

COMMUNICATIONS: UPPING OUR GAME

Proposals by Bob Weiner, Chair, Media Subcommittee, with input from more than forty top athletes and organizers of MTF – November 15, 2017- Jan. 4, 2018

Proposals for what we all can DO to maximize common platform branding and increase coverage ON TV, RADIO, PRINT, WEBSITES, RELEASES, SOCIAL MEDIA, MARKETING, AND MTF WEBSITE.

TV, RADIO, PRINT, WEBSITES, RELEASES:

With your help and guidance, we've built the world's number one press operation! BUT AS REX SAID, WE WANT TO UP OUR GAME! We now get millions of viewers from or TV, radio, and print outreaches and releases for our national championships, and the results of our world championships. We work with all of you, and the LOC's, for guidance on the athletes of all masters ages to feature -- not just oldest and Olympians, but our world champions, national champions, age group winners, people with amazing life stories of career or recovery for example, and best locals. We have been fortunate to get the TV networks nationally and locally to accept and work with us on news hooks as draws. We carry out and pursue phone calls, emails, and faxes non-stop as the meet is close and underway. KEY HERE: LET'S BRAND WITH REX'S "#1 WORLD MASTERS TRACK & FIELD TEAM" AND EXPAND THIS WORK. We'll put the branding at top of releases, and make sure we have short, medium, and long versions of the releases (Rex's point in a recent meeting I had with him). We are also FYI achieving thousands of "media views" for each release according to PRN, and millions of TV viewers according to Nielsen ratings. People in home clubs are calling to say "saw the news of the meet with xxx great event."

*** That brings up CLUBS: We should get the available lists (all available on Google and via friends/contacts) of **ALL USATF AND RRCA CLUBS' NEWSLETTERS** and send NOTICES AND INVITATIONS to our CHAMPIONSHIPS TO EVERY ONE. Then, follow up by phone to the editors of the largest clubs' newsletters. THIS IS AN ENORMOUS MOSTLY UNEXPLOITED MARKET where we can expand our participation.

IN PREPARING THIS MEMO, WE CONTACTED more than 40 LEADERS as world class athletes and organizers we've worked closely with on MEDIA DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING WMA bests Kathy Martin, Bill Collins, Gary Patton, Bruce McBarnette, Phil Raschker, and many more. The two words of guidance request that came from virtually ALL of them; **Let's "INCREASE PARTICIPATION" at our championships.** Now we need to do more than traditional press—hence, the Club newsletters and social media, marketing, and website

2) **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Now, with Sandy's project we recruited and which Ken Stone had urged, we are achieving thousands of hits on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and we have hashtags for easy referral. EXPAND AND BRAND with our working to be “World's Number One Masters Track and Field Team” and BUILD THIS WITH MORE SUPPORT. It is critical to our future.

3) **MARKETING AND UPPING OUR BUDGET RESOURCES (BEYOND USATF ALLOCATIONS):** Reaching out for *sponsors* will take systematization and work, honestly, more than the talk we always do about it. As Bill said in e-com meeting, and Carroll said later, we need to coordinate fully and assure satisfaction and obtain leadership from USATF Indy. We have no real marketing person. However, a good sprinter reached out to us at a couple meets starting in Lyon and said go to financial and retirement organizations—yes. But we need to explain why MTF is a good and important gift investment where we will credit you (Mr./Ms. donor) and shows the importance of *lifetime fitness and health through training and competition* (another MTF “branding” we’ve regularly used and the press always picks it up. We must point out that the studies (Wash Post gathered and averaged them) say you gain 9 years on your life with a 3-day a week with half-hour fitness plan, and more years with more intense. Also say here is our media coverage, and we want your financial support! As targets, there are hundreds of companies—financial, retirement, fitness, spa, senior, etc etc. And of course brand our proposal for “world’s number one masters track and field team.” If we get a one-in 10 or 20 or big donations by the personal follow-up, WE’LL DO WELL FOR MTF. Our SOCIAL MEDIA is another important outreach mechanism for INTERNAL contributions—by our own masters members. Which leads to...

OTHER FUNDRAISING OPTIONS: An *estate giving plan* is already on website with the needed wording via attorney assistance to put money in wills for MTF; and gifts while living by mtf athletes. We are ALL dedicated, right? So it needs ADVERTISING – get the word out -- notes in NMN etc. Few know this program exists—and it has UNLIMITED POTENTIAL.

WEBSITE: Few have gone through the amazing substance Jeff Brower has on the website. First, we need to learn WHAT’S IN IT, AND it’s not advertised. Maybe have Jeff do BOTH an open primer conference call AND WEBINAR for all interested (Spoke with Jeff, he likes idea) for starters to let all know what’s on the site! SECOND, there are various requests for font and format improvements—some curved letters instead of stilted on the home page, to modernize. Jeff or whoever is the webmaster will WELCOME SPECIFIC offerings like running runners going back and forth in the corners, and a thrower or whatever. Let’s help with concrete (not general criticisms) wording or artwork or any specifics. I know John Seto also has an amazing MTF Rankings website now and is building a news web blog as well-- what a huge contributor to the MTF mission he is!

ANNOUNCING AT MEETS; and PUBLICIZING RECORDS/AGE WINNERS materials.

A big part of the press operation, as when Sandy Pashkin allowed me into the Perth announcer's room to collaborate with the announcers. They are happy to help—Pete Taylor has been invaluable over the years, and now Lisa as well. In Perth at worlds, Sandy Pashkin let me in to the announcer's room to ask the announcer to make a point that Bill Collins was about to sprint, he'd recovered from life-threatening Guillan Barre, and he could now break world records—and he right then won the 100 in world's fastest ever age time (unfortunately wind-aided) but it became THE headline for days as an inspirational recovery story, which it is. So let's continue the great announcers we have

In addition to Pete, instrumental with his knowledge and writing skills in helping us draft our releases, are MaryTrotto (so dedicated!) and now Rachel Gest and Jeff Brower also have been in providing chart info, all of which media love in picking stories. The releases' thoroughness with many options are very much appreciated and used by the press.

