

How to organize a charity sporting clays fundraising tournament

Your organization has decided to host a charity sporting clays tournament and you've been asked to help plan it. The content created here is designed to help answer this question, "**How to organize a sporting clays tournament?**" Below we've provided some basic guidelines for you to consider as you start organizing your sporting clays tournament. A sporting clays tournament is very similar to a golf tournament, This information should help keep your planning process on track, and make you look like a pro the day of your charity sporting clays tournament. Whether this is your first time planning a sporting clays tournament or you already have an established fundraising event, these tips may help.

Planning and Research

The first step in organizing a charity sporting clays tournament is establishing goals. Determine how much money you need to raise and estimate costs as this will influence your planning. Charity sporting clays tournaments are known to be one of the most lucrative fundraising events if done right. Create a written project plan that spells out goals and outlines roles and responsibilities.

Before you start your planning, do some research. Contact your local sporting clays range to find out if other sporting clays tournaments are taking place in your area. Over saturation of too many sporting clays fundraisers could lead to low attendance and unattainable financial goals. This should also be carefully considered when selecting the date of your event, as you'll want to avoid competing against other tournaments or large community charity events.

Assemble a Planning Committee

Successful events hinge on the recruitment and action of a strong leadership team. Ideally your team should be comprised of individuals with diverse skills and talents that share a common interest in the organization's success. It is also highly suggested that you get knowledgeable sporting clays shooters involved on your event planning committee. They may not know about fundraising, but they've been to enough sporting clays tournaments to know what works and what doesn't.

Working smart at this stage of the game requires delegation. Consider assigning a person (or team of people) to the following project areas:

Corporate Sponsorship and Donations: This person or team should have experience in sales and building partnerships to create sponsorship packages that outline benefits and obligations. They will then raise money for your organization by soliciting event sponsorship from local businesses. This group will want to work closely with the marketing team to ensure all sponsorship obligations are fulfilled (i.e. signage, logo inclusion on printed materials, thank you's, etc).

Marketing & Public Relations: It will be beneficial to have someone with a communications background for this role. This person will write press releases and pitch story ideas to media.

They will also create print and promotional materials (i.e. flyers, print ads, event posters, etc.) to help spread the word about the event throughout the community.

Hospitality & Day of Event Operations: He or she organizes "day of event" logistics including table or tent rentals, raffle tickets, cash boxes, golf cart rentals, placing event signage, etc. This group also plans pre- and post-event meals and activities, and coordinates entertainment. It may be a nice gesture to have an on-site photographer to take pictures at the event. These will be great assets for the post-event recap on your website, newsletter, etc.

Prize Committee: This person or group is responsible for finding items for goody bags that each shooter receives such as hats, ear plugs, safety glasses and other small promotional items. Procuring trophies for the winning teams and high individuals. **Shop for and discuss trophy and tournament memorabilia with a reputable vendor as far in advance as possible.** Custom trophies, t-shirts and promotional materials often require planning and ordering.. They will also work with the sponsorship coordinator to assist with obtaining donated items for raffles or silent auctions.

Volunteer Committee: This group will organize staff & volunteers for day of event activities including:

- Rules judge - Recruit a few volunteers who know the game of sporting clays well enough to help keep order on the course, answer questions and judge on-course contests, etc.
- Welcome Committee - Friendly, outgoing individuals to welcome guests, set up registration tables, prize tables, distribute goody bags, snacks, drink tickets, sell raffle tickets, etc.

Selecting & Negotiating with the Gun Club

A critical step in the planning process is the selection of the actual gun club. You'll want to iron out the details with the course staff. Putting everything into writing and signing an agreement can alleviate confusion on tournament day. Here are some things you'll want to include in your contract:

Date and time: Be flexible here! Courses may offer discounts for off-season or mid-week dates.

Description of tournament services: Are golf carts, scorecards, gratuities and service fees, etc. included?

