

Yet Another USSA Race Administrator Manual

Summary:

Scheduling Races (June)

Timing equipment and Bib needs (June)

Get Race Info Sheets to NYSSRA (July/August)

Attend Fall Clinics (October/November)

Develop a Filing System early (November)

Get Scheduling Agreements to Eastern USSA (November)

Homologation and Race Codes? (November)

Who puts together your Race Crew and other Volunteers? (November)

Set up and learn to use your Timing Computer, Software (November)

Find the best Photocopier/Printer you can (December)

Order all the office supplies you will need and then some (One month before)

Check on the Bib situation (One month before)

How do you order tickets for racers, coaches, volunteers? (One month before)

Download Forms and Rules (One month before)

TD Reports, Referee Reports, Head-Tax Forms, Accident Report Forms, Gatekeeper Cards, etc. (One month before)

Check Vertical Drop, Double Check Homologation. (One month before)

Contact the TD for your race. (One month before)

Download the latest version of the Software. (One week before)

Download the latest Points List (as soon as the list for your race is published)

Get enough Petty Cash (One week before)

Enter all the Racers (Start three weeks before, ongoing until deadline)

Order Tickets (As soon as you can pin down a roughly accurate number)

Pick up Tickets (As soon as they are printed)

Do the Draw (right after dinner the night before)

Check that you have given complimentary entry to NYSSRA, Eastern, USST and top 5.

Post your Start List to NYSSRA.org (as soon as it's finalized)

Print ticket sign-up sheets for Coaches and Volunteers. (night before)

Photocopy Volunteer Waivers (night before)

Photocopy Start-orders, Schedules and Alphabetical Lists for Registration (night before)

Go to Bed Early (night before)

Get to the Mountain Early

Have all of your setup work done at least five minutes before the first guest arrives

Smile, welcome people, be an excellent concierge.

Use slack minutes in a race to get a jump on filling out forms

Print and Copy Second Run Start Order

TREAT THE TD AS NICELY AS POSSIBLE, THEY'RE A VOLUNTEER

Refer all angry coaches to a member of the jury

E-mail results to USSA and post them on NYSSRA.org.

Put away all of your equipment, especially bibs

Get the whole results package published and in envelopes before you collapse

Say Thank You more than anything. Catch flies with honey

Be trusting, polite and accommodating to everybody.

Aggressively pursue anybody who violates that trust.

Introduction: People are intelligent. You are intelligent. This manual is less about answering questions than it is about raising questions. Every organization handles things a little differently. There is lots of specific information out there on various things that I devote a single paragraph to. However, if you are new, you probably don't have any idea what questions you need to ask. This document is an attempt to point you in the right direction, allow you to glimpse most (but certainly not all) of the big picture, and to share with you a little bit of personal experience.

Ask if you have questions. There are a lot of helpful people in ski racing. Start with Connie Webster, the Executive Director of NYSSRA. If she doesn't have the specific answer, she'll point you in the right direction.

Summer:

Scheduling Races: If you are a new hire, this has already been done for you. This is usually done by program directors. However, you may be brought into this process in the future. The initial discussion usually happens during the summer. Be aware that during the competition season, there may be lots of schedule changes due to the weather.

Timing Equipment and Bib Needs: You obviously need a full complement of timing equipment. If you are uncertain as to whether you have all the pieces and parts, you need to start working on this ASAP. As a general rule, you should always be uncertain, even if you've been doing this for decades. The same is true for race bibs. If you need to order new or replacement bibs, there can be a two month lag between putting in the order and you getting the bibs.

If things are running smoothly, you end the previous year's season with an idea of what you need, and it becomes included in the budgeting process over the summer and you order it towards the end of the summer. If you're coming in new, you should be working on this immediately.

See Appendix A for a list of what you'll need.

Get Race Info Sheets to NYSSRA: A Race Info Sheet is the midlevel manager in the race scheduling process. Your organization already has a verbal agreement with NYSSRA, and in the next step (Scheduling Agreements) you will sign a legal contract with USSA. The Race Info Sheet is just a written document between the two that gets everybody on the same page.

These are sent to NYSSRA.

Autumn:

Attend Fall Clinics: The NYSSRA Race Administrator Clinic is typically held towards the end of October. This is an important meeting in which a large number of Race Administrators and Race Timers can get together and discuss issues from the previous season, discuss procedural changes that we need to adapt to, and to share tips and tricks between colleagues.

