

# Run Wild Missoula

## Race Director 101 Guidebook



August 2023

# Run Wild Missoula: Race Director 101 Guidebook

## Introduction:

This guidebook is intended for anyone seeking to organize a safe and successful event. We hope it allows you to produce consistent, high quality experiences for your participants. However, we could write a novel on producing a 5K, so please read this as not a fully comprehensive resource. Please feel free to reach out to RWM's Operations and Events Coordinator, Raynee Daguerre with any questions throughout the process.

**Raynee Daguerre**, *Operations and Events Coordinator*

Office: 406.544.7073

Cell: 406.830.5438

rayneed@runwildmissoula.org

## 1. PLANNING

- **Date Selection** – Each season, you should consider other known running events. In Missoula some examples are: RWM Club Races, Runner's Edge events, Missoula Marathon, Riverbank Run, Bloomsday, Governor's Cup, Mountain West XC, etc. and other large community events i.e. UM Football home games and Homecoming, Pride, Film Festivals, Parades, Roots Festival, Club Sporting Events. Then work to select a date that:
  - Matches the date/weekend on which the event has been conducted (as closely as possible)
  - Minimizes or eliminates conflict with other events (which can be problematic for spring and fall races due to the number of other outdoor recreation events during those times of year)

If a conflict is identified, work through options and alternative dates.

- ➔ Once a date has been selected, list the event on race websites such as Run Sign Up, runningintheusa.com, and local event calendars like MissoulaEvents.net, Destination Missoula etc.

- **Venue Selection** – A venue should be selected with thought to area construction, conflicting venue use, permitting requirements, etc. Additional items to be considered include: facilities for shelter from weather, parking, accessibility, power, and toilets. Space for race day registration/packet pickup, start & finish area, awards and post-race refreshments must be considered as well.
- **Course Layout** – Items to be considered when laying out a course include: Adequate space for runners based on expected field size; Minimize out & back segments; Avoid railroad crossings; Minimize major street crossings, On-course construction activities; Easy to navigate (minimize risk of lost runners)
  - ➔ Mapmyrun, Strava or a similar application or web site can be used to map out a preliminary version of the course. A GPS watch/device should be used while running or biking the course to verify distance. Adjust the course as needed to have an accurate distance.

- **Sponsors** – A great way to create income for your event is offer sponsorships. We suggest creating two to three levels of sponsorship with different opportunities.
- **Insurance** –You can obtain single event insurance through the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA), US Track & Field (USATF) or similar agency.
  - ➔ Please note: Both owners of venues (i.e., University of Montana, Marathon start line venue, etc.) and agencies will require evidence of insurance coverage and will request to be added as an additional insured party on your insurance certificates.
- **Swag, Runner Amenities & Awards** – Most (but not all) races provide some form of runner amenity and award structure. Amenities include such items as T-shirts, hats, gloves, cups, etc. that the participant receives as part of their entry fee. In most cases, it is common to strive for this amenity to be a functional item that participants can use when running, walking or in some other part of their active lifestyle. Ideally, sponsor names and/or logos can be printed on the item.

Awards are prizes given for top performances such as age group and/or overall winners. Some events provide prizes for other categories such as best costume.

To coordinate race swag:

- Decide on swag/amenity item. Cost/item must be within the amount included in the overall race budget.
  - Identify source/distributor for the item. Many outdoor/athletic retailers offer wholesale option for some of their products at a reduced rate.
  - Identification of age groups, number of awards to be presented, and any “specialty” awards. As with amenities, the cost of the awards must be within the amount included in the overall race budget.
  - Take into consideration current supply chain issues and shipping delays when ordering swag. It is better to order early, if possible.
  - To prevent ordering too much swag and eating the cost of production, it is advisable to include swag as “opt-in” only. Participants can submit whether or not they would like the swag product as part of the registration process. (this may depend on the registration platform used, it is an option through RunSignUp).
- **Permits and Local Authorities** – The following permits are required for organized running and walking events:
    - City of Missoula Street Use Permit: Required for events that take place on City streets.
    - Missoula Parks & Recreation Special Use Permit: Required for events that utilize bike paths, multi-use paths, river trails, or sidewalks within parks.
      - Parks & Rec Amplified Sound Permit: Should you plan to amplify sound in certain Missoula Parks
      - Parks & Rec Alcohol or Concessions Permit
    - Missoula Parks & Recreation Conservation Lands Special Use Permit: Required for events on City open space lands on Mount Sentinel and/or Mount Jumbo.

- Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Special Use Permit: Required for events that take place on or cross streets and roads under the jurisdiction of MDT. (Mullan Road, Broadway, Madison, Orange, Brooks, Stephens, Russell, Reserve and South 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Streets East, Bridges)
- University of Montana Event Services Approval: Required for events utilizing University lands. (Includes main campus, University Mountain lands, Campus Drive and Riverbowl, Dornblazer Intramural fields.)
- Missoula County Right-Of-Way Special Event Permit: Required for events on County roads or rights-of-way.
- US Forest Services Permits: Required for events taking place on Forest Services lands. (Applies to Pengelly races.)
- Missoula Co Public Schools: Required for field or venue use

## 2. REGISTRATION

- **Registration & Race Pages** – Registration for races can be done via an online platform like RunSignUp, RaceRoster or UltraSignUp. Most of the platforms are free and make their money from ‘service or CC fees.’
- Often on these platforms, you can set up a separate donation page or enable fundraising to increase your fundraising abilities more.
- **RunSignUp Options**
  - Events that already exist from a previous year can be renewed - settings copy to the new year.
  - New events can be created at no initial cost - RSU charges a processing fee on each registration.
  - Competitive Timing (see timing) has access to race dashboards through RSU partner account, and can assist with registration questions/management as needed. Accurate participant data and registration setup critical for producing accurate results and making sure award ceremonies go smoothly.
  - Registration data syncs automatically with timing software, so no need to send registration data to the timer.
  - Race Day Check-In app used for bib assignment for most events - makes for a very fast check-in process and allows for an unlimited number of check-in volunteers to all work at the same time. Options within the app to allow event transfers, participant info changes, and custom data display, if those are applicable to the event.

## 3. EQUIPMENT

Run Wild Missoula has a large supply of equipment for conducting running and walking events. This equipment is available for a rental fee. Please visit [RunWildMissoula.org](http://RunWildMissoula.org) to fill out an equipment rental form.

- Runner’s Edge also rents some specific items for community events. Please visit [runnersedgmt.com](http://runnersedgmt.com) to fill out a request.
  - ➔ For most races, it is useful to rent a U-Haul for transport of equipment to your race site.

## 4. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer recruitment and engagement is perhaps the most significant task as it is critical to event production, participant safety and participant experience.

- It is typical for you to recruit volunteers from friends, family, co-workers, professional networks and social networks.
- Consider age, experience with running events and past volunteer experience when making assignments. For example:
  - Adults with past running and/or race volunteer experience should be assigned to critical turns on the course. These volunteers must be able to loudly and forcibly provide clear direction to participants to ensure that they follow the correct course.
  - Volunteers assigned to packet pick up and registration tables should have basic computer/digital skills.
- Be sure to advise volunteers of the following:
  - Dress appropriately for the forecast conditions – especially course monitors.
  - Clearly convey the expected time commitment.
  - Course monitors are to remain in place until “released” by the official race sweepers.
- It’s always good practice to feed your volunteers! (e.g., coffee, water, bagels, donuts)
- RSU provides a simple way to show volunteer jobs available with descriptions and times.
  - ➔ Leading up into the race
    - Reiterate job duty for each individual, timing, and directions
    - Make sure people feel needed and valued (try to have the right number of volunteers)
    - Returning volunteers are priceless

## 5. TIMING, RESULTS & FINISH LINE TECHNOLOGY

- RWM, Runner’s Edge Events & YMCA Riverbank Run use Competitive Timing for timing and results. CT can help on:
  - Process for runner check in, bib pick up and late registration at packet pick up
  - Race day packet pick up and registration (if available)
  - Post-race results and awards lists
- **Competitive Timing Options: MyLaps passive RFID technology**
  - Used at the vast majority of events timed by Competitive Timing
  - The finish line mats emit a signal, which is reflected back by the tag on the back of the bib.
    - ➔ Occasionally, a chip can be blocked if a participant reaches up to stop their watch at the finish line. They set up a backup set of mats for this reason, and also set up a GoPro at the finish line to record video so we can verify finish times and put them in manually.
  - In-person or remote options, depending on race size, budget, and specific needs.
- **RSU Mobile Timing App**
  - Lower-cost alternative for low-density races, or for on course splits.
  - Numbers are typed in as runners pass - the app creates a .csv file that we can access via Dropbox, which we can use to produce results.

- Does not work well for high-density races, since each number needs to be typed in individually
- Results published live on RSU and Competitive Timing website. Kiosks available for individual results at finish line.

## 6. BUDGET

An event budget can be tricky to navigate. It's important to manage your expectations on attendance, sponsorship & donations and work within these constraints to produce a successful event with the outcome you desire.

- Projected income should include entry fees and sponsorships.
- Expenses will include (but are not limited to) swag (shirts or other runner giveaways), awards, race timing, advertising & promotion, insurance, staff costs, bib numbers and pins, refreshments, portable toilets, permits, facility rental, course marking supplies and signage.

## 7. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Practice the Three C's:

- ✓ **Cause** - What is the main goal/cause/passion/purpose of putting on your race/event?
- ✓ **Collaboration** - Once your cause/goal is established, who are your partners? Collaborators? Sponsors that function as supporters beyond financial support.
- ✓ **Connection** - Tie everything together!

## 8. MISCELLANEOUS & THINGS OF NOTE

- Per Missoula Parks & Recreation policies, **DO NOT** use spray chalk or paint to mark on bike paths or trails. Use a variety of signs, irrigation flags and temporary route arrows that can be used to mark the course on paths and trails.
- In very cold conditions, flagging, cones and feather banners can be used to mark the start and/or finish in-lieu of inflatable arches.
- Portable Toilets are necessary to some permits and for shoulder season events where public facilities are closed. Toilets are typically ordered on a ration of approximately 1 Toilet per 50 Participants.
- In an effort to be a good steward, we recommend cleaning and clearing a course both prior and after the race to ensure it's better than when you left it.
- We also suggest crafting a medical and emergency response plan as well as a traffic control plan (which may be required for certain permits)