

MEDIA RELATIONS & PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

It is through public relations and publicity that clubs; sponsors and supporters involved with the event receive most noticeable benefits. With public recognition of their support, there will be numerous positive effects.

- 1) The general public will learn more about the sport of sailing. This awareness will support membership recruitment efforts.
- 2) The heightened awareness of the event sponsors will increase the likelihood that the particular sponsor could be retained in the future for the particular event.

CYA STRONGLY ENCOURAGES THE REGATTA HOST TO RUN A WEB SITE ON THE EVENT WITH SECTIONS ON THE NOTICE OF RACE, DAILY RESULTS, DAILY RACE REPORTS, NEWS RELEASES, ETC.

IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, THE CYA WILL TRY TO POST THIS INFO ON ITS WEB SITE. PLEASE CONTACT ERIKA IN FEBRUARY TO ORGANIZE A WEB PAGE FOR YOUR SITE OR TO LINK YOUR SITE TO THE CYA WEB SITE

MEDIA RELATIONS FOR EVENT PUBLICITY

This booklet contains basic information on how to promote your racing event. It is not intended as an all-inclusive guide to media relations but should provide the reader with the basic knowledge and tools to be effective in promoting club activities.

You will be able to judge the benefits of providing the media with correct and pertinent information and a reliable contact person by the amount of coverage you to get for your event. In this easy to follow guide we will take you through the steps one at a time. In a short time you will be able to determine what works best for the media in your particular area and the most effective way to service them.

The Canadian Yachting Association would like to thank Figure Skating Canada for allowing us to adapt their media guide material.

Thanks to Figure Skating Canada & Scammell Communication
For Allowing Us To Adapt Their Material

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So, You are Holding an Event!

The most simple and effective way to relay information to the media is through a news release.

First establish a media list which will include the daily newspapers, weekly and/or community newspapers, magazines, radio stations and television stations in your area. The list should also contain the name of the contact, title, address, phone and fax numbers as well as the deadlines. CYA has a national media list - major Canadian media - this list can be obtained by contacting the Kingston office.

The news release announcing the event should contain the Who, What, Where, When and Why of the event. It should provide the basic information only. It is not intended to tell the whole story. A contact name and telephone number should be listed at the bottom of the release so that anyone interested knows who to call for more details.

If the event is considered to be high profile enough to hold a media conference, the details should be included in the release. It is not always necessary to hold a media conference. The rule of thumb is to hold one only if there is something to announce that cannot be done simply through the media release (eg. corporate sponsorship, local community support, VIPs in attendance).

If you are planning a media conference, follow up the release with a reminder phone call to your media contact. Establish how many will be attending.

As developments take place between the time of the announcement of the event and the event itself, follow-up news releases or phone calls concerning volunteer support, local sailor participation, sponsorships, and community support can be made periodically to keep the media informed.

The final media release should be issued approximately one week before the event listing the final entries of any local sailors plus any "big name" sailors.

News Release

General information

1. Plan series of advance releases for both national and local media
2. Provide daily wrap-up news release during event
3. Set up media fax and email list
4. Send media notice of opening press conference listing day, time, location

Writing a News Release

1. Include a brief, but catchy heading; it helps the editor or producer decide whether or not to read on.
2. The lead should provide a summary of information expanding on the heading. The lead follows the 5 W's policy - who, what, when, where, why.
3. Including a quote gives credibility to the release providing it is a quote of substance.
4. Information on other sailors or personalities can be included in the body of the release. Some of the local people can be mentioned, if they are "newsworthy" e.g., they have had good results at past events, a good chance at a medal, or are coming back after a year plagued with injury. Something unusual is newsworthy and interesting, but remember to keep it short.
5. Don't forget to list the contact's name and phone number - for any and all information requests that come from the media.

Specific points on release announcing the event

1. It is better to send a release on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday rather than Monday (after a busy weekend your release may get ignored) or Friday (coming up to a weekend where many other things are planned and again your release may be put aside).
2. If spectator boats are still available or if the races can be seen from the shore, let the media know so they can inform the public. Also, the contact person's name and phone number is included for any possible calls for information on the events.