THIS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT--- WITH MORE IDEAS, MORE WILL BE ADDED!
THANKS SO MUCH FOR ALL YOU DO!!!!.

Here now are some sections of letters we requested and input you will appreciate, from some of our best and most dedicated:

11/6/17 From: **Kathryn Martin**

Bob, My thoughts are our participation is slowly increasing I think since I started running MT&F. I truly believe we need a broader reach to get to the local clubs & associations. Long Island is a hot bed of running yet we get very few participants at our national & world events. Runners do not even know these events exist. I have tried speaking to runners and I know Vicki Fox is doing a great job with the children but we cannot seem to get to the adults. Perhaps some videos of local runners that other athletes can relate to on a local level? show them at local club meetings & association meetings.

You mention we have no marketing person-did we ever?

I love the idea of rewarding athletes who compete with gear. We look like a team & people want to be a part of that community when they see the uniform. I had mine on the other day at a race & received many compliments & "wow where did you get that?" Maybe enticing?

So many people do so much for MTF & often are feel like they are thrown to the side. ie Mary Trotto does an exceptional job.. If it were not for other athletes who take newbies under their wing & show them how things work at these events, they would flounder.

Mary is just one example.

I love that Rex wants us to be #1 world masters track & field team. We would honor him to make it so.

Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to assist you. Thanks Kathy

(More from Kathy 😊)

From: **Kathryn Martin**

Date: Sat, Sep 9, 2017 at 10:04 AM

Subject: media leadership

Continued Personal Caliber & promotion of the sport is what Masters track & field needs, For the future, the key is increased participation in our championships. it's a real plus to have a leader & adviser in our masters events. Development of print media & our social media presence has grown & we always know there will be something about the events in the media within a very timely fashion. There was very little coverage of masters track & field events prior to the existing media committee. If bylaw changes need to be tweaked to keep this position, we ask that this be done. Thanks for your consideration. Many thanks Kathy & Chuck

PS- What we do now, lightening quick on getting a timely report out on games ie 3000 WR, is also critical, and we need more of.

William Collins

11/6/2017 9:44 AM

To **Robert Weiner**

Bob,

As always it's great to hear from you, trust this finds you doing well. I have been busy getting my house restored from the flood, had over three feet of water in the house. I always felt that in order for us to promote and move masters track and field to higher levels is all about getting the word and great stories out, this must be done at all levels. Local, State, Nationally and Internationally, web sites, media and grass roots programs. How do we tie into more of the National media like the elite and youth get?

Bob Cozens and myself have done local media things in Houston, this upcoming weekend we are honoring three masters athletes at our awards and appreciation barbecue. This will go out to the media and on our Gulf association web site. Things like this should be picked up by the national office and posted.

Best Wishes

William L. Collins

Director

Acala Sports

7653 Glen Manor Drive

Houston, Texas 77028

From Bruce McBarnette

On October 28, 2017 at 9:11 PM Bruce Mcbarnette wrote:

I hope you are doing well. I am in the Philippines right now getting ready to travel to Japan, but I did want to reach out to you

We need MORE of what we are doing. The media committee working tirelessly for our athletes for many years and have been truly impressed at the many media articles, radio interviews, and TV interviews has arranged with media to support our sport. In fact, I have frequently been interviewed by media representatives who would never have interviewed me if I had not been because of the MTF Media operation. The same is true for countless other athletes.

We must continue the art of pitching the story of Masters Track in a manner that maximizes attention for the sport –AS the stories of our eldest athletes a a hook for the entire meet . We've been successfully packaging these stories, getting the attention of the media, and then pitching to the media the outstanding performances of some of your younger athletes . My interviews came because we got the attention of the media using our elder athletes as the "hook."

Good luck.

Bruce McBarnette, Esq.

President
Summit Connection LLC
A Real Estate Investing Firm
<http://mcbarnette.com>

From Steve Cohen:

Gentlemen,

(Selections below, names deleted):

Rex's new brand that will be globally recognized may be subject to certain requirements of the "Communication" Subcommittee. The Media Committee's achievements and professionalism should be allowed to proceed. It would take ten people to do the work of the chair. Perhaps it should be discussed on the floor of the Annual meeting before the change for this Committee.

.

VERY best regards, on on to Upping our Game!

Bob Weiner

Chair, USATF MTF Media Committee

On November 4, 2017 at 9:01 PM Mary Trotto wrote:

I am not sure I can add anything to what we are already doing in coverage. Maybe the emphasis should be on increasing the numbers who participate.

One way to increase participation, our numbers are small compared to the senior games for example. Getting a national corporation or organization to be a sponsor for MTF . Possible partners would be AARP, Citi Bank, HMSA, Kaiser Permanente, Auto Brand (Ford, Chrysler etc.)

If we could get one major company to underwrite our National Championships, then we could lower the fees for registration. Additionally, each year we award about 40 Athlete of the Year awards. How about if we invited those award winners to participate free?

These are two ways we could lower the cost to our participants and thus increase the numbers who attend our events.

We could also look for a sponsor for our World Championships so that we can again reduce the cost of registration.

Another idea if we could not get sponsorships is to give special consideration and invitation to those who set World Records in the previous season.

We could highlight them, and their accomplishments as invited world class athletes attending Nationals. (only for US athletes)

with aloha

Mary