

SO YOU WANT TO HOLD AN IFSSR SPONSORED SHOOTING EVENT

The best day for a sport shooting fundraiser isn't always the day the best weather days. Consider planning your event for the "fringe months" surrounding the high season, "Jan, Feb, March and April is usually the best months in NE Florida". There's good weather, everyone's schedules are likely to be less hectic." To draw a crowd, schedule your initial shooting fundraiser for a slow day for your area. You don't want to hold an event on the same day as a big parade, or worse, another sport shooting tournament. Read your local newspaper or contact your chamber of commerce for a community events calendar, and IFSSR for shooting events.

Once you have a few target dates in mind, work your IFSSR connection to gain access to a private or clubs in the area. The chance to shoot a premier course will get the die-hards drooling.

The most important thing is to plan ahead. Start a year in advance scheduling dates so you can get the best course at the best time.

Don't limit the invites to your sport shooting buddies. If the fundraiser benefits a project in your local community, ask them for a list of donors who might want to participate. Hold "best over all team" and "broken shotgun team" tournament to open the door for more participants at diverse skill levels. Some tournaments can provide side activities for non-shooters such as golf lessons with a pro, lunch buffets and afternoon social.

When you distribute "save the day" and invitations, make sure people can donate even if they can't attend. The Rotary Club of SouthPoint, Jacksonville FL, USA always includes a "donate only" option on all of their promotional material.

A substantial prize for a "clean score" 100% looks great on a brochure. (Think Mercedes or Mediterranean cruise). But what happens if someone actually wins and the prize is not "donated"? Do your proceeds vanish? Not if you buy hole-in-one type insurance. Here's how it works. The tournament organizer contacts an insurance company, which specializes in assisting sport tournaments. Tell the firm about the prize, event, and the number of shooters. The company calculates a premium, and the tournament organizer buys an insurance policy to pay for the prize if someone wins. Policies usually start at about US\$300 for a \$5,000 prize says Kerstin Murphy, operations manager of "Advantage Golf's" Colorado office.

Many tournament organizers don't realize just how many things they can sell to sponsors. First, are "stand sponsors" every stand has a price. You can sell the same stand to multiple sponsors simply by listing several logos on one stand sign. Prize stands count as premium property and should go for more.

All fliers and marketing materials should name sponsors. The Rotary Clubs of Southpoint & West Jacksonville, FL USA prominently thanks its donors on all marketing publications. The club also offers high and low brass tournament and "beverage cart" sponsorships at different price points. The high brass sponsorship costs the most but comes with the highest profile and includes special benefits, such as free registration for four participants.

Consider including a shoot-off contest and offering a company the chance to sponsor the shootings. For example the event could become the “Rotary Clay \$5,000 Shoot-Off” or the “Publix Clays Classic.” During your sales pitch, don’t forget to offer sponsors a link on the IFSSR’s tournament’s Website or a special mention during the event.

Where do you find all of these sponsors? Start at your weekly club meeting and branch out from there. The most well connected person in your club should be in charge of sales.

Thank each shooter with “a goody bag”. Fill bags with Tournaments shell premium logo items, pens from your local bank, chewing gum from the convenience store, sponsor donated items. There’s no need to buy anything you put in a goody bag: It’s more free publicity for your sponsors. Most club members will gladly donate "bag stuffers" as a way to promote their business.

After all the shooting is finished, tournament organizers often hold a lunch or dinner at the local clubhouse or get a tent donated. Find a local caterer to donate a meal for team entries. Make sure the food is good. You want to leave people salivating for next year. Before lunch/dinner is served, hold a raffle or a silent auction of donated items.

"We display our raffle items up front, and you drop a ticket in the box in front of them," says Joe Springer of the West Jacksonville club. He notes that the fund raisers benefit from peoples tendency to buy more than one raffle ticket to increase their odds of winning. Think outside of the box for this items...Big Green Eggs, tents, Outdoor Get Aways, Yeti coolers. Most of these items can be easily obtained as donations.

Pinpoint your niche

“The calendar in Jacksonville, FL is so crowded with fundraisers, you could probably shoot a sport shooting tournament every weekend in the summer,” within a 100 mile radius says Clark Vargas, past president of the Rotary Club of Southpoint. “You have to differentiate yourself.”

Vargas’s club found a place in the crowd each year by helping a local charity and staking out the first week of April. “We choose a worthy cause in our area and approach people who support the charity” he explains. “Every year we choose a different project.”

Several Rotary clubs in FL, hold a sport shooting tournament every year.

If you’ve been meaning to tell your Saturday morning sport shooting buddies about Rotary but couldn’t find the right moment. Inviting them to your club’s fundraiser is an ideal way to of involving them in Rotary.

At the tournament, make sure all participants receive information about Rotary and the Rotary Foundation so they understand where their money is going and how they can continue to help. Be sure to keep a mailing list of past sport shooters for recruitment purposes.

When it's all over, relax.....

Then clean your shotgun, your sport shooting shirt, and start planning next year's event.

Don't forget to send a report to the IFSSR about your event and include photos so they can be posted on Website and Facebook.