

Chapter Two

Learning About Corporate Running Activities in Your Area

All right, so now you've decided that it's a good idea to have a Corporate Running team, now what? You need to find out what organized corporate running activities exist in your area and how runners from your company can participate. Getting employees involved in a few exciting running events can give you all the momentum you need to get started. Some benefits you experience right away include:

- Competing in local competitions gives the team a common goal.
- Common goal builds team comradeship.
- Members build friendships that sustain their running.
- The company name gains exposure.
- Track performances give individuals personal goals.

Participation in local events can build interest in the national championships. The following are some of the methods that I, and other team captains, have used to find Corporate Running events or to request that an event add a Corporate Division. First is a checklist of where to look and what YOU can do. I have also listed a number of organizations that sponsor corporate running events.

Corporate Events

Battle Of The Corporate Stars

Dan Snyder (202) 861-0066

Washington, DC

This organization has anywhere from 10–16 Regional events with an entry fee between \$1,000–\$3,000 (based on area). The team winner of each region gets an all expenses paid trip to the Nationals for all members on the team. There are 20–28 folks needed for each team. Regionals usually start around the March/April time frame. The Nationals, which are held in the October/November time frame at a luxury resort, get ESPN coverage (airs on Christmas Day). Events contested are a 5K road race, volleyball, legitimate swim events, and a slew of “goof ball” events (it's modeled after Battle Of The Network Stars), so you may end up playing “Pass the Grapefruit” for time. Although some of the

Prepared by Hank Lawson, who has had many running identities, including:

- former team captain of Hewlett-Packard
- owner of his own race-timing business
- race organizer for many San Francisco Bay Area track and field events.

events are strange, everyone takes them VERY seriously (after all, a free trip is on the line). A portion of your entry fee goes to a local charity (based on who helps put on each area's Regionals). This is a well-established affair.

USCAA National and Regional Track and Field Championships

Between April and July, the local regions hold Regional Championships with a National Championship happening at the end of July. Nationals have been held in California, Iowa, Colorado, Massachusetts, and Washington. These events consist of Track relay events with distances between 200 meters and 2 miles. There are both 5K and 10K road races for men and women, and field events such as the High Jump, Long Jump, Discus, and Shot Put. All events are team events, and age and gender requirements mean that teams need men and women of all ages.

Corporate Challenge: The Ultimate Corporate Game

330 B Distillery Commons

Louisville, KY 40206-1999

(502) 581-1881

Same idea as “Battle” except not as many Regions. Corporate Challenge usually holds its Nationals in Hawaii. Few companies compete in both (AT&T and Hewlett-Packard are the only teams I know of), so there is not one dominant force. In fact, small companies seem to do really well in this event.

World Corporate Games

PO Box 1990, 335 Merchant St.

Honolulu, HI, 96813

(808) 536-1990

World Corporate Games hosts almost all of the events that you would find at the Olympics, but you must either work for a company or represent one (this means spouses can compete for a company). The event has been held in Hawaii, Canada, and San Francisco. There are no Regionals, and the event is held in the October/November time frame.

Tips For Finding Corporate Running Events

- Look for running event flyers that have a Corporations logo on it. Chances are good that there may be a Corporate division associated with the event; if not, then chances are better that they will listen to your inputs for them to ADD a Corporate division for the event next year.
- If you have a United States Corporate Athletic Association (USCAA) regional affiliation, get the contact person's name and phone number (see attached list for names and numbers). That person will know what's going on in the local area.
- Contact the March of Dimes, American Heart Association, Big Brothers/Sisters, and others; more and more they are having events with Corporate divisions.
- Major marathons or large-scale road races are a good bet for a Corporate division.
- The Athletic Conference (TAC) is also getting more and more involved with having Corporate divisions in its races. Call your local TAC representative and see if TAC will add a Corporate division to its events.
- Start your OWN annual event with a Corporate division. Have a company Fun Run where you "invite" other companies to compete as well, or a mid-year, low-key Corporate track meet. Follow the same format as the USCAA National championships, but drop some of the events so that it's easier to manage.

Manufacturers Hanover (Manny Hanny) Manufacturers Hanover, New York, NY

Regional 3.5 mile road races are held in 10–16 different cities throughout the United States and Great Britain. There are three categories: Men (5 men), Women (3 women), and Coed (2 men and 2 women). The winners of each category are flown to the National Championships, usually held the week before Thanksgiving in New York. Scoring is based on Team Time.

Establishing Corporate Events

— or —

Taking the Bull By the Horns

We found that although our local area (the San Francisco Bay area) had a good amount of Corporate events for us to compete in, we wanted something that we could count on year after year and not be dependent on the whims of others. So with this in mind we created the BACAA Grand Prix Road Race Series. It consists of approximately eight events each year that are mostly running related, but we have included Triathlons and Relay races in the past. We "piggyback" on existing events by requiring them to add a Corporate Team Division; in return, we promote their event within the companies that are part of BACAA. Corporate teams

garner points from each event based on number of team participants and how well their teams perform. These points are tallied, and a perpetual trophy is awarded to the top large and small company Division I and II teams at the end of the year. The main trick is convincing the Meet Directors that it would be beneficial to their events to have and promote a Corporate division. We let them know that it would be easier to ask companies for sponsorship if they have something that is geared towards Corporations. The next trick is getting the Corporate runners out there to participate; that will be covered in the next chapter.