Total costs: Costs per shooter, costs for food, beverage, services, etc. and due dates for deposit and final payment. Consider asking a local business to pick up this tab by being "title" sponsor of your charity sporting clays outing.

Cancelation terms and weather policy

In summary, make sure you are prepared with a list of questions before you start negotiations with the course. You may want to compare costs and services between a few different courses to ensure you are getting a fair deal, and put everything in writing to protect your organization. But most important, make sure you feel comfortable with the terms and the staff at the course as you want to make sure the course will treat your guests to a great day of hospitality!

Tip 1. Staffing your Tournament

Do not attempt a tournament alone. You will get frustrated and burnt out. Tournaments are fun and exciting to be a part of. There are many people that want to volunteer on your team. They just need to be asked. Committees are essential for producing a successful event. When working with a committee, here are a few key things to remember:

1. Finding Volunteers - Committee members are found within your industry. Call on vendors and businesses in your industry.
2. Recruiting Volunteers - Give them what they want. They want to network, serve, make friends, pay dues, see action and get recognition.
3. Give Volunteers Direction - Set goals and give instructions in writing. You will be more productive if you give direction.
4. Reward your Volunteers - Your committee will be loyal and return year after if you give reward them with gifts, incentives, exposure and recognition.

Tip 2. How to Sell Sponsors

Sponsors are the profit. The more sponsors you have the more money you will make. Sponsors are companies that want to give to your cause, build relations with your members and most important have a relation with you. Call on all of the vendors within your industry, give them value and the opportunity to invest. Sponsors want a return on investment.

Tip 3. How to Recruit Shooters

Without shooters you have no tournament. Shooters will play in your event if you show them a good time, you give them value and they have a relationship with you. Shooters expect to pay for their round of sporting clays, their meal and a reasonable donation to the charity.

Tip 4. Promoting Your Tournament

Spending money on promotion is not necessary if you have a good committee and you produce a good event. Networking is the key. The best promotion is relationships. Shooters and sponsors will return year after year. Be ready to preregister for next year's tournament. Your gun club can only handle a given number of shooters. If shooters have a good experience during your tournament, they will not want to miss it next year. Create a database of team leaders and their e-mail addresses, so you can contact them with next year's date, when it becomes available. Team leaders will try to fill their teams. As your tournament becomes popular there are chances you can run a morning and an afternoon tournament.

Tip 5. Games & Contests

Games and contests build memories. Give them games and contests and they will remember your event. It also gives you an opportunity to announce more winners. The more winners you have the better. Many gun clubs will be able to include a 5-stand setup, a wobble trap or a flurry.

Tip 6. Quality Prizes

The quality of prizes, determine the quality of your event. Give them quality merchandise. Try to trade with sponsors. Prizes include: goody bags given to the shooters when they arrive, contest prizes, winner prizes, raffle items, and auction items.

Tip 7. Tournament Operations

Sweat the details. Watch everything from the spelling of everyone's name to starting on time. Inform all of the committee of all of the details so that they can be helpful. Your gun club should have a good idea of how long it will take for shooters to complete the course. Have your food ready when shooters start coming off the course. Have your scoring committee ready to tally scores as soon as score cards are turned in. Nothing disappoints a shooter more than having to leave without knowing if he won an award or prize. If you run two flytes, have prizes and awards for each flyte.

Tip 8. Time Line

Start 6 months in advance, reserve the course 5 months out, contact sponsors as soon as possible, contact shooters 60 days in advance.

Tip 9. Additional Revenue

Mulligan's, gambling hole, contests, raffles and auctions can take you event to a new level.

Tip 10. Food & Beverage

Give them good food. Be sure to have a drink cart if it is hot weather. Many shooters will be walking the course and will not be able to carry more than their gun and shells.

Wrap Up & Follow Up

Pay your bills, clean up and write thank you letters. Build a reputation of thoughtfulness. Producing a tournament can be fun and rewarding. It can also be a nightmare. Try some these ideas and you will have a successful tournament.