rrca.org. Please let us know of any questions you may have.