If your organization is running FIS races, you will also be expected to attend a FIS RA clinic which typically occurs in New Hampshire towards the beginning of November. There are typically several other clinics that a sufficiently motivated RA could attend. If you are on the USSA Eastern Region and the NYSSRA email distribution lists, you should be receiving notices of these meetings.

Filing System: The preseason is a good time to get a filing system in order. I start by creating a hanging file for each of my races. As paperwork filters in during the year I have a place to put it where it won't get lost.

My computer also has a specific RA folder, within that is a folder for each year. In the current (2012) folder, I have folders for each race on my schedule as well as folders for general information such as blank USSA forms and my homologation certificates.

I also have a portable file-box that I can carry around with me. This contains all of the paperwork for the race that I am currently working on. This travels with me everywhere I go on race day.

Scheduling Agreements: A Scheduling Agreement is a legal contract between three organizations: your ski club, the owners of the mountain where the event is to be held, and USSA. It basically says that you will follow all of the rules and procedures, and that USSA will provide insurance for the event.

Schedule agreements are done online; you will receive a user name and password from Eastern USSA and instruction on how to fill out with a link to the web site (<https://login.ussa.org/EventScheduling/home.htm>). Once completed you must print off a copy of each race schedule agreement and have your local organizer sign as well as the Ski Area or Landowner and then mailed to the Eastern USSA office for processing. Fees

for races can either be paid online or with a check sent in with signed schedule agreements.

If you add a race to your schedule during the season, you must have completed the proper Scheduling Agreement before you run the race. This means that there must be RACE CODES for your event on USSA.org. If there are no race codes for your event, you don't have legal coverage, and you must not run the event.

Homologation: When you are working on the Race Info Sheets and the Scheduling Agreements, you will encounter the term Homologation.

FIS and USSA have a process of evaluating race hills to make sure that the meet technical specifications for length, width, vertical drop and safety. All FIS and USSA race trails must be homologated to host races.

Somebody at your mountain should have folder that contains Homologation Reports as well as Homologation Certificates. You should have copies of the certificates, and you should know how to access the reports. You should especially have the Homologation Numbers. This is basically the registration number for your race trail. The last two digits on a FIS Homologation Number are the date the certificate was issued. For Super-G and Downhill, this certificate is valid for five years after that date. For GS and Slalom, the certificate is valid for ten years.

Race Codes: You cannot hold a USSA sponsored event without a valid race code from USSA. Similarly, you cannot hold a FIS event without a FIS race code.

If you have gone through the scheduling process properly, these race codes should automatically appear on USSA.org under "Event Lookup."

You must check to see that you have the proper race codes at least a month before you are scheduled to run the race.

If there is a problem with the race codes, or if you are adding a race at the last minute, you must hustle through the scheduling process as quick as you can. You must not run a race without a race code. The key issue is insurance. If the proper procedure has not been followed, you do not have insurance for this event.

Race Crew: Each mountain staffs its races differently. You need to know how much of this you are in charge of. Typically higher level coaches will be assigned to be Chief of Race and Chief of Course. You need to know who these people will be and develop a rapport with them. You also need to know who is in charge of drumming up Gatekeepers and Course Workers, and especially a Head Gatekeeper. Ask around at your program and find out how it's been done in the past.

On positions that will be filled by volunteers, get them signed up as early as possible. Volunteers who are not members of USSA will need to sign a waiver which can be found in the Master Packet of Forms.

Also learn as quickly as possible how you arrange to get tickets to athletes and coaches on the day of the race.

Early Winter:

Computer(s): You should have at least two working computers that you can use to do your RA and Timing work. These do not have to be top of the line computers. (See Appendix A) But at least one of them should be able to reliably connect to the internet.

Software: You will need to buy and install the latest version of Split Second Software. It is available from SplitSecond.com. The software can be downloaded from the internet, and a license for the software can also be purchased on-line. However, Split Second must send you a small device referred to as a "Software Key" this may connect to a USB port, or a Parallel Printer Port. It contains code that interacts with the software to determine whether you have paid for the software or not.

Your organization most likely has at least one (hopefully two) software keys. If not, these need to be ordered from Split Second and sent through the mail.

You may have two keys already. However, you need to vigilantly download the latest version of the software, and you need to purchase a new license to unlock the software each year. This is actually a big benefit to us. Split Second releases new versions frequently that improve the software, having the latest version will mean that

you have the version that is the easiest to use, and works the best.

You have a RA login on the RA section of the NYSSRA web site where you can put in information into your race program. This is a place where almost everybody will find out information about your events. It is critical that you understand how to use the resource.

