Race Planner

To do list:

> 6 months ahead: 1) Establish race date & course-get it <u>certified</u> if necessary. SFTC King & Queen competition?
Check SFTC website to see that date is clear. Post race on the website calendar when date is known.
2) Clear race & course with city/VA/police/parks & rec or other authorities as appropriate.
3) Arrange for EMS.
4) Get insurance (or use the clubs...)!
5) Find a place (indoors) to have the registration & awards. (or <u>rent a tent</u>). Make sure that tables are available for registration, water station, food, awards.
6) Start looking for sponsorship
7) Put race on **SFTC website** & **Running Journal** web site; notify local newspapers of event time, place etc. (faxing an entry form works best)
8) Design & print entry forms/fliers-distribute at <u>local races</u> & in <u>local stores/fitness clubs.</u>

(Fliers left in stores and fitness centers don't get a lot of results, newspapers and *Split Times* work well but radio and television advertisements probably do best.

The SFTC website calendar also has a printable entry-form feature that most races use (it's free).

-entry forms/flyers should contain time, date, location, length (certification?), age groups & awards, T-shirts (when does registration begin, is there raceday registration)
(who manages and sponsors?)
- place for runner's last name, first name, address, phone number, birthdate, age on race day, T-shirt size, emergency contact and phone number disclaimer (I use the SFTC web site as a template for mine...), place to sign and date for athlete or parent if under 18.
-a map of the course AND directions from the nearest major highway are helpful
-Just For Feet & Runners Market in Knoxville; JC Health & Fitness, The Wellness Ctr, Franklin Health & Fitness + various stores in J City/Kingsport/Bristol

9) Start looking for volunteers! Some suggestions:
-local boy and girl scout troops, senior citizens, local schools, spouses & children of runners, bulk track club e mail....
-**Calculate # of volunteers needed:** 3-4 (registration); 3-4 (finish line); 1 @ every corner/intersection; 1-2 set up food and trophies; 1 lead car driver; 1 follow car driver (or EMS); at least 2 @ each water station; split timers?; 2-3 "extra" volunteers (someone is ALWAYS late/doesn't show up). It is always better to have too many volunteers than too few. You'll need police at traffic lights.
-Make SURE volunteers bring clothing for inclement weather
-Make SURE volunteers know that race is held <u>regardless</u> of weather
10) Find a source for T-shirts & trophies. Find out their turn around time (esp. for T-

shirts).
11) Arrange for Port-a-Johns or access to nearby bathrooms.
12) Design T shirts (may have to wait for sponsors)

> 2 months ahead: 1) **Confirm all is OK with** city/VA/police/parks & rec or other authorities as appropriate. Check EMS and status of bathrooms & registration/award facilities. Do any of these parties need an insurance certificate as proof club is covered? If so, fill out form and fax to Diller and Associates at least one month in advance.
    2) Keep looking for volunteers!
    3) Keep reminding current volunteers.
    4) **Run or drive the course to make sure it is open (no construction etc.).**
    5) Keep looking for sponsors if needed.
    6) Order trophies and T-shirts.
    7) **FAX or email** JC Press and Kingsport Times to get race time, place, date posted. Check all newspapers to see that race is actually on calendar. Bristol does not have a calendar section at this writing.

>1 week ahead: 1) **Tally all pre-registered runners-reserve T-shirts as needed and jot names down on race master list.**
    2) Volunteer meeting to assign jobs (or at least touch base with all of them by phone or e-mail).
    A. Instruct course monitors to be visible to runners and traffic
    B. Remind volunteers that the runners are quite exhausted and get lost easily without vivid directions. Tell them to "Use a loud voice and exaggerated arm signals when directing runners."
    C. Smile at drivers when holding them back. Say something like, "Hang on and we'll get you going in just a minute." Be cheerful and outgoing.
    D. Restrain a runner physically if you see a collision with a car coming. The runner will always lose in this situation. You must prevent it.
    3) Pick up race equipment.
    4) **Run or drive the course again to make sure it is open.**
    5) Pick up trophies, prizes, T-shirts, food and drinks.
    6) Pick up food, any sponsors "stuff".
    7) If the race crosses railroad tracks, check on train schedule.

> the day before: 1) Check to be sure someone will be around to open facilities early for registration
    2) Make final check with the railroad.

Important Notes:
-publicity counts, get the word out early and often! If the race is for a charitable organization, contact the national organization-they may be able to help you with publicity and volunteers.
-make sure all agreements (for sponsorship, services etc.) are obtained in writing and are signed by an individual with sufficient authority.
-T shirts are probably going to be the greatest expense associated with the race.
-weather drastically effects race day registration & economics. Remember, most races are "rain or shine" events-make sure your volunteers know this too.
-make sure you always have extra volunteers, there is ALWAYS someone who oversleeps, gets lost, forgets etc.

