



Race Organizing – Best Practices for New Promoters

In General:

Organizing a race can be a lot more work than you expect, so there are a few important things to keep in mind:

- **Help:** You can't do everything yourself. You will need four or five other people actively involved in preparation and planning beginning at least three months ahead of time. On race day you will need twelve to twenty volunteers at a minimum, so start recruiting your team early. For example, there should be separate people who are in charge of course setup and signage, medical emergencies, follow cars and lead vehicles, start/finish area control, race-day registration, and corner monitors. All should be in communication with the race organizer.
- **Advance communication** with LAMBRA and the Chief Referee (officials@lambra.org) is essential. Your event announcement/flyer is approved along with your event permit by the LAMBRA permit coordinator. It will be checked for essential elements, compatibility with LCCS rules if the event is an LCCS event, reasonableness of start times, course lengths, etc. It is a good idea to send a draft flyer for review before you submit your event permit. Event permits need to be submitted two months prior to event dates in order to avoid late fees, so you will need to have your courses, start times, registration locations, distances, prizes, etc. in place by then. Ask questions if you are unsure about anything. A few weeks prior to the event find out who the Chief Referee will be (they are assigned by LAMBRA's Commissioner of Officials) and plan for a long phone conversation about the setup for registration, finish lines, results, courses, etc. This can go a very long way toward preventing last-minute problems and delays.
- **Facilities:** You will need to provide rest room facilities adequate for your anticipated number of participants. For an early morning start you can safely assume that nearly every rider will need to use them. At a couple of minutes minimum per rider, do the math.
- **Race Officials:** In LAMBRA, our officials will often be able to get the officials area at the finish line set up themselves (this is not always the case elsewhere), get the necessary flags put up, etc. You need to discuss with the Chief Referee ahead of time what will be needed and exactly where the finish line should be located. This may involve issues such as the availability of electricity, the location of the sun relative to the camera (and therefore the side on which rider numbers should be placed), visibility, crowd control, intersections and/or driveways, location relative to climbs and/or descents, shelter from rain/sun, etc. LAMBRA officials for LCCS events will generally have one or two folding tables, a pop-up tent, multiple cameras and computers, finish line flag, a megaphone, etc., but may need additional tables, chairs, shelter, etc.

Event Announcement/Flyer/Website:

Check the LAMBRA website and the link to the [USAC Policy](#) for required and recommended elements of event announcements. You will need to have all of those items on your flyer before your event permit will be approved. In particular, be sure to include directions to registration, when it opens and closes, pre-registration information, fees, and race information (distance, start time, prizes and places). If multiple groups are to be racing together each must have its own prizelist if they are to be included in the LCCS points competition.

Numbers and Pins:

It is tempting to skimp on race numbers in order to reduce costs. Don't. There are specific USAC requirements (both size and quantity) for race numbers. At a minimum each rider should receive one large (20 x 20 cm or 7.8 x 7.8 in) number to be placed in a position suitable for the finish line camera. It is strongly recommended that riders receive two numbers, one for the camera side and one for the back. Back numbers allow motorefs to identify riders from behind and allow riders to identify other riders which is especially important if two groups are racing together. Always try to provide separate number sequences for each class/category in order to facilitate scoring. When you order your race numbers (You can get a discount with some vendors by going through the USAC website), be sure to order pins. Riders will typically use 6 pins per number. In a pinch, you can usually get a box of the correct size pins from a local dry-cleaners.

Time Trials:

Time Trial courses should be free from uncontrolled intersections and road hazards. Keep in mind that riders will be pushing themselves hard, often in a head-down posture. Choose a start location that provides a place for riders to warm up, and include that in your plans for course control. Having police cars and monitors at the start, finish and turnaround is important. You will need volunteers to hold riders, stage them, monitor any intersections along the way, and assist with timing at the finish.

Road Races:

Road races in particular require close cooperation with police and sheriff's departments in order to enhance safety, especially at intersections and the start/finish area. Be sure that there is adequate parking available and that access to the parking area is not within the final kilometer of the race course. Riders should never have to ride back past the finish line to get to their vehicles since there will often be other riders and races still to finish. The course should be marked, preferably with both paint and signage, especially leading up to turns. There should also be a sign and preferably red flag at the 1 km to go mark, along with numerous signs facing both directions notifying motorists that a race is in progress. Police officers should be instructed about how fast the groups will be going, that they may stray across the centerline into the oncoming traffic lane on the turns, and how the finish sprints will be handled. If the full road is to be available to the riders for the final 200 meters (or more), police will need to stop all oncoming traffic when the group is still about 1 km from the finish. This requires communication among lead and/or follow vehicles, officials, and the downstream police officer(s), generally via radio. Follow cars should be lined up, marked and ready to go well ahead of time so that riders can drop off spare wheels. Follow car drivers should be instructed as to how to handle emergencies and should have fully charged phones with a list of phone numbers (other follow cars, chief referee, even organizer, etc.)

