

2011 Duathlon National Championship
Town Hall Meeting Discussions
April 30, 2011 at 5:00pm – 6:00pm
Tucson, Arizona

Tim Yount – Introduces Tonya Armstrong
Tonya Armstrong

- All attendees were welcomed to Tucson for the 2011 Duathlon National Championships.
- Athletes were thanked for competing at Nationals.
- The USAT race committee, Jeff Dyrek, and all the volunteers were thanked for a very organized, safe, and well run event.
- Athletes who participated in the focus groups were thanked for their valuable feedback.
- Athletes were reminded to get their drink tickets provided by the Duathlon Committee.
- Tonya explained the mission of the USAT Duathlon Commission: To grow the sport of duathlon at the grass roots level.
- The Duathlon Committee was presented: *Co-Chairs*: Faye Yates, Tim Armstrong & Tonya Armstrong *Active Members*: Brian Grasky, Anne Curi Presig, Jim Presig, Bill Rule, Carol Whipple, Dave Lasorsa, Don Forgione, Jason Digman, Jeff Trout, Judi Carbury, Linda Mallers, Stephen Koranda, Virginia Poyner.
 - In attendance:
 - Bill Rule
 - Carol Whipple
 - Jeff Trout
 - Ginny Poyner
 - Brian Grasky
 - Tim Armstrong
 - Tonya Armstrong
- The past 18 months the USAT Duathlon Committee has been working on a 30 page working document to grow the sport of duathlon at the grassroots level. The Duathlon Master Plan was to insure the long term growth potential of duathlon. It was also created to help improve the organization and growth of duathlon as a whole.
- The Committee and USAT Staff (Wendy Peel & Tim Yount) put in a lot of time and hard work to develop the plan.
- 2011 Short Term Goals
 - The Duathlon Committee picked 11 items from the plan to consider working on for the year. Each committee member was to prioritize the list and send it back to the co-chairs.
 - Results of the Voting:
 - Establishing regional championships in each of the 10 USAT regions and working closely with the regions to develop a duathlon series within the regions, both entry level and mid-distance races.
 - Depending on the USAT budget, special awards could be given to the age group winners at the Duathlon Regional Championships.

- Increasing promotions through website and media outlets using the USAT National Office and the 10 USAT Regions.
 - Examples
 - Working with clubs at a national and regional level
 - Setting up a website URL to duathlon and information about duathlons on the USAT website.
 - Setting up a booth at large running and cycling expos to promote regional and local duathlon races.
 - Promotion at the Community Level such as YMCAs, police, fitness centers, recreation groups.
- 2012-2013 Goals
 - Youth Duathlon
 - USAT and committee to work with regions on setting up duathlon races for youth.
 - Collegiate Duathlon Plan
 - USAT and committee will work on setting up a system to move towards a Collegiate Duathlon National Championship

Audience Discussion – Questions & Comments

- Why are most duathlons not sanctioned with USAT? How can we convert these race directors to sanction?
 - *Tim Yount:*
 - As athletes you will want to reach out to the race directors and encourage them to sanction their events. Explain the benefits that you see as an athlete.
- What about the Race Directors who do not have a negative relationship with USAT?
 - *Tim Yount:*
 - We may never be able to change their minds to sanction with our organization. It might best to work with the new race directors to sanction their races.
- What Incentives can we provide Race Directors to put on a duathlon event?
 - *Athletes/Tim Yount:*
 - Grant System
 - Funding to support the sanctioning process
 - Sponsorships to assist sanctioning race directors – Awards/Nutrition/T-shirts/etc.
- Why is the 2011 Duathlon National Championship not as success in past duathlon events in terms of participation?
 - *Tim Yount:*
 - If you look at the numbers in our first year at Richmond, we have surpassed the participation numbers.
 - To improve the numbers - We need testimonials for duathlon. Athletes will need to help spread the word about the championship event
 - Bring a friend to the event. This will help grow the event and the sport.
 - *Celeste Callahan:*
 - We need to reinvent duathlon to our membership.

- The sport is harder than a triathlon event.
 - Encourage your friends and teammates to end the event in 2012
 - We will have 1,500 athletes in 2012
- Athletes:
 - There needs to be a kid's event. Parents would be willing to come back if they can get the whole family involved.
- Has USAT considered hosting the Duathlon National Championship at a different time?
 - *Athletes/Tim Yount/Wendy Peel*
 - Spring vs. Fall
 - USAT is holding the event during the same weekend major cycling, marathon and triathlon events
 - Athletes in the northern states are not prepared to compete in a national championship in April due to weather limitations.
 - Athletes participating on Team USA did not want to change the date. The qualification standards could change if the event was in the later months.
 - Athletes can provide feedback on the event date via the Duathlon National Championship Survey
- Is the event more popular in the east coast vs. the west coast?
 - Richmond had a lot more numbers because they were pulling from larger metropolitan cities.
 - We are losing athletes because we are moving it around each year.
- How do we remove the stigma of duathlon from race directors?
 - *Athletes/Tim Yount:*
 - Need athletes to participate in these events
 - People need to think that the sport is innovative.
- Duathlon vs. Triathlon
 - Issue with the organizations name
 - Issue with signage at the event
 - Issue with "triathlon" placed on award medals
 - Need visibility in both sports
- USAT Needs to develop a Duathlon Series much like the Coors Light & Dannon Series.
 - *Tim Yount:*
 - The duathlon committee would like to work with the regions on this type of programming.
 - The series were successful because there were not that many events available in the 80's and early 90's. Today, we have 3,000 plus sanctioned events making it difficult for athletes to travel across the country when there is an event in their backyard.
- Promotional Items
 - There are articles in major running/cycling magazines on "how to compete in triathlons". How can we educate the athletes/writers about duathlon?
 - Write articles about health factors of duathlon – can't swim or injured, focus on duathlon.
 - Purchase advertising in Runner's World Magazine

- Note: Advertising in Runners World cost \$100,000
 - There needs to be more programming in the regions. We will build the sport at the grassroots level through local/regional events.
- Existing Events/New Programming:
 - Life time fitness combine triathlon with duathlon
 - Du the Tri/Tri the Du
 - Duathletes Vs. Triathletes
 - Make the run & the swim competitive so the first swimmer and first runner are entering transition at the same time.
 - Princess Desert is coming back.
 - Need to work with race director to become sanctioned with USAT. Need to rebuild the relationship.
 - Develop more excitement through duathlon with new racing formats
 - Bike Criterium/Formula-1 Race
 - Ironman makes a statement with their events. How can we build on their programming?
 - We do this through the Powerman events
 - USAT Needs to reach out to the Stage Races
 - Athletes in the Northeast have expensive time trial bikes that they are not able to use.
 - Northeast would be looking for a race in the summer vs. an April event.
- Education
 - Athlete:
 - Use USAT certified coaches to promote the sport
 - There are many coaches excited about duathlon
 - The coaches will bring athletes to regional and national championship events