Materials and Equipment:
From the club: 1) at least 2 timers **(batteries and paper as well)**
    2) Race clock **(Make sure it is charged the night before)**

3) Chutes (discs, supports and flagging)
4) Spindles if using numbers with tear tags. Or index cards if not.
5) Megaphone
6) Orange vests and flags for corner marshals/course monitors
7) Mile markers
8) Traffic cones
9) Caution road race signs
10) Age group baskets, labels and pencils
11) Water jug(s)
12) Laptop and RunScore software, if being used

Other supplies:1) Extra entry forms
2) Pens/pencils for registration
3) Change
4) Numbers, pins and bandit tags **OR**
     finish cards - www.ecprint.com
5) Toilet paper
6) Spray paint/tape or chalk to mark the course
7) Tables (2 for registration, 2 for awards/food, 1 for each water stop) & chairs
8) Legal pads/paper for recording entries, select times, results
9) Masking tape
10) Course map
11) Food & drink
12) Cups (and other utensils if needed)
13) Awards
14) T shirts (medals, ribbons etc.)-extras for volunteers?
15) Construction flags (for X-country courses)
16) Trash cans/bags
17) Registration signs
18) Magic markers
19) First aid kit
20) Knife/scissors & string
21) Umbrella or plastic sheet to protect timers if it rains
22) Cell phones (2-3) or walkie-talkies

Facilities: 1) Covered area for registration/awards/food
                     2) Bathrooms (access to showers is nice if possible)

Volunteers: 1) 3-4 (registration)-depends on size of field
                     2) 3-4 (finish line)-depends on size of field
                     3) 1 @ every corner/intersection
                     4) 1-2 set up food and trophies
                     5) 1 lead car driver (If police lead, then someone who knows course rides to direct them.)
                     6) 1 follow car driver (or EMS)
                     7) 2 @ each water station
                     8) 2-3 "extra" volunteers as back up
                     9) split timers? If so, one for each mile mark
                     10) starter (usually race director)
                     11) Photographer & **police/traffic control?**

Race morning:

1) **Mark the course: This can be done the week/night before or <u>race morning</u>. This is your last course check. It is easiest with two people in the car. <u>ALL</u> turns, twists and intersections should be clearly marked with large arrows indicating direction of travel. You will need:**

    -the course map
    -spray paint, marking chalk or masking tape (determined by **weather** and **local regulations**). **Whatever you use make sure you bring extra marking materials!! White is the best color!**
    -highway cones (at busy intersections and other confusing points)
    -mile markers (mark miles on the road as well...)
    -caution road race signs (put at busy intersections or on busy roads coming into the course)
    -construction flagging for cross-country courses

2) **Check bathroom facilities-<u>at least</u> 1.5-2 hours pre-race:** make sure they are open (or delivered to the race site in the case of Port-A-Johns) **AND** that there is sufficient toilet paper/hand towels

3) **Set up registration-should be set up <u>at least</u> 1.5 hours pre-race. Use experienced people if possible. Put 75% of volunteers on "Race Day" registration-it will be the busiest. You will need:**

    -a covered area to set up in (or tent)
    -at least two tables & chairs; three tables better -one for pre-registered and at least one for race day
    -at least 3 volunteers (at least ONE experienced at registration)
    -legal pad to list entrants and tabulate results; <u>list all pre-registered runners the night before the race on a separate page.</u> Assign race #'s to pre-registrants first. Have each registrant's number on the sheet next to his or her name. This is done so an "out of towner" who becomes unconscious can be identified. For larger races (200+), use of "picket up packets" should be considered.
    -all pre-registered runner entry forms and checks (in case there is a problem with a pre-entered runner)
    -tape and "registration"/"pre-registration" signs
    -T shirts (**put pre-registered shirts in a "reserved" pile-sort T-shirts by sizes**)
    -lots of extra entry forms. As a guide, race day entry can easily be twice preregistration.
    -pens and pencils
    -safety pins (if using race #'s)
    -at least $100 in change ($40 in1's; rest in 5's and 10's-remember, you will get mostly $20's on race day if your entry fee is >$10) **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH CHANGE!!!**
    -money bag or cash box
    -course map
    -sponsor & SFTC banners (if appropriate)
    -extra toilet paper
    -water jug or available water source
    -SFTC membership/K&Q/LDS entry forms