To start off with, you need to know your club's username and password. If it is lost, please contact NYSSRA to get a new one.

Mock Racing: I would highly recommend that you run a full mock race all of the way through before you attempt to run a real race. I would suggest having your club run an internal "fun race" on one of the early days of training. It may kill a day of training as you pull your hair out trying to figure out how to make things work, but it will give you an idea of what you are up against. It's better to ruin a day of training than to ruin an actual race because you were not sufficiently prepared.

Printer(s) and Photocopier(s): Photocopiers have become a little less important as more things happen electronically. However, they are still really important, and you should have the equipment to handle the following critical jobs:

1) Print/copy approximately 150 copies (sorted and stapled) of the First Run Start List and Race Schedule.

2) Print/copy approximately 40 copies of the Second Run Start List in fifteen minutes or less.

3) Print critical forms during the race that need to be signed by race officials.

4) Copy approximately 4 copies of the signed results packet at the end of the race.

Race Supplies: For each race, you will need to order: (approximately) 24 pencils
12 Black ball-point pens
6 permanent markers
Plenty of sturdy tape
2 Scoreboard sheets (100 racers per score sheet)
Regular Stapler, staples. Staple Gun, heavy duty staples. Various Toner and/or Ink for Printers/Copiers
Lots of white paper. (1000 - 1500 sheets per race)
Misc. Office supplies

You should expect a substantial portion of your race-supplies to find their way into people's pockets and to walk home at the end of the day.

Staple Guns, for some reason, have an unusual proclivity for going stray if you aren't constantly checking on their location.

I know that it takes about a week to get office supplies delivered. So, approximately two weeks before my first race I will figure out what supplies I have lying around from last year.

A good rule of thumb is to assume that everything that you put out for a race is going to walk. Order what you would need for the entire season if this actually happened. Hopefully at the end of the season you have almost everything you need for the next year. You can then order just enough to bring your stash back to full. Remember that people (including yourself) will remember that you have a stash of things like markers and pens that they may need during the summer. Don't expect everything to be as you put it away in April.

Bibs: As we get closer to race season, you should take another look at bibs. Are they complete, clean, sorted, and folded? Do you have an adequate way of hauling them around on a rainy day? (Cardboard boxes can become a nightmare)

Your Radio: The race administrator is usually low on the list when it comes to handing out radios. You need to find the person who is in charge of radios and advocate getting one that is permanently assigned to be yours. At a race you are more or less in charge of public relations and it is critical that you can help people get in touch with the Chief of Race, TD, Referee, etc. You also need to know about changes in schedule, since you're probably going to be in charge of announcing them. Advocate. Get a radio. Make sure it's fully charged the night before the race.

Ordering Tickets: Early winter, well before your first race, is a good time to learn who you are going to be dealing with in the ticket office.

How do you order tickets for the races?

Who do you order them from?

When will they be ready?

How are you going to account for receipts of pickups and returns?
How do you do ticket returns?
How much do you pay for racer tickets?
What about tickets for volunteers? Coaches? Officials? Industry Reps?

It is really worth your while to find a rainy day in early December to go and sit in the office of the person in charge of giving you tickets. Be agreeable and friendly; listen to what they have to say. Do your best to follow all of their procedures correctly.

Good fences make for good neighbors. If you have written policies, and everybody follows those policies, it will make for a happier situation than if you start off with implicit trust and good will that sours when somebody takes a close look at the numbers and they don't work out.

Forms, forms and more forms: At the start of every season, USSA will post somewhere on USSA.org a big .zip file called the Master Packet of Forms. At some point in time after that, the same file will be posted somewhere on NYSSRA.org.

In any given year a significant number of these forms will be changed. Therefore, you need to download the forms sometime between when they are posted and when you need to use them.

You should have these forms on every computer that has a remote chance of being used for racing.

The internet has really helped us out when it comes to forms. If you have a way to reliably print out forms, you no longer need to keep blank forms around. Many of these forms are obscure, probably not necessary, but may be critical at some point. If you have them on your computer, you can get any form you need instantly. Every form that you will need will be in the Master Packet of Forms.

Important Forms:

Race Worker Waivers: If your volunteers are not members of USSA, you need to have them fill one of these out. **Referee Reports:** you need a lot of these, one for each sex, each run. A packet of these will still be sent to you by USSA. They will be a two part (white and yellow) form. This is convenient but not absolutely necessary. If you don't have the two-copy form, you can print one out from the Master Packet. Post a photocopy of this form and keep the original in your race file.

