

Recap: Mideast/Midwest Regional Race Director Symposium (December 7, 2013)

Saturday morning began with breakfast and ample time for everyone to mingle, eat, and check-in.



Our session started off with Lucy Harr (ROC from the Midwest Region) and our own Graham Wilson stepping in for Rosalyn Popham. They did a great job equally balancing the presentation and discussion between the two of them. There was quite a bit of interactive discussion between the audience and presenters. Everyone was quite pleased with it all. There was also excellent feedback for how things have been working well with the officials and where there would be areas for improvement.

Keri Serota and Colin Grove from the Midwest Region followed with a presentation on paratriathlon. They did an excellent job talking about considerations one should make when planning a race with paratriathletes in mind. Keri also talked about the “para friendly” sanctioning process and Colin walked us through a very entertaining testing system using our phone to see if we were paying attention!



Barry Siff presented the current status of USA Triathlon and talked about several programs that are underway or have already been rolled out. He showed us video of the super sprint series that has been initiated to generate a new exciting format of racing to generate more mainstream sponsorship and media support. He also talked about the upcoming NCAA vote to start triathlon as a collegiate sport. His presentation was well received with several questions from the audience.

After lunch, we had the opportunity to hear from our three vendors that came to the symposium:



Zach Ruske from Finis told us about the equipment they have available as well as event sponsorship opportunities (finishing arches, sighting buoys, etc.)



Lisa Maloney from Headsweats talked about custom headgear (visors and caps).



Chris Navin from FFC talked about the new USAT Certified Performance Center as well as an event promotion program that they were offering to Race Directors.



Meg Weagley from the National Office presented information about the Race Director Certification program as well as other initiatives that have been rolled out or will be newly introduced in 2014. These included the Youth Splash & Dash Series, the Retro-Tri series, and the MTR (mixed triathlon relay).



Eric Opdyke of REV3 wrapped up the day of presentations with an excellent overview of what they have done to improve swim safety at their events. He had several case studies to go over and some amazing photos to go along with them. The discussions generated during this presentation were very helpful for everyone in the room.



We were very fortunate to have a well balanced panel to field questions from the audience to end the day. They included: Kathy Matejka – Event Services at the National Office, Meg Weagley – Education Manager at the National Office, Kevin Smeltzer – Board of Directors, Jeff Grady – Mideast RD, Ann Vidro – Mideast RD, and Jim Donaldson – Mideast RD.

We only had time for about four topics to be discussed but those were very informative and well received by everyone.