4) **Set up water station(s)-should be set up <u>at least</u> 1.0 hour pre-race. Can be set up at the same time the course is marked if you do it in the morning before the race. Need at least 1 station every 5K; one for every 1.0-1.5 miles in hot weather. Good to set up in any part of the course that is repeated, that way you get "2 for 1". Have volunteers put water into cups before race starts. You will need:**

    -one table/station

-at least 2 volunteers/station
-one jug of water/station (+ one with Gatorade if needed). Can use 5 gallon containers of water
        available at WalMart.
-<u>at least</u> 2 times as many cups as runners/station: get **paper cups** NOT plastic or styrofoam
-garbage bags for cup disposal

5) **Set up start/finish-should be set up <u>at least</u> 1.0 hours pre-race. Can be set up at the same time the course is marked if you do it in the morning before the race. You will need:**

-the race clock **(charge the night before)** and chute(s)-may need to set up chute after runners start
-**<u>at least</u>** 3 volunteers (more if start and finish are not close to each other)
-tape or spray paint to mark the start/finish line styrofoam?
-**2 timers** (at least two-one primary and one back up)**-make sure they are charged and have extra paper**
A. Have timers test the watches to make sure the watches work and the timers know how they work.
-bullhorn
-lead car (often police or parks dept car)
-notebook and pen for select times (if necessary)
-**finish cards OR spindles for tags-make sure you have enough!**

6) **Set up awards & food-should be set up <u>at least</u> 1.0 hours pre-race. Can be set up while the race is going if you have enough volunteers and the race is long enough. You will need:**

-food (fruit, cookies, bagels et.) & drinks (water and Gatorade)-get at WalMart/Sams or as donations
        from sponsors
-at least 1 volunteer
-several tables
-trophies and/or prizes-**should be set up grouped by sex and age group BEFORE awards ceremony**
-trash cans & bags
-cups, utensils and plates if needed

7) **Volunteer meeting and assignments-should be <u>at least</u> 1.0 hours pre-race.   <u>Volunteers should be at the site no later than 1 hour before they are needed for their specific task!!!!</u> You will need:**

-vest & flags
-your course monitors, start/finish crew and water station personnel
-several cars to get the course marshals out on the course

8) **Start and finish. Use your most experienced volunteers here-get help from the track club if necessary. Give a pre-race briefing in which you mention the sponsors, describe the course, warn runners of cars, unusual hazards etc. and remind runners to fill out finish cards (if used). You may also want to arrange for a blessing or the national anthem. It is critical to have someone intimately familiar with the course in the lead to car to drive or tell the police where to go. When split timers are in the lead car, check to see that they can get out: the back doors on some police cars don't open from the back seat!**

As runners finish, your timers and "finish card" handlers should stay in communication to make sure

everyone is on the correct finish number-this allows early identification of any problems. Having a "select" timer can also help resolve finish order discrepancies. **Person handing our cards should continually instruct runners to fill out cards and put them in the correct age group box. Remind anyone handling a spindle to be super careful not to drop it. Remind timers to discuss procedure for identifying and handling bandits.**

You will need:

  -The Chute (assemble and set out of the way-move onto the course during the race)
  -race clock
  -finish cards (make sure you have enough)
  -bullhorn
  -tape or paint to mark the start/finish line
  -spindles AND bandit tags if using numbers with pull tabs
  -at least TWO timers and volunteers who know how to use them
  -select timer, pen and legal pad (optional)
  -at least one volunteer to keep the runners in order thru the chute
  -at least one (better 2) volunteers to hand out finish cards/take pull tabs (depends on size of field)
  -one volunteer (or race director) to serve as "starter"
  -race lead and follow cars, race director and starter should have communications devices

9) **Results tabulation and awards ceremony. It is best to have experienced volunteers to help with this. You should also have a sheltered area to set up the baskets, do the results and the awards. It helps is you make out a "finish sheet" before hand with all the age groups on it so you can more easily tabulate the results. Also, make sure to compare the two timer tapes to make sure the results are consistent. USATF requires times on races 5000 meters and greater to rounded up: 18:44.01 is reported as 18:45, 18:44.00 is reported as 18:44. In case of a problem, hang on to the volunteers who worked the finish so they can help you figure the finish order out. You will need to have/do:**
  -age group baskets, pens/pencils (and table to place them on) if using finish cards
  -for a small/medium sized event, at least 2 people to tabulate the results and 2 to announce results and
        hand out awards. Use of "Runscore" can reduce the time and effort required but is not usually
        worth messing with in races with $<$ 100 entrants.
  -set up trophies in each group on a table PRIOR to the race to reduce confusion and facilitate awards
  -door prizes/random drawing?
  -need at least one table for post-race food and drink