Gatekeeper cards. Eastern sends a bunch, but sometimes not enough. Buy some card-stock and photocopy up enough to be sure. **TD Reports:** you need one of these for each sex. **Timing Technical Report Form:** you need one for each sex, each run. **USSA Head-Tax:** one per race or series.

There is space on this form to also declare what Eastern and NYSSRA head-tax you owe.

Minutes of Jury Decisions: You should have, before the race starts, signed Minutes that says that the Technical Delegate, Chief of Race and Referee all agree that the race is ready to be run. It should say something similar to, "The jury has inspected and approved of the course and the competitor on-hill security measures."

Accident Report Forms: Hopefully you won't need these. But realistically you will. At minimum, any time ski patrol responds, you need one of these forms. **TD Expense Report:** Only some TD's use these.

(A note here: TD's are volunteers! Many don't even ask for gas money. If you have anything nice to give them (hat, sweatshirt, lunch, etc.) try to give them some small token of your appreciation. Always remember that the TD is doing an awful lot of work and getting mostly a big hassle in return. Try to be extra polite to the TD.)

Forms typically generated by the timing software:

Transmittal Sheet: Basic who, what, where race information for USSA. **Official Results Official Start List** Please see note in Forms part 2! **Penalty Calculation:**

If anybody asks you about any other form, ask them to help you track it down in the Master Packet of Forms. If it's not there, it's not a form. If it is there, the person who asked for that form can help you fill it out.

The Master Packet of Forms will also contain a digest of information on publishing results packets and transmitting results to USSA and FIS. Keep this information in the front of your filing cabinet for constant reference.

Preparing for a Race:

Check Vertical Drop: This is actually not something that you have to do yourself, but somebody in your organization needs to. USSA has minimum and maximum standards for each possible race (discipline, age, gender) that you can run. The TD will ask for verification that your actual race course is within these standards. Somebody in your organization should know how to do this. You are going to need them to give you the actual information for the actual race course on the actual day of the race.

Contact the TD: Check the NYSSRA website - Schedules page - specific race - more info to find out who the assigned TD is and what their contact information. Call them or email them directly to make sure that they are all set to come and work. Also make sure they know how to get to where you will be, and ask them if they have any issues or concerns that they need addressed before the race.

Download the latest version of the software: There are frequent, and sometimes critically important, updates during the year. It should be part of your week-before-event routine to check and see if there is a more recent version than what you have. Once you have the license and the software key, all you need to do is download and install the new version.

Downloading the Points List: Before you enter any racers, you should take a moment to check which Points List is going to be valid for that race and make sure you have downloaded it into your computer. It's easier and easier to get the actual lists, but you should also find the schedule that lists the dates for the entire season when each list is valid. If a list becomes valid on the day of your race, you are going to need that list. It may only be published to the internet a couple of days before that.

The actual points list can be automatically downloaded within Split Second or it can be manually downloaded from USSA.org.

There are ways to enter racers first and update their points later. If a new list is coming out the day before a race, you won't want to hold up entries until you get a new list. But, whenever possible, load the points list first and then enter the racers.

The points list determines the running order for your race, and is based on the athlete's current rankings. It is critical that you get this part of things done correctly.

Petty Cash: Banks aren't open on Sunday morning at 6 am! Make sure that the banks don't close on Friday before you have gotten out some petty cash to use as change. You should be o.k. with \$75 in ones, \$75 in fives, and \$50 in tens. Look at your race fee and try to anticipate. I look at some race fees and think "oh no! I'm going to be giving out a lot of change." At registration keep announcing that you would like correct change. A lot of people may have it if you ask, and that pads your bank for those who don't.

Race Workers: A few days before the race you should make sure that you have contacted any race-workers that you are in charge of. If they are parent volunteers they will most likely need and appreciate a reminder. Have you ensured that the ticket people know what to expect? Where they're supposed to be? When? How many tickets?

Have you talked with the TD? Do you know who he/she is supposed to be?

Entering Racers: Entries will probably dribble in by mail, quite early in the season. Then you'll get some emails, and then during crunch time you should get a flood of emails and some faxes. Your club may also do some form of online registration.

You can drive yourself nuts if you try to update your registration list each time you receive an email. In general you are o.k. if you wait until three weeks before an event to post your first registration list. After that you

should post two weeks in advance, one week in advance and then just about every night during the last week before the race.