Media accreditation

1. Develop "Master List" of accredited media
2. Prepare accreditation form
3. Distribute with news release to special media list
4. Send confirmation letter two weeks before event to each media

Sample Media Accreditation Form
(To be sent 3 months ahead)
Media Accreditation

2001 World Championship, Location, Date

Name (please print):

Agency:

Address: _____ Telephone:

(Day) _____ (Night) _____ (Fax) _____

Classification

(a) Print Journalist: Sports ___ Daily ___ Weekly ___ Other ___

(b) Radio: Sports ___ Special feature/editorial ___ Other ___

(c) Television: Broadcaster ___ Technician ___ Other ___

(d) Photographer: _____

Requirements

Telephone ___ Typewriter ___ Computer/Printer ___ Fax ___ Motor Boat ___ Phone lines ___

Other (please specify) _____

Media Hotel: Name of hotel Rates (cdn): \$single/double
Address GST and service tax
Phone number
Fax number

Do you require us to book accommodation for you? Yes ___ No ___
Single ___ Double ___

Credit card name number _____ Expiry _____

**** If this information is not provided we cannot guarantee you a room****

Arrival date & time: _____ Check out date & time: _____

Signature of applicant Date Signature of editor

Please return by: Date (a month ahead) to: Local PR Person, Address,
Telephone number/Fax Number

Hosting a News Conference

Hold a media conference when what you have to say needs to be explained in more detail than can be done in a media release or when there is a particular person or company involved who is of

news value.

News Conference Organization

1. **Date & Time**
Choose a "light" news day, when little else is happening and will not conflict with any other media event. A news conference staged just before noon will ensure that your message will get into the evening news, although it will be too late for the mid-day reports. Never start your conference more than fifteen minutes past the scheduled start time.
2. **Location**
If your club has an appropriate room for this type of event, then all you have to do is supply the refreshments. A hotel meeting room can usually be catered easily or your local community centre can sometimes provide space cheaply. A central location is preferred providing easy access from all parts of the town.
3. **Invitations**
Mail or hand deliver typed invitations to the media two weeks in advance. Make sure you include an RSVP and a contact name and phone number. Follow up with a phone call a few days before the conference to remind them of the time and location.
4. **Media Kits**
Kits containing a media release, explaining the reason for the conference, biographical information on any sailors or other personalities present, background information on the event, profiles of the sponsor, specific sailors information etc. should be distributed.
5. **Refreshments**
Sandwiches and coffee, tea and soft drinks are adequate for a media conference.
6. **M.C. and Guests**
Your Master of Ceremonies should have a clear, commanding voice and a good sense of timing. Key club and community people should be on hand to answer any questions. Also try to have sailors available for photo opportunities and special feature interviews. Be aware of the particular needs of some to the electronic media (for example some TV stations might want to film some sailors in action, make sure you have access to motor boats, sailboat/board). Try to determine ahead of time what the electrical and lighting requirements will be.
7. **Equipment Needed and Room Set-Up**
The room should have a lectern and a microphone at the front of the room, and a table and chairs on either side of the lectern for guests and VIPs. Chairs should be set theatre style, facing the lectern, for those in attendance. Tables can be placed at the back of the room for food and beverages.
8. **After the Conference**
Make a list of who attended and which organization they represented. Send any of the

invited media not present a media kit folder from the conference.

