

Promoting A Lumberjack Contest

By Gary "Tiny" Hammond

Promoting Your Event

There is one thing that will absolutely ruin your competition. Poor spectator turnout. The competitors will be there competing, but with no spectators there to watch, the future of your event will look very dim. Promotion is essential to the success of any public event.

When you promote your competition you are, in essence, asking the public to sponsor it. The majority of the ideas put forth in our instructional guide "Securing Sponsors For A Lumberjack Contest" also apply to promoting an event. Spectator turnout is one of the major ingredients to a successful competition. The competitors are essential for the event to take place, but the spectators are the ones that help pay the bills.

Have A Strategy

When putting a competition together you need to make certain that it is as entertaining as possible. Your promotional work should convey to the potential spectators that, if they come to your show, they will be entertained. Remember, the spectators are giving up their time and/or money, usually both, to be in your bleachers, and if they are not entertained they are not going to come back. You need them to want to come back, and to tell their friends what a good time they had. In order for this to happen we need to get them there initially. Successful promotion is the key. Lumberjack Sports are by nature very fast paced, and with such a variety of events to choose from there is always something different going on. One key phrase that I particularly like is "non stop action". There are several ways to promote the competition, following are a few of the means at your disposal.

Promotional Resources At Your Disposal

- Posters
- Fliers
- Brochures
- News Paper Ads
- Radio Commercials
- Radio Interviews (local talk shows)
- TV Commercials
- TV Interviews (PBS & News Broadcast)

Print Media (Posters, Fliers, Newspapers, Regional Magazines, Etc.)

Posters, fliers and brochures can be very effective means of advertisement. Distribute them all about town, especially in the areas that potential spectators would frequent. If the competition is part of a fair, make sure that it is mentioned prominently in the fair materials.

The local news paper can also be a great asset in promoting the competition. See if they would be willing to do an article or two on some of the local competitors, a week or so prior to the competition, in conjunction with you purchasing advertising space for the event. Remember a picture is worth a thousand words. Get some action photos from the competitors in your area and use them generously in your advertisements and print media.

Electronic Media (Radio, Television, Etc.)

Most radio, and some local television stations, have free advertising for upcoming events. If necessary contact the Lumberjack competitors in your area and see if they have any video footage you could use in your advertising campaign.

If you can afford it, television commercials are a great way to go. See if you can find somebody vibrant to narrate your commercial. While you're at it, see if they will help announce the actual competition. I particularly like the people who narrate the commercials for the upcoming Monster Truck Rallies (lumberjack adaptation follows).

"SUNDAY SUNDAY SUNDAY Come on down to the biggest Lumberjack Competition to hit this area since Paul Bunyan came though with his axe. See the top national, and local lumberjacks put a serious hurt on

some big **TIMBER!** That's **SUNDAY SUNDAY SUNDAY.**"

Put the emphasis on "non stop action", chainsaws roaring in the background, axes glittering in the sun, and cheering fans, again the promise of entertainment needs to be there. However, that's just me, you should set it up anyway that you think the local populous will best respond.

Conclusion

As with obtaining sponsors, be creative in your approach and you should be rewarded for your efforts. Always keep in mind when promoting; the promise of entertainment needs to be there. If it's there, the people will be there.