Entering racers is almost two easy in Split Second. All the information for a racer, except their club-affiliation should be in the points list.

Club Affiliation is really important to people. You should enter that manually. The best way to do this is to enter all of the kids from one club, then highlight those kids and do a "block edit." You can then assign them all to that club. If you make mistakes, you will hear about it from irate customers.

You should include on the registration sheet whether the racer is paid or unpaid. Anyone who is helping with registration should be able to immediately see your system and know how much to charge people.

What do you do with Jess Smith? There are five Jess Smith's on the points list! Which one is your Jess Smith? All Eastern racers have USSA numbers that start with E. unless your Jess Smith is from a major academy, chance are her number starts with E. (Chances are pretty good even if she goes to a major academy.) From there, look at the date of birth. If she is supposed to be a JI or JII, this tells you a range to expect for her date of birth. Every entry is supposed to include their USSA number and year of birth, but sometimes they don't.

J5's and J6's are notorious for sending in incomplete information which can often include miss-assigned genders. Is Morgan a boy's name or a girl's name? Go to the Membership Lookup at USSA.org and just type first name = Morgan. It looks like an even split. You may find that our mythical Morgan is actually a boy who mistakenly appears on the girl's side of the points list. Manually enter them onto the boy's side of things and send an email to USSA telling them what the mistake was, and how you have corrected it.

I said that this has become too easy. You can enter a racer VERY quickly these days. Slow down just a bit to make sure you have it right. USSA.org lists two Nicholas Arnolds. There are over 10,000 athletes in the points list. There are going to be repeats on names.

USSA Member Lookup: Found online at USSA.org. This is a very valuable tool. This is tied directly into the USSA membership database. If they do not appear with their USSA number in Blue, they cannot participate in the race. The same is true for all coaches and other officials.

Post Registration on Web Site: After you have entered a batch of racers, post the updated Registration list on NYSSRA.org. People have just come to expect this. Timely posting of registrations lists will drastically cut down on phone calls from nervous parents. The phone calls and emails that you do get will tend to pick up mistakes that you made. This allows you to correct them before the race.

Order Tickets: In general, the ticket office at your mountain would like to know exact numbers for all of your races in December. That, obviously, is not possible. Getting back to my earlier comments on tickets, you need to sit down and talk with the person in charge and come up with a compromise. The earlier you tell them how many tickets you'll need, the less accurate that number is going to be.

Usually it is better for you to order more tickets than you are going to need and then return the ones that you didn't use.

Pick up Tickets: As soon as they are printed and you can pick them up, you should do so.

Do the draw: You need to do a random sort on the top 15 and all 990's. Split Second will automatically do all of this for you in one step. Only do it once, not five times until your racers "randomly" come out on top.

Complimentary Entries: You need to find the list of NYSSRA Team athletes for '12 on www.nyssra.org. - Go to News & Features - bullet #1. These athletes should not be charged an entry fee. The procedure is for you to send a list of current NYSSRA Alpine Team members who competed at your race and NYSSRA will reimburse you. Send this list to conniew@nyssra.org after the race.

Alpine Ski Racing is not a sport of prima donas. In general, the kids who have made these various teams have gotten there with hard work and commitment. In general, they represent what we would like to see in all of our athletes.

Any Eastern Team or USST athlete who is coming to your USSA race is doing so in order to make your race better and to give back to the lower levels of the sport. They cannot improve their ranking by winning your

race.

As you are going through assigning complimentary entry, it is also a good idea to review that you have a good record of who is paid, and who is not paid for this race.

Post Start List on Web Site: As soon as you have a Start List, and before you've photocopied it up, post in to NYSSRA.org. Believe me, the night before a race there will be lots of people clicking "Refresh" to see if you post the Start List. Coaches want to know who to put in the van in the morning. Athletes and parents want reassurance that the entry has gone through. People want to see who the best kids in the race are going to be.

Schedule: Make a quick race-schedule for the race.

When and where do things happen?

When and where is the team captain's meeting? Here is what people need to know: Registration open and closed? Lifts open for visiting coaches and athletes? Which lifts? First Run Inspection? First Run Time? Second Run Inspection? Second Run Time? Awards? Where are DSQ's posted?

This schedule will probably change, but it gives people a starting point. I tend to photocopy the Schedule as the first page of the starting list.

Print Ticket Sign-up sheets for Coaches and Volunteers: This is part of your accounting with the mountain. You need to have an exact record of exactly whom you gave every ticket to. Your registration list should cover what athletes received tickets. These sheets should cover everybody else who gets a ticket.