Press Conference Check List

- room
 - registration table with person to register media
 - good lighting
 - sound checked
 - podium satisfactory height
 - table microphones for speakers if required
 - head table or seating for speakers
 - seating for all media
 - area for television cameras (one tripod requires approximately five feet across)

- guest speakers
 - speakers arranged and briefed
 - athletes arranged and briefed
 - transportation arranged both ways
 - follow-up phone call to all athletes who have been invited
 - speeches copied for press kit
 - speeches translated into French if required
 - should review speeches two weeks before if possible

- media
 - follow-up with reminder to all accredited media
 - invitation to press conference sent to all local media
 - follow up calls made day of conference

- invitations
 - media
 - sponsors
 - association
 - others

- info kit
 - produced (including speeches)
 - translated if required
 - taken to press conference room

- signs
 - ensure direction signs to room
 - get banners, photos, signs from association
 - get banners, signs from sponsor

- day-before walk-through

- sound test
- lighting test
- confirm refreshments
- get signs ready

- day of conference

- put up direction signs
- put up association/sponsor signs
- meet with all speakers
- dry-run in room, using mikes

Media Requirements At Competitions

The following is required for media to do their job:

1. Media room
 - sufficient electrical outlets for portable computers
 - fax machine with separate phone line
 - lighting
 - interview area
 - lounge area with comfortable seats
 - media passes with names
 - photo copy machine
 - easy access to the sailboat parking area.
2. Working tables
 - six feet long
 - against wall to leave open space for socializing
 - two chairs per table
3. Computers and printers (although many media have their own computers). Local media may choose to go back to their respective offices but some will want to work on the premises.
4. Many phones and extra phone lines so that the journalists can send their articles to their newspaper directly from the regatta site.
 - determine number of additional lines required
 - operated assisted for long distance
5. A results board
 - easily accessible to all media
 - a peg-board if possible although a wall is fine
 - away from door so non-media can't take results
 - press clipping
 - sponsor poster & event poster
6. Sufficient quantities for results should always be available.
7. Such items such as coat racks, ashtrays, waste baskets etc.
8. Bulletin board- for any announcements.
9. Food & drink: abundant supply of coffee, cups, creamers, sugar and stir sticks, some snacks (sandwiches, munchies etc.) are also appreciated as most media do not have the

opportunity to stop for meals.

10. Media boats to provide easy access to the race course(s) for photo/film opportunities or sailor's interviews between races. These boats should be very stable.
11. Press chief binder
 - list of media attending
 - list of all media deadlines
 - list of phone numbers for key association people, athletes
 - schedule of events
 - schedule of key athletes
 - sailing instructions
12. Signs
 - at main entrance pointing to media room
 - as required along corridors
 - outside media room
 - bilingual if required
 - smoking area/ashtrays
13. Supplies
 - pens, scotch tape, post-its, highlighter, paper clips, glue stick
 - two and three-hole punch
 - stapler & staples
 - thumb tacks
 - masking tape
 - labels

What to Include In An Event Media Kit

Media kits provide all the background information the media need to cover your event effectively. A sufficient quantity should be prepared in advance for the media to pick up at the beginning of the event or at registration.

1. **Contents**

- fact sheet on association
- fact sheet on sport (specific sailing/windsurfing information that may or may not be technical in nature but would provide background on the sport for those not familiar with it)
- history of association (short, bullet form)
- list of organising committee members
- copies of any speeches given at opening press conference
- message from president welcoming the media
- up-to-date athlete and coach biographies (The CYA has bio for the Canadian Sailing Team athletes)
- thumbnail sketches of top foreign competitors
- list of all athletes with hometown, yacht club and country (or province)
- number of countries (and/or provinces) competing
- results from the same event in the previous year
- current Canadian/world rankings
- a regatta schedule - dates, times, locations
- event program (if available)
- previous press release(s) on the event
- information on any sponsors underwriting any of the costs of the event. Ask the president or local contact to supply you with background on the company. The media person may end up using this, or at least part of it, in some of the stories (your sponsor will love it!)
- technical information on class and event

2. **Folders**

- standard association folders or specially designed for event

Remember, if you are having any receptions during the event to invite the media; it is good public relations.

Other Requirements

A media relations person should be on hand in the media room to answer any questions the media may have and to arrange interviews, with sailors, officials or sponsors and to provide story ideas. This individual should also ensure that results are provided to the media as soon as they are available.

