

# Developing and Hosting Off-Season FRC Events

## “How To” Guidelines Based on the IRI (Indiana Robotics Invitational) and IndyRAGE Off-Season Events



*Cyber Blue - FRC 234*

# How to Host an Off-Season *FIRST* (FRC) Event

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# How to Host an Off-Season *FIRST* (FRC) Event

## A. Introduction

There are many ways to plan and organize a successful *FIRST* Robotics off-season event. This paper will provide some general guidelines, based on the Indiana Robotics Invitational (IRI) – a large event (65 – 70 teams, 2 days) and the IndyRAGE – a small event (14 teams, 1 day).

The original version of this paper was written in 2008 by Chris Fultz (FRC Team 234) and Andy Baker (FRC 45 and AndyMark) and represented our experience from the IRI. This update from FRC 234 also captures new material based on smaller events and changes in the FRC landscape. We welcome feedback and comments and will provide updates to this when appropriate. Please send any questions or comments to [first@CyberBlue234.com](mailto:first@CyberBlue234.com).

This is far from the only way to do an off season event, but will provide some guidance as you begin to host your own event new event or if you are looking for some guidance to grow and expand an event you are already hosting.

In each section, a description of “*how it works at the IRI*” or “*how it works at IndyRAGE*” is provided for reference. These segments will be in *italicized* text.

*The IRI is a two day, off-season competition held in Indianapolis in July of each summer. It has grown from 20 teams in 2001 to 65 teams in 2015. As the IRI continued to grow, an application process was implemented to determine which teams would attend, due to the high demand. The IRI has grown each year, and the organizing teams strive make it the best planned and best organized event it can be. The IRI took several years to develop and grow to the size it is today and this has only happened due to the huge number of dedicated volunteers who come to help and the quality of teams who come to compete.*

*The IRI plays by the rules, but also adjusts certain FIRST rules based on the experience of a full season of competition. The rule changes are put in place to enhance the game, not to make it easier or be detrimental to the robots that have been designed to play the official FIRST game.*

*Several special activities have turned the IRI into an “event” that is built around a robotics competition. Incorporation of some special activities can help generate interest in your event and keep teams coming back.*

*The IRI is hosted by Team 45, the TechnoKats, Team 234, Cyber Blue and Team 1024, the Kil-a-Bytes The original IRI was started by the TechnoKats in 2001.*

*The IndyRAGE is a one day off-season competition held in Indianapolis during the fall. 2015 was the first year for this event. The IndyRAGE is an all-girls event, with a focus on inspiration and removing barriers for girls to be active on FIRST Teams in any role they aspire to. In 2015, this was a 14 team event. The goal is for this to grow to a 24 team event.*

## **B. Basic Order of Getting Ready**

The list below is a checklist of things to do as you prepare for your event. They are listed in order of completion, but many will be iterative. For example, you may repeat steps 3, 4 and 5 as you search for locations, find available dates and then secure a facility. Each of these items is detailed in a section below.

1. Create a Committee
2. Determine a Leader and other Key Roles
3. Determine the Event Length
4. Select Potential Dates
5. Get FRC team support
6. Create a List of Facility Needs
7. Secure a Location
8. Secure a Playing Field
9. Plan Event Layout
10. Create a Budget
11. Define Money Matters
12. Create the Schedule
13. Advertise the Event
14. Register Teams and Collect Fees
15. Recruit Volunteers
16. Update Teams
17. Hold the Event
18. Review and Document the Event

### **1. Create a Committee**

One of the first steps is to determine who is going to lead the event and ‘sponsor it’ from an organizational standpoint. Is this a single team event, or will a group of teams lead the planning and organizing? A *FIRST* District or Regional Planning Committee is often 12 - 15 people, smaller off-season events can be planned and organized with 4 -6 people if necessary.

The committee will need to determine if the event is a fund-raising activity, or a service activity with the intent of breaking even. This decision will drive other considerations. For most events, your goal should be to at least break-even.