Every coach that receives a complimentary ticket must be a member of USSA and NYSSRA and be on the NYSSRA coaches list to receive a lift ticket. You can download a list of coaches from the RA login section on the NYSSRA site. This is for every race, especially J5/6 races! The only exception is foreign coaches who are visiting for FIS races. (Foreign coaches who normally work in the U.S. must be members of USSA.)

Photocopy Volunteer Race Worker Waivers: Always plan to have more of these on hand than you will need.

Photocopying: The night before, photocopy up start-lists and registration lists. Having plenty of start-lists will make your morning go better. Plan that a race of 160 kids will have about 30 coaches, 20 gatekeepers, 2 hand-timers, starter, asst. starter, timer, asst. timer, 30 parents, jury members. It comes out to be about 100 start-orders.

DO NOT leave all of your start-orders out at registration. They will disappear with the first hundred racers and then you'll have none and everybody will be mad at you. Have a stack of start orders close by, but not publicly grab-able. Then if a parent asks for one, you have one.

To keep the racer happy, plan to post 2 to 4 start-orders around the registration area. Tape them up in a way that people know they are not to be removed. Racers only want to look at the start-order for 30 seconds anyway.

Photocopy up a few lists of racers in name order. When a racer can't find them self on a start-order they can find their name on the alphabetical list. This will save you a lot of questions.

Make sure you have copies of everything for yourself. If there is a dispute it's always handy to have a clean copy of the document on your person.

Go to bed early! The better rested you are, and the earlier you wake up in the morning, the better your day will go.

Day of Race:

Get to the mountain early! I plan on arriving at 6am for a 7am registration. If everything is running smoothly, I'm all set up by 6:45 and using the time to vacuum a little bit, or just twiddle my thumbs. When I have time to twiddle my thumbs before the start of registration, I usually find that I'm twiddling my thumbs all day. That gives me time to be pleasant, chatty, and helpful. You are probably the first person that people will see at the race. They will take their mood from you. If you are calm and relaxed, they will be calm and relaxed.

My sense is that for every fifteen minutes I'm ahead of the game at 7:00am, I'll be an hour ahead of the

game at the end of the race. For every fifteen minutes I'm behind at the start, I'll be an hour behind at the end.

Similarly, if registration is open and running smoothly when the first five racers arrive, you'll never have much of a registration line all morning. If you open registration when there is a line of twenty people, that line will grow and grow and grow.

Tape down start-orders and alphabetical lists for the public to see when they arrive.

Do you need to set up timing equipment? Announcing? All this should be done before any guests arrive.

Do you have radios to give out to the jury?

Do you have a photocopier for running off second run start-orders? You don't need a hundred of these. Make as many as you can, but probably no more than 50.

I use Alphabetical Lists at registration with the start numbers marked off so that your registration people do not confuse them with bib numbers. Lots of athletes get their number wrong. Very few get their name wrong. Ask them their name, find it on your Alphabetical List and then give them their number.

Set up the cash box, tickets, bibs, etc. in a way that allows registration to flow smoothly.

Keep an eye on the time. You should be aware of how much time people are going to need to get from place to place. How long does it take to ride the lift to the start? People always underestimate this.

Hopefully at registration you have reliable help. Remember, 95% of the racers entered correctly. They deserve a smooth registration process. If a racer has a problem, tell them that they will have to wait a minute until you get some time.

Be and excellent concierge. Hopefully you have people helping you in the morning, and you can have more of a roll of a floater. From Wikipedia: "In upscale establishments, a concierge is often expected to "achieve the impossible", dealing with any request a guest may have, relying on an extensive list of personal contacts with various local merchants and service providers." You are the host, and most everybody else are guests. Customer service is important.

A Note on Bib Collateral: Historically, clubs have demanded some collateral from racers before giving them a bib. Presumably this was to ensure that you get your bibs back. In my experience, 50% of missing bibs are due to kids leaving the hill on a ski-patrol sled (be tactful in these situations) and 45% of bibs are missing because the kid just forgot they were wearing it under their jacket. They find it when they take their jacket off at home. It seems odd to me that some people make a big deal over bib-collateral when 95% of "stolen" bibs are completely accidental. In Europe there is no such thing as collateral for a bib.

In my opinion it is much more effective to heap praise and positive attention on the 99% of racers who are doing everything right, and to concentrate my fury on the 1% that are trying to defraud me.

