ADDING A VIRTUAL OPTION TO YOUR "REAL" RACE

Having a "virtual" race will <u>neve</u>r make you as much profit as a REAL race. However, a GREAT way to maximize your profitability is to add a "virtual" component to your REAL race. Having a virtual race allows you to get extra entries from those that cannot make the event but want to support the organization and/or those that want to get the race "swag" but are not comfortable attending due to Covid concerns. In a virtual race, the entry runs "whenever" they want (some races suggest a specific time frame; i.e. Dec 1 thru Dec 8) and they run your distance "wherever" they want (a place of their choice or your actual course on a date different from the race). Setting up a virtual option <u>initially</u> also makes it very easy to convert the race TOTALLY to virtual if health conditions or regulation changes result in the cancellation of the REAL race.

Your extra cost for adding a virtual option is $25 if we handle your online registration or $50 if either we do not or you don't have online registration. The extras you get for that are:

*1 <u>extra</u> free eblast over however many you get with your method of timing

*A one time posting of whatever virtual results you provide to us

*If needed, a separate posting of your Virtual race app and a separate online reg form, if there are considerable differences between the events.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have to convert your REAL race to a "virtual only" race at a later date, you will not incur a timing fee from us but your "virtual" fee will convert to $75 if we are doing your online registration and $100 if we are not.

WHEN YOU RETURN YOUR INFORMATION THAT WE NEED TO ISSUE YOU A SERVICE AGREEMENT, PLEASE LET US KNOW <u>AT THAT TIME</u> IF YOU ARE ADDING A VIRTUAL OPTION SO WE CAN ISSUE YOU A CORRECT INVOICE.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR VIRTUAL OPTION

There are some important decisions to be made in designing your virtual option. These decisions need to be made before preparing a race app for your event.

RACE APPLICATION: Will you use the same application for both the real race and the virtual one, or will differences in the two require you to have a separate one for each? If you are able to do both on the same application, you'll reduce both your printing AND mailing costs.

RACE SWAG: People still expect to get something back from entering a virtual race; few will enter just to support your cause. So, what race swag will you give; shirt, participation medal, buff, gift certificate, etc? (it CAN differ from your REAL race). Will the price of your virtual race or the swag that you give differ from your REAL race? Will there be different prices if they pick the swag up versus you mailing them (figure about $5 to mail most shirts), When and where will they pick them up? Is there an entry deadline for the getting them (some wait till after the entry deadline to minimize ordering more than you need). Does your price for the virtual change after a certain date? Does the swag guarantee end after a certain date or continue on at a higher price? **NOTE:** Having identical pricing and swag for BOTH races makes the conversion of a REAL race to a VIRTUAL ONLY RACE a <u>lot more seamless.</u>

AWARDS: This is a VERY touchy area; especially to those that do the REAL race. Not everyone will run the same course or in the same weather conditions. They probably won't run the same terrain either. Even if you design it so they have to run the same course as the REAL race, it will not appease those

that think the virtual runner has an advantage. For that reason, we strongly suggest that you NOT have awards for virtual entries. And Pretzel City will NOT merge virtual results into the results of the real race.

RESULTS: We will do a one-time posting of your virtual results if you wish; not all races ask us to publish their results. Why not? Mostly due to the extra work that YOU incur in doing so. Somewhere, you'll have to post a guideline on how to accomplish this. You have to give them a method to report results to you, give them a format for doing so, give them a deadline by when they must do so, compile the results in an excel form that we can supply you and send them to us. This is a decision that should be made before the app is printed since the app is a likely place to share your needs and deadline for this information.

BE CREATIVE: Again, most people are not going to send you an entry fee out of the goodness of their heart. So how do you attract them? Enter them in the same raffles you have for the real entries. Think about unique, easy-to-mail swag that does not require "sizing"; Face Masks, Draw String Bags, Buffs, Gift certificates to local venues, etc. Give them a discount coupon for next year's REAL race. Have different swag packages at different prices. THINK ABOUT WHAT WOULD ATTRACT YOU TO ENTER THIS VIRTUAL RACE VERSUS ANOTHER VIRTUAL EVENT NEARBY.

LET US HELP YOU!: OUR success depends on YOUR success. So, if you have any questions, please feel free to call or email us. That's what we're here; to help! And don't forget to send your race app to us for a quick review *before* having it printed, we might be able to give you some suggestions that can help attendance or reduce confusion..

Does the pandemic make it a bit more challenging to raise funds for your organization? OF COURSE!! But it CAN be done and we're here to help you do it!

Good Luck!

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