

2011 Cross Promoters Meeting

February 26, 2011

Golden Visitors Center

1-5pm

Attendees: Cade Bickmore, Lynn Bush , Galen Classen, Alan Enos, Zak Grabowski, Brian Graves, Chris Grealish, Frank Harney, Brian Hludzinski, Cory Kramer, Glenn Light, Tim Madden, Melissa Marts, Lucas McCain, Paul McCarthy, Bruce Miller , Davin Neubacher , Rob Noble, Tony Panigutti, Dale Riley, Doug Robinson , Adam Rachubinski, Doug Richard, Tim Sandell, Brad Schneider , Tim Shea, Bill Teasdale, Jason Trujillo, Rich Visscher, Talitha Vogt, Lee Waldman

ACA Board Members Present: Bill Barr, Clint Bickmore, Timothy Lynch, Lynn Taylor, Kayla Thomason

ACA Staff: Chris McGee, Yvonne van Gent, Jon Tarkington, Bruce Whitesel

Minutes by Chris McGee

Chris McGee introduced himself as the new Executive Director and welcomed promoters to the meeting. He noted the growth and quality of Colorado cross in the last years, with racer numbers over 9,000 for 2010 and nearly 30 medals at Cross Nationals awarded to Colorado racers of all ages and categories.

As part of the effort to encourage promoters to use the services of local on-line registration providers, Alan Enos from Madsync and Lucas McCain of PreRace described their online pre-registration services to cross promoters. The services of Clint & Clark at SignUp365 were also noted. Promoters, please look at our local providers when creating your online registration.

Bill Barr recognized Jon Tarkington's role in the ACA's recent success and financial stability.

Jon Tarkington took over as chair for the meeting, and began by asking all promoters to introduce themselves and give their opinion as to why Colorado cyclocross racers are finding so much success at the national (and international) level. Answers included (in no particular order):

- ACA has 40-50 teams that provide support for many skill levels and are committed to junior and development programs.
- Our good weather and altitude contribute to excellent training.
- The diversity of hard, quality courses gives racers the opportunity to experience a variety of cross situations.
- Full length races help our athletes prepare for shorter races in other settings.
- Many Colorado racers focus on Nationals for their season.
- Top end talent for local racing provides pressure for our racers to get better. Colorado a magnet for high end cycling talent.
- Cross attracts road, mountain, and tri athletes – brings lots of talent together.
- Back to back racing most weekends (for juniors too) lets racers improve quickly.
- Colorado's cycling culture brings passion and commitment to the sport.
- The Boulder cross training rides help riders of all levels to improve.

- Lots of new, fast faces keep the fields growing and getting faster.
- Lots of support between clubs on race day, including help in the pits.

Jon urged the promoters to keep these ideas in mind as we proceeded with the meeting. Jon's view is that cyclocross in Colorado is at a crossroads. The growth of the sport is forcing field sizes to be very large, this causes difficulties for officials and impacts the racer experience. Do we allow 200+ field sizes? Do we limit field sizes to 80 or 100? Where do we go and how do we shape cross in Colorado?

Jon suggested going to a 2-day schedule for Cross Cup events (as was the model for 2010 State Championships). Many racers (66% of survey respondents) choose to race only 1 day per weekend, so a 2-day schedule would not impact race participation numbers. Fields could be given their own time on the schedule without combining. Officials and many racers would benefit. While the benefits of the 2-day schedule were not seriously debated, there was very little interest from the promoters in promoting such a schedule given the additional work and cost involved, and the inability to secure most venues for 2 days. The 2-day schedule did not pass.

Brian Hludzinski made comments regarding the importance of holding Cross Cup promoters to the published Cross Cup standards, especially regarding course width to 3 meters, the use of big venues, course length to a minimum of 7 minutes, perhaps go to 8.5 minute laps, and make sure there is a separate start grid. Cross Cup races are supposed to be the best events on the schedule and promoters have a responsibility to ensure this is the case.

The separate start grid is very important for our cross race day schedule, as it allows staging while other racers are finishing. This allows promoters/officials to start the next race on schedule while allowing riders to finish. This solution is better than the USAC/UCI policy of pulling riders from the field (which is antithetical to a grassroots organization).

Lynn Taylor asked – could we use a standardized number schedule for Cross Cup races (ie, SM P,1 2 always wear 1-125, SM 3 always 150 – 300, etc). Promoters liked this suggestion and would like to use it for all cross races (except those with radically different schedules). Brian Hludzinski has generated and used a number system that will be reviewed by the Board's Technical Committee and then implemented for 2011.

The season calendar was finalized based on promoters' first choices and an impressive level of cooperation during the meeting. It is important to note that the two promoters that put in for State Championships came to an agreement in which DBC Events withdrew, providing Alpha Bicycle Company with the opportunity to promote the championship race.

The ACA cross season will run from the Sept 10th weekend thru December 18th (and perhaps through December 31st). No Cross Cup races will be allowed before Oct 1.

The difficulty of call-ups was discussed. Brian Hludzinski suggested that we use the free services of www.crossresults.com, a website that tracks cross results. Jon agreed that this system would work well, as many races in other parts of the country are using it. Pending approval from the new Cross Committee, we will use crossresults.com for non-Cross Cup races. The call-ups for the first Cross Cup race in 2011 will be based on 2010 Cross Cup results.

Bill spoke about the new timing system. As with the rollout of any new technology and system, this system will require patience and determination on the part of the ACA staff, promoters, officials and racers. Cross promoters should be able to learn from the example set by road promoters earlier in the season, especially how to deal with rental and one-day chips. For 2011, chips are required for Cross Cup races. Brian Hludzinski noted that his use of the chips at a race in the fall of 2010 was very good (His actual quote was “It’s awesome.”)

Many observations were noted:

- The growth of the singlespeed category and its likelihood to continue growing.
- Race fields are biggest between 9 and Noon.
- Boulder-based racing is significant in comparison to the rest of the state. At most events, half of the participants are from Boulder. Cross Cup races in 2010 tended to draw larger fields outside of Boulder than non-Cross Cup fields outside of Boulder.
- SM 35+ Cat 4 is the largest category.
- The rule that forbids pre-riding was very effective at reducing course clutter and bad interactions.
- Cross Cup 2011 will likely be 6 races.
- How do we upgrade sandbaggers out of 35+ Cat 4?
- Events after State Championships do not draw many racers. Hard to promote with less revenue. This is in conflict with our desire/need to have a longer schedule that includes races before US National Championships (Jan 4-8, 2012 in Madison, Wisconsin – be ready for cold and ice!)
- Perhaps we could have three defined race day schedules:
 - Longest race day schedule before time change
 - Medium race day schedule after time change
 - Short race day schedules after States so promoters could run a half day (smaller combined fields).
- The suggestion was raised – are we ready for two races on one day? The consensus was not until we can draw 800 – 1000 people to a single event.
- Dual-permitted (both USAC and ACA) days are very difficult. The best system created thus far is the race day schedule used by Chris Grealish at the Boulder Cup. The suggestion was made that other dual-permitted events should use this schedule.

Jon mentioned specific areas that need to be addressed:

- Different skill levels within the same field or combined fields.
- The race day schedule needs retooling.
- How to structure the race day for women.
- Make sure the proposed call-up process will work.

To make 2011 work more smoothly, a Cross Committee was established to work on these issues. Members of this committee are: Tony Panigutti, Bill Teasdale, Melissa Marts, Brian Hludzinski, Chris Grealish, Tim Madden, Lynn Taylor, Frank Harney and Chris McGee. Chris will contact members and organize the meeting.

Discussion was ended and meeting adjourned at 3:35.