I simply trust that bibs will come back, and almost all of them do without my doing anything. I have to be delicate in getting bibs back from injured athletes. I need to be professional in getting bibs back from kids who simply forgot to turn them in (and are very sorry). And I have to be extremely aggressive in pursuing anybody who is attempting to steal from the program.

Data Management: The USSA Alpine Officials manual will tell you how to do all of the calculations that you need to do. I cannot offer a better explanation here. If you can't learn it from the manual, sit down with somebody who can work through it with you.

Of most critical importance is that you know how to do a time-of-day calculation while everything around you is going wrong and people are yelling at you. Yes, I know this is a daunting task. It is a tricky piece of math that you need to be able to do in the most adverse conditions.

Always keep in mind: the scoreboard results are not official times. The results that you hand out at the end of the race are not official unless they say so. Get a hand-time out quickly, and then calculate a corrected hand time later when things are calmer. If somebody calls you on the discrepancy, remind them that you did not originally give out an official time.

If you missed a time completely, immediately contact the jury, and then with jury approval announce that the racer should go around for a rerun. While the racer is on the lift, you may be able to resurrect their time. It is better to tell a kid, "we sent you up for nothing. We got a good time on you. Sorry. No rerun." then it is to not have a time for a kid and it's too late to give them a rerun. Again, a small number of coaches will try to argue that the kid

should get a rerun anyway. If you have a time, they don't get a rerun. (period)

Sending a racer up for a rerun that they aren't going to get will make people mad at you, but it is nothing compared to missing a time completely.

More Forms Part II: Typically the jury comes from the ranks of ski coaches. Ski coaches tend to be ski coaches because they don't want to have a job that requires them to fill out forms all day long. Most TD's and Referees will appreciate it if you fill out all the forms for them. A good TD or Referee, however, will take the time to carefully check the accuracy of the information.

You need to focus on completing the following four forms:

Transmittal Sheet Technical Timing Report Form Referee Report TD Report

While you are twiddling your thumbs, because you're ahead of the game, you can use slack minutes to work on your forms. Almost all of the information can be completed before the race is done. When there is a 3 minute course hold, I'm filling out the header of one form or another.

The transmittal sheet can cause real headaches! Split Second will generate this form for you, and you can enter race officials in a screen in the software just like racers. However, everybody who is on that form needs to be a member of USSA. If the person who actually set the first course is not a member of USSA, then you have a problem. If anybody who is supposed to be on any of those lines does not come up when you type the first few letters of their name, you have a problem. Hopefully you can double check USSA.org. If they are not current on USSA.org, you need to find somebody to replace them in that job.

At the end of a run, you should have the Referee Report with a complete header, DNF's and DNS's. The only thing that remains is to get the DSQ's from the Head Gatekeeper and Referee. As soon as you can you should be filling out the Technical Timing Report Form it gives you a good handle on how the timing system is working that day. And it is much easier to do it while the race is happening rather than trying to locate all the necessary data at the end of the race.

At the end of the race you should have everything except the personal comments section of the TD Report filled out.

One important note: Official Start List: Please do not cross out names of DNS. There is some confusion as to what the term "Corrected Start List" means. Everybody who was on the start list that you generated the night before should be on the official start list that you print at the end of the race. The key thing is that you may have added racers at registration that need to be added to an official start list. Also of critical importance, the Official Start List needs to include information like gate counts and temperature that you could not have known ahead of time. You fill all that information out as the race goes on, and then print out a "corrected start list" at the end. There is no need to mark DNS athletes on the "corrected start list."

The only other form that you need for a normal race is the Head Tax report. You can do that later on your own.

Remember that any other form you might need to fill out is in your Master Packet of Forms.

Again! The TD is a volunteer! It is cruel for you to keep them 2 or 3 hours filling out paperwork and correcting mistakes after everybody has gone home. At the end of the race, your first priority should be getting the TD on the road. Help them with the paperwork first, make any corrections that they suggest promptly. Once they are out the door you can take care of your equipment, bibs, etc.

Dealing with an Irate Coach: You are not on the Jury!

The jury is the group of people who make rules-decisions at the race. These include: Is the course safe? When should inspection close? Who is allowed to race? Did a racer DSQ?

The jury is made up of the Chief of Race, the Referee and the Technical Delegate. You are not on this list. You should not be making decisions or interpretations regarding the rules. You owe it to yourself to divorce yourself from these decisions as much as possible.

When you are confronted with a coach who is upset, your absolute best response is to say, "I'm

not on the jury. But I can help you get in contact with somebody who is.”

