



The Ins and Outs of Volunteering for Cross Country Events

The following is a brief overview of the various “teams” that are required to run a cross country ski event.

Timing

The timing team is large, and has inside and outside positions. Outside positions are almost always in the stadium area. This is a crucial team, responsible for recording times and order of finish. There are both computer/technical positions, positions which require an analytical and detail-oriented mind, as well as outside positions like calling out bib numbers, pressing a timer plunger, or posting entries into a small hand-held device. It may seem intimidating but many of these are actually fun positions which you can learn in a few minutes. There are backups built into the timing process so if you make a small error, don't fret, it can be corrected.

Food

Food preparation and delivery is a key role anyone can take on! Racers need to keep fuelled. It is an outside position that may be on course or in the stadium. Dress appropriately and be prepared to stand and move quickly if required. Your training requirements are minimal.

Course

Working on course means just that – you will be stationed outside the stadium area. This is one of the early crews to start setting up for the day as you are either responsible for setting out the course (course marking and fencing) or marshalling (keeping spectators and recreational skiers off the course during the event to ensure the racers' safety). Of course, since it sets up the route, this crew also takes it down. You may be assigned to either the first or the last half of the day. Be prepared to ski to your position. Bonus – you get to watch the racers during the event!

Race Office

These are inside jobs with many roles to fill. If you are a details person, this is for you. You may be involved in sorting and organizing bibs. You may be dealing with racers'



and coaches' questions or assisting with document preparation, team captains' meetings, preparing race files, managing the flow of paperwork, updating the website, posting results and more. This is truly the heart of the race as, without all that data, no one would even get to the start line.

Stadium

These are outside jobs. Just like course crew, the stadium crew is first to arrive and last to go home. We try to break the group into setup and take down. This crew's work is never done – once the stadium is prepared, the stadium volunteers help to maintain the stadium part of the course, bib collection, timing chip distribution and collection and more. It is action-packed and a lot of fun to be in this gang. You need to be able to stand outside and be reasonably fit because you will be bending, lifting, hauling and placing equipment. You also have ringside seats for all the action.

Competition Control

This team consists of recorders, videographers and controllers placed on course in groups of three. Controllers generally have at least level 2 Officials certification, and are familiar with the Cross Country Canada rule book. They must be able to differentiate between skate and classic technique, (i.e. a skate stride versus a balance check and step turns). This team is responsible for recording information regarding potential rule infractions for review by the competition jury.

First Aid

First aid patrollers are required on course and in the stadium to assist athletes with hypothermia, exhaustion and traumatic injuries. You will be working in coordination with the venue ski patrol.

Event Organizing Committee

The organizing committee is responsible for all activities and roles that are a necessary part of hosting a race but not related directly to the race itself. This includes marketing, sponsorship, athlete services, accommodation, hospitality and protocol, banquets, awards ceremonies and other event organizing items. These are roles that must be performed prior to the event but often also require attendance and participation during the event. Depending on the size of an event, planning can start months in advance. Smaller local races often don't have a separate organizing committee.