

Ironman Task Force
November 2, 2021 8am

Question and Answer with Dave Christen, Ironman Regional Director

1. What is the total dollar amount given back to communities and how is it allocated?

Foundation team is compiling the history of amounts given. Two different funds; Ironman Foundation - grants to local 501c3 (\$15k - 40k a year) & community service projects (donations of equipment, etc). Foundation funded primarily by foundation entries into events, best leveraged in sold out events, such as 2022 Ironman Lake Placid. Money that goes into the foundation is distributed to all Ironman events. Allocated by volunteer needs and what the foundation wants to do within a community.

2. Can you provide some bullet points on what has gone right and what has gone wrong?

Lake Placid is what is right. It is a special place and the right location for brands to live together. The premier triathlon brand is Ironman. The premier destination for sports in the State of New York is Lake Placid. Brand alignment has gone well. What has gone wrong is on Ironman and feeling that Lake Placid would manage itself. You deserve focus, our attention, true partnership. We "fell asleep at the wheel". The second issue is our community engagement. We weren't managing our relationships or spending time fostering the true champions of the community.

3. What makes the Lake Placid course so premier?

Some athletes should be more prepared, some athletes are very prepared. Lake Placid is a course you have to come prepared. Lake Placid is the litmus test in North America Lake Placid is the high bar for those that want to prove they can do this.

4. What, if any, course change options are there?

As long as the event is held in Lake Placid, it will be special, the course can change. It's really easy to say that, but know that it's a challenging prospect to find the same amount of road in the region.

5. Is it possible to limit the number of athletes?

2022 sold out at 3200 entries. We heard the concerns of the community that the size of the event is inflated and we put a pause on the number of entries to show good faith. Normally it would have been 400-500 more if we had not.

6. How can Ironman get more progressive in dealing with training camps?

This is an area where Ironman left you on your own to manage and we should have done a better job. We have a strong relationship with our triathlon clubs. If we know a club is signed up for the Lake Placid event, there is no reason we can't leverage our connectivity to and make sure that we are communicating about being good stewards, about being good, responsible bike riders. We can definitely support this effort. If someone is being disrespectful to the host community, they are not welcome in our series. We can bring this to the table and support Lake Placid.

7. What steps can be taken by Ironman to promote local enthusiasm for the race, such as posters, increased volunteer recognition and signs/pennants?

This group is uniquely positioned to be a conduit to me. We need to take a moment to assess the event and the energy behind the event. We need to make sure the community members are

engaged on every level. Greg is very good that if there is money that can be spent locally, it is spent locally. Ironman needs to communicate more, be more involved and walk with you.

8. What ways can you encourage local race director / staff to be more visible to area communities? Could there be a local office, could meetings be held in each community prior to the event?

I agree, we haven't made ourselves available. We won't have a physical office, but we can make ourselves more available to take concerns and answer questions. There are certain things we don't allow our race directors to engage in to protect work flow. Having a community relations coordinator for the event could be the person needed.

9. Is it possible to see the information that the athletes get after they have registered/paid? What kind of information about the course communities do they receive?

We are starting a new event in Juno and doing staff picks of activities to do on the website. This is something we could absolutely do for this event. We currently do a dine-around program for restaurants already for the Lake Placid event which helps for race week.

10. Can the money for the EMS be split up better/differently? For example, if most of the accidents occur in Keene and that is where the Life Flight is stationed, can/should more money be allocated there than somewhere else where there are statistically less medical events? Could additional money be given to North Country Life Flight which is itself a non-profit organization?

No, we don't get to pick where accidents happen and can't divvy up based on where incidents occur. We can work with the groups and find ways in which we can support them better. Financially, to divvy up what we are doing with our EMS in terms of invoicing is based on being on duty, extra duty and are things that are not negotiable.

11. What do you see Ironman's engagement to be?

We will follow your lead as a group. We own the event and we will always be in control of production. But in order to be successful the community has to have buy-in, to shine. We are going to make sure our resources are available. You'll have me and my operations manager, Katie Svenson, at your disposal. Next steps: we are prepared to produce the event in 2022, but the question we are asking is what does the future look like? That's ultimately the objective here, to know what we can do long term and prepare for that one way or another.

12. We worked for a year and a half to get our logo incorporated and then unilaterally, without any conversation, our logo was changed. What is the brand value being brought to Lake Placid globally?

As far as brand adjustment, there should have been opportunities to be involved in the conversation. There should have been collaboration on that and it needs to be corrected. In terms of global continuity, there is no other brand that means triathlon more than our brand. Ironman is the household triathlon name.

13. Do athletes/families tend to spend more/less during Lake Placid event?

Lake Placid is uniquely set as a premier summer destination as it is. You have great summer activities, olympic history. Places like this lend to athletes and families spending more time and money in the area.

14. In the past there were some significant capital projects (hockey box, police car). How do we get back into that cycle for the communities?

One of the things that we need to look at is what is our tangible, physical, visible impact on the community? It's on my to do list to look at how we can do better in all the communities and areas involved.

Next meeting: November 16th at 8am