If somebody says they should be in the top seed, but they’re not, call the TD.

If somebody says they didn’t get a fair chance to inspect the course, call the TD.

Unfortunately, a small number of coaches will try to browbeat a decision out of you because they feel that you are easier to browbeat than a TD or Referee who has more professional experience and status than they do. Hold your ground. Demand that substantive decisions be handled by the jury. “I’m not on the jury. But I can help you get in contact with somebody who is.” **Email Results to USSA and post them on NYSSRA.org! AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!** This is the Internet age. Everybody is looking for this information online, and they want it immediately. You should email and post your results on the internet within minutes of getting final approval from the TD. (That is, as soon as they’ve handed you completely signed race packets, and said, “Looks good.”)

In fact, if you post second run start orders on NYSSRA.org in the middle of the day, there will be at least a half-dozen spectators at your race who find it on their own on their Blackberries.

After everyone has gone home:

Put away all equipment that you are responsible for.

Make sure all the bibs are back. Respond immediately to bibs that are missing. Make a phone-call to an athlete’s race-program so that somebody is waiting when the van rolls in and the racer with the missing bib comes tumbling out.

Copy the results packet before you go home for dinner. You will be so exhausted at the end of a race that if you sit down you’ll never get up again. Copying the results now will be much easier than trying to do it later.

Another Reminder: On race-day, the most common words to come out of your mouth should be **Thank You**. People will do the most amazing things for you if you ask politely, thank them before and thank them again afterwards. Your sanity is closely related to how much people are willing to help you out.

Bad Checks:

The quicker you respond to bad checks, the better luck you’ll have. Always respond in writing so that you have a record. Keep copies of everything.

If a racer bounced a check at a previous race that you held, you can refuse them entry future races until they have paid. I usually demand payment in cash for the previous race and the current race. This can mean \$80 including processing fees. I make every effort to contact these people and let them know that if they don’t have the full amount in cash, they will not race.

There is plenty of help out there: There are lots of people who are willing to help you. Hopefully this document will raise all sorts of questions that you have. Feel free to ask anything of the Executive Director of NYSSRA, that’s their job. You can also ask coaches, program directors, other race administrators.

Appendix A: Bib and Timing Equipment Needs

Bibs: At minimum, you need to have about 10% more bibs than you anticipate needing for the biggest race in your season. 200 racers is a nice round number. That translates into having 220 unique bibs. By unique I mean, there is no other bib with that same number, or that same style given out to anybody else at the race.

It’s best to have a complete and unbroken set of numbers running from 1 to 220. If that is not possible, the next best thing is to have a set of sequential numbers with a limited number of gaps.

If that is not possible, the next best is to have boys bibs and girls bibs that are very different in appearance. For example, you have white bibs from 1-80, and you have blue bibs from 1 - 140. You anticipate having 70 girls in the race, and 100 boys. So you give the girls the white bibs and the boys the blue bibs. This can still lead to mistakes in the paperwork since somebody might record a fault for bib 65, but not record the gender of the racer, or

the color of the bib.

The quality of your bibs reflect directly on the quality of your organization. Bibs that are smelly, mildewed, torn or have numbers that are peeling off probably don't pass the test of "would I give this to my child to wear?" Clean, well cared for bibs give people the impression that you are professional and competent.

Timing Equipment: Ideally you should have at least the following:

A Start box and wand that is manual return and has two independent outputs. A couple of extra wands. Cable to connect the start box to the main cable running along the race hill. A main cable (in good shape) running along the race hill. Cables necessary to connect the main cable to each timer. Two sets of photocell (light-beam) finish eyes. The cable necessary to connect the finish eyes back to the timing building and to timers. Two independent FIS approved timers with printers. Cables to connect each timer to a separate computer. Two computers. ***See note below*** Two versions of Split Second Software with two license dongles. A way to transfer files between the computers. A way to print from at least one computer. A way to connect your primary computer to the internet, if possible, from the timing building.

Note on having two computers.The computers that you need to run Split Second Timing Software only need to run Windows 98 or later. They do not need large hard-drives, memory or speed. I am positive that at least three members of your organization have thrown out perfectly adequate timing computers in the past year. These days you can get appropriate computers for FREE! All you need to do is put the word out to your organization. **DO NOT BUY A COMPUTER JUST TO TIME RACES!** By asking around, you can potentially have a 'new' set of two timing computers each year with a third as a backup in case one breaks.

Our races run better if your races run better. David Iverson, Updated 10/08Burke Mountain
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