10) **Post-event. Make sure all runners are accounted for and off the course (check with the sweep driver/EMS truck). Then do the following (make sure to "hang on" to a few volunteers to do this):**
  -**clean up water stations, bathrooms and the area around registration/awards**
  -take tables & chairs back to original locations
  -drive the course and pick up mile markers, signs etc. **Account for ALL SFTC equipment!**
  -$ to bank (or SFTC)
  -return SFTC equip to storage facility
  -results to Oscar Wagner and David Fox
  -**<u>THANK THE SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS!!!!</u>**

Economics of Road Races

People think of road races as good fund raisers. With the 100 or fewer runners typically participating in the "home town foot race", the odds of breaking even are low.

Before buying anything, have your tax free certificate at hand for quoting, faxing or copying.

Shirts - Plan on paying $4.00 for each shirt in 2002 dollars. Long sleeves are more as are more colors. Many volunteers expect one. To help hold down costs, you can state emphatically on the entry form that only pre-registered runners are guaranteed a shirt on race day. It is low class to promise three sizes and only have large and extra-large as some low class race directors are know to do. The cost break point on shirts is typically a gross which is 12 dozen which is 144 shirts. This covers you for 120 runners plus 24 race volunteers which definitely includes police, EMS and street crews. Adjust your order accordingly based on your past experience. Let runners who register on race day run for $3 less or something like that if you have run out of shirts. Cotton Graphics in Atlanta does nice work. Their phone number is 1-404-297-9277. Address: 5600 New Peachtree Rd., Atlanta, GA, 30341. Keep your audience in mind when designing the shirt. High schools don't allow kids to wear shirts with beer ads to school. It is mean to charge a youngster $15 for a shirt he or she can't wear to the locale where bragging rights are most precious.

Trophies - Runners have come to expect trophies 3 deep by 5 year age groups. These range in cost from $3.60 for a small third place to $7.25 for a first place overall but you only need two of these. Trophies for Overall, Masters, Grandmasters and 11 age groups (total of 66 trophies) should cost around $300. Medals are fine for smaller, low key races though they are not a lot cheaper than small trophies. The runner still gets the recognition and it will look the same in the newspaper.

Place Cards - 300 cards cost $14.00. Get 1 - 200 and 1 - 100. 1 - 200 will cover most anything and somebody will have a race with less than 100 so those will get used eventually.

Numbers - These cost about a quarter a piece but with minimums are price break points, $70 is to be expected as a cost. Use the same logic as the place cards when asked for numbering sequencing.

Pins - 10 gross pins cost $16.50. You can use the rest next year.

The most common source for place cards, numbers and pins is Electric City Printing in Anderson SC. Their phone number is 1-800-277-1920. Address: P.O. Box 1920, Anderson, SC, 29622

Food - If you don't want to try to get it donated, figure $.50 for an apple and a baggle for each runner. Throw in $5.00 for a bag of Gatorade mix.

Portable Toilets - If you are running way out in the middle of nowhere, then plan on $200 worth of Porta-Johns for a 120 person race. Find these in the Yellow pages.

Insurance - Some locales require a $1,000,000 policy which runs around $300 which is about what RRCA charges for an event club which is a club formed just to do one (presumably big) race. Races managed by RRCA members are covered if timely notification is given to Diller-Smith and Associates in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Their phone number is 260-482-5455 or toll free 888-297-6467

Advertising - The best advertising is just about free but plan on paying $15.00 for 200 copies of a well

designed entry form with a little color. Where you put them out is more important than what they look like. Track club web sites as of this writing are free as are most newspaper sports calendars.

Course Security - Police and EMS support varies from town to town though it is usually provided free as a part of supporting a community event. **Always check first though to be sure!** If this is not free it is ***MAJOR*** and usually a deal breaker!

Check with local authorities to find out what they require in the way of permits, insurance, etc.

Now, let's add it up:

Item	Cost
Shirts 144@$.00	$576.00
Trophies 66	300.00
Cards 200 as part of minimum shipment	10.00
Numbers 200 as part of minimum shipment	50.00
Pins 500 / 1440	5.50
Food & Gatorade	55.00
Typical Race Minimum	**$993.50**
Those little extras:	
Port-a-Potties	$200.00
Insurance	$300.00
By yourself in the boonies:	**$1493.50**

So 100 runners at an average entry fee of $13.50 puts you in the hole $150.00. Most people who do this kind of thing look for natural advantages like use of a building with toilets and/or a sponsor with insurance.