

Jeph Abara suggests ways to lower entry fees

(The comments are by Jeff Abara. He was requested to submit an article about how road races possibly could lower their entry fees. He has been objecting for several months to the fees that have been rising over the years. His views might not necessarily represent the views of this website.)



First, one way to control road race entry fees is for race organizers not be corporate greedy such as, say, oil companies are wont to be. In other words, they should not try to fleece the runners/walkers because some of the racers can and will pay whatever the fee is, but many can't afford the super-high fees.

Organizers with populist tendencies will endeavor to make the fees affordable and hope to engage as many people as possible. In contrast, pure capitalist organizers will want to maximize their revenue, whatever it takes, including super-high entry fees. (One probably can develop an economic/mathematical model that can provide the ideal fee; somewhere between these recent high fees and the traditional,

lower ones; which will actually maximize profit. But I won't go there with this short answer.)

Second will be to lower the race production costs so that the races still can be profitable at the lower entry fees.

How?

- Seek out professional T-shirt, cap and other complimentary giveaway suppliers with good quality and reasonable prices. And don't go overboard on the number of colors on the T-shirt design (the more colors, the higher the prices); three or four colors should be plenty.

- If uniformed police are needed, see if one can get some of them as volunteers for nominal or no fees. Or race in the park, as some of us do, and minimize or eliminate the police fee.

- Deal with finish line outfits that provide quality service for reasonable fees.

- A race of 400 or fewer participants doesn't really need to incur the added cost of computer chip-timing. The Chronomix (or similar equipment) / bib number tear-off

combination remains quite adequate for that size of race; which applies to most races in this area.

- Don't spend too much on the performance awards since most participants won't win any of them anyway. Only the fastest finishers have a chance at those. In a 400-field race, for instance, typically only 25% or fewer will win any awards.

Medals, etc. @ \$4 or less are quite appropriate. Let runners/walkers looking for exotic, expensive awards go elsewhere!

- Try to get post-race refreshments donated or purchase them at reasonable prices.