Most media attending will be working to a nightly deadline. Deadlines vary according to the agency but often they fall very close to the end of the competition (10:00pm - 11:00 pm for daily newspapers). Any assistance you can provide for them to have the results in record time or a quote from the winning athlete will be greatly appreciated by the media.

Make sure the sailors understand that if they want everyone to read about their achievements they have to cooperate with you and/or the media.

If possible the media relations person working at the event should be the same person whose name appears on the media releases. This provided continuity for the media.

Be prepared to phone or fax results to any media who are unable to attend the event but would still like to cover it. Know their deadlines and make every effort to meet them.

The media relations person should be kept informed of everything that is happening at the event. There is nothing more discrediting to an organization than an uninformed publicity person.

SAMPLE MEDIA RELATIONS PLAN -- SIX MONTHS LEAD TIME

Event

- **Canada Cup Boxing Tournament**
- **June 14-19, 2001**
- **Halifax, Nova Scotia**

1. organizing committee meeting
 - attend meeting
 - introduce self
 - discuss your media relations plan
 - find out about media passes, media access, parking, press conferences, media hotel
2. press conferences
 - decide how many press conferences are necessary
 - select dates
 - inspect potential sites
 - select site
 - if holding press conference to announce event
 - plan press conference agenda
 - invite speakers
 - write speeches if necessary
 - inform media
 - arrange food/drink
 - prepare press kits
 - host conference
3. press releases
 - write press release announcing event
 - transmit press release to CP
 - mail or hand deliver to all local media
4. sponsorship
 - meet with marketing chairman
 - decide what items you could get free from a sponsor
5. media room
 - inspect facilities
 - develop media room checklist
 - review results procedure
6. media hotel
 - if doing hotel arrangements for media, develop contact on local committee and meet with hotel staff

Three months before event - March 2001

1. media passes
 - confirm media passes being made
2. sponsorship
 - check on status of sponsored items for media room
3. media room
 - order equipment as required for media room
4. press kits
 - design press kits for event
 - begin compiling information or assigning writing
 - deadline for materials beginning of April
5. media accreditation
 - draft media accreditation letter
 - get accreditation forms
 - draft letter of reply to accreditation request
6. press releases
 - send local press release to announce tickets going on sale or anything else relevant) by hand or mail

Two months before event - April 2001

1. press kits
 - copy all material for press kits
 - get folders
2. opening press conference
 - order equipment
 - order food/drink
 - write program
 - invite guests/speakers, athletes
 - tell them to prepare speeches
 - begin writing speeches if necessary
3. media accreditation
 - write press release announcing accreditation
 - mail press release and accreditation forms to local media, special media
 - transmit press release announcing accreditation through CP
 - reply to media including invitation to opening press conference and confirming hotel reservations if appropriate

4. media hotel
 - inform media who will be staying

One month before event - May 2001

1. attend organizing committee meeting with update
2. confirm sponsors for items for media room
3. do final copying for press kits
4. opening press conference
 - review speeches
 - write any speeches as required
 - confirm attendance of quests, athletes
 - arrange for signage for media room
 - confirm food/drink
 - confirm equipment
5. confirm media hotel rooms

Two weeks before event - June 2001

1. opening press conference
 - make copies of speeches for press kit if you are going to use them
 - distribute invitations to local media
 - get all the signs you will be using
 - transmit press release announcing event and press conference to CP
 - contact local media and big-name national media who have not responded

One week before event - June 12, 2001

1. stuff press kits
 - send copies to local contact
 - have contact distribute by hand to local media
 - confirm all details for press conference
 - confirm travel plans with all out of town media who will attend
 - confirm own travel plans

Two days before event - June 17

1. arrive on site
2. call all local media to introduce self, remind about conference

3. walk-through media room again to make sure everything in place

One day before event - June 18

1. take press kits to press centre
2. media room
 - set up media room
 - set up registration desk
3. media drop-offs
 - to all radio, television, papers

Day of event - June 19

1. take press kits to press conference
2. walk-through opening press conference in morning with all players
 - check for sound, lighting, TV positions, signage

More questions? Please contact CYA!