Criteria:

Criterion courses should ideally be 0.6-1.2 km in length and should always be completely closed to traffic. Keep in mind that any vehicles that are inside the course need to be prevented from entering the course as well. Ideally there should be monitors at each intersection with radio of phone communication in order to report any crashes or other incidents (such as vehicles, pedestrians, animals, etc., getting on to the course). The finish should preferably be about 200 meters from the last turn with few immovable obstacles. Ideally there should be barricades along the final 200 meters to prevent pedestrians from walking onto the course and to allow the officials a clear view of the oncoming riders. The wheel pit should be located close to the finish area, especially if there is not a dedicated pit official.

Registration:

Race-day Registration should ideally be located close to the start/finish and parking area since the officials will need to be in both places and will need final start lists immediately prior to each race. It is best to have most of the rider parking close to the start/finish and registration in case there are any changes in the start times or other things that need to be communicated to the riders. For most LAMBRA races the Chief Referee will have an Excel workbook for rider registration and results. Plugging in rider bib numbers and license numbers will automatically populate the rider's information (name, category, team, etc.) except for riders using 1-day licenses or riders who renewed or purchased annual licenses within a day or so of the race. We recommend printing out the release forms for all pre-registered riders and having them sign the forms when they come to pick up their race numbers on race day. At that time the registrar should write their bib numbers on their release forms, thus verifying that they actually showed up for the race. If the database is pre-populated with pre-registration data there needs to be a way to identify any pre-registered riders who did not show up. If there is any doubt, the officials will usually call roll at the start line which may cause a delay. It is crucial that registration be handled very carefully and smoothly.

Incomplete or careless registration procedures virtually guarantee problems with results which can be delayed, incorrect, or both. Be sure you can quickly identify the release forms for all riders using 1-day licenses because those will have to be submitted to USAC after the event. Riders can show proof of license category either with their license cards or electronically. The Excel registration and results workbook will also include the most recent USAC road database so if they show up without either you will be able to look them up.

Typical problems with registration include:

- **License number** incorrectly entered, which pulls up the wrong name or no name;
- **Bib number** for the wrong race (wrong sequence) given to a rider (i.e. Cat. 4 rider with a Cat. 1/2 bib number);
- **1-Day license** riders not identified as such;
- **Wrong category:** Riders registered in classes or categories for which they are not eligible. Sometime this is a registration error, sometimes the rider thinks he or she can ride the incorrect category. Riders who have annual licenses for Cat. 1-4 can never race on 1-day licenses, even if they have not renewed their annual licenses. Once a rider is upgraded from Cat. 5 he or she can never race as a Cat. 5 again.
- Riders allowed to enter with **licenses from other disciplines**. This may be changing somewhat at USAC if they go to a single multiple-discipline license, but presently a rider with only a mountain bike license cannot enter a road race (RR, TT, Crit, CX) without also having a road license. Likewise with collegiate licenses. Some races may attract riders from continental pro teams who have only UCI licenses. Those riders will not come up in the regular USAC road rider database, and there are some restrictions as to which pro riders can enter races open to Category 1 riders. If this is anticipated, be sure there is an official on hand for registration and contact the chief referee ahead of time.
- **Incompletely filled out or signed release forms.** Riders are in a hurry on race day and tend to leave information on the release form blank. You need to require that they fill in everything on the form and you should be sure to check for a signature. Incompletely filled out forms could jeopardize your liability protection.
- **Wrong release forms** printed out or forms printed out in reduced format. For race-day entries be sure that you have the correct release form for licensed riders that includes space for club/team, license number, etc. USAC has a number of different forms on their website.

Results and Prizes:

You should identify a place where results will be posted. Sometimes this will be on an extra folding table, but ideally a large vertical surface (wall, side of a van, etc.) in the vicinity of the finish line.

How quickly the results of each race are ready will depend on a number of factors:

- Accuracy of registration information;
- Ability of the race camera(s) to capture bib numbers;
- Ability of judges to place riders, identify lapped riders, etc.
- Number of available officials: If the same official who is judging the finish and staging the start is also responsible for entering and printing out results, there may be a long delay in getting results posted, especially for a road race in which there are many stragglers out on the course belonging to multiple different races. As long as riders are still on the course, a single official cannot break away to start reviewing video, tape recorders, and finish sheets.
- Ability to verify finishes and DNFs. Riders sometimes quit races without the knowledge of the officials. Sometimes there is a rider on the start sheet who does not actually start the race but who the officials are looking for.
- Once the results are final (15 minutes after posting without protest), the promoter or event organizer is responsible for conducting the awards ceremony. Likewise, if there are Primes that are won during the course of a Criterium, the race organizer should designate someone to be in charge of getting the Prime winners from the officials and giving out the prizes.
- After the race the Chief Referee will give the final results to the LAMBRA results coordinator who will post them to the LAMBRA website, format and upload them for the USAC results database, and use them to update the LCCS rankings (for LCCS events). Results are generally posted to the LAMBRA site within 24 hours. Uploading to USAC and updating the LCCS rankings can take a number of days. If results are needed for the media, be sure to get them from the Chief Referee at the race.

Post-Event:

At the end of the event, the Chief Referee can complete the USAC post-event report online, if possible, which will result in an email to the event promoter informing him or her that the post-event report is ready for review and that the post-event fees are ready for payment. Payment can be made online via credit card or by applying any online registration revenue (if using the USAC system) to the fees, or by check/mail. The event will not be closed out at USAC until the post-event report has been completed, fees (insurance, license sales) have been paid, and any one-day license release forms have been received.