*The primary IRI Organizing Team is several people and most of the activity is carried out by email. The organizing team is led by two people, Chris Fultz from Team 234 and Andy Baker from AndyMark. They coordinate with several other people who are leading specific areas and many people are involved in planning and organizing. Key roles are identified below.*

*The IRI is a fund raiser for the host teams, but the focus is on providing a high quality, fun, exciting and unique experience for every team. A high percentage of the entry fees are used to support the activities and teams at the event. All corporate sponsorship funds for the IRI are used to fund college scholarships.*

*The IndyRAGE was designed to provide an opportunity for an all-girls event and provide a structure where girls could take all of the team roles at a competition. The financial goals were to keep the event at a very affordable entry fee and for the host team to break even on the event. Two key sponsors made this a reality.*

## **2. Determine a Leader and other Key Roles**

Somebody has to be in charge and be willing and able to make decisions for the group. Somebody has to be in charge and be willing and able to make decisions for the group. Yes, that was stated twice! It is very important. At the end of the day, there has to be one person who can make a decision, and have the support of the rest of the group when doing so. The leader will organize meetings, keep track of actions, and make a final choice if the larger organizing team cannot agree as a whole. This person can also make last minute decisions during the event if changes need to be made. Having Co-Leaders can work if they are able to work closely together and communicate well. Co-leaders will work best if there is a level of defined responsibilities for certain portions of the event to avoid confusion.

There are several other Key Roles that need to be filled and the people in these roles need to understand what the expectations of the role are and what their limits of authority and responsibility are.

The Key Roles for the Planning Committee are:

- Committee Leader or Co-Leaders
- Finance Lead
- Registration Lead
- Team Communications Lead
- Volunteer Recruitment Lead
- Facility Coordination Lead

*For the IRI, these roles are filled by a small group of people affiliated with different teams and different organizations.*

*For the IndyRAGE, these roles were filled by mentors and students from Team 234. A volunteer coordinator was recruited from one of the event sponsors. "Volunteer Spot", a free event volunteer web-site, was used for team registration and volunteer registration.*

There are many other roles and volunteer positions that need to be filled for the event, but these six are critical to the initial organizing activity. Other roles are described in the Volunteer section (Section 13).

### 3. Determine the Event Length

Off-season events can be 1, 1-1/2 or 2-day events. There are benefits of each choice.

- One-day events are less expensive and teams may not need to stay overnight. Volunteer recruitment can be easier, as one-day events are usually on a Saturday and that does not impact as many work schedules. Set-up can be the evening before, with time for set-up and check out of the field.
- 1-1/2 day events mean two full days for many volunteers. You can set-up the field in one morning, and then have matches for ½ day plus the full second day, or use that first ½ day for practice and other challenges and only have matches on the second day. This gives teams the flexibility of attending just the second, full day.
- Two-day events require an extra ½ day of set-up the day before, and a full volunteer crew for two full days. The advantage of this schedule is that teams will get the most matches.

*The IRI is a two-day event. The field is set-up on Thursday evening, so that matches can begin early on Friday. There is some practice time Friday morning, opening ceremonies, and then matches begin. Qualification matches continue Saturday morning, with Alliance selection before lunch. Eliminations and Awards are after lunch. After the event, the field is taken down and repacked before the host teams leave.*

*The IndyRAGE is a one-day event. The field was set-up after school was out on Friday. Before the crew left Friday night, they made sure the field, electronics and sound were all working. The event was on Saturday, with field tear-down and packing after the event closed.*

### 4. Select Potential Dates

Selecting the date is a difficult task. You will need to work around school schedules and the availability of facilities. Also, check for the dates of other off-season events, especially if they are in the same region as your event. Check for non-*FIRST* events that could impact not just the facility but hotels and restaurants in the area. Select several potential dates that the committee can support, and rank them in order of preference.

During the school year, either spring or fall, it may be easier to recruit teams because teachers are in session and vacations are over. The negative is that many students are also involved in activities that can hurt attendance. During the summer, there can be fewer conflicts, but some teams have difficulty scheduling an event while school is not open.

*The IRI is held on a Friday and Saturday in July. The dates are usually based on the availability of the facility due to camps and other activities that are underway during the summer. The team selection is completed in May so that teams can obtain school approval and can pay entry fees. Both of these can be much more difficult during the summer months.*

*The committee also has to consider other events in Indianapolis. The Brickyard 400, a NASCAR race, fills most hotel rooms and drives up room rates so the race weekend is avoided.*

*The IndyRAGE was held on a Saturday in the fall, after school had started to allow teams time to re-organize after the summer. The challenge was finding a Friday afternoon and Saturday with no other school commitments, and working around other local events to avoid overlaps.*

## **5. Get Other FRC Team Support**

Depending on fellow FRC teams to help your event run smoothly is a wise choice. Ask these teams if your planned date works for them. Ask them if they are able to provide key volunteers, resources, or even lead activities at your event. These teams can make your event better, and you can spread out responsibilities this way. It is important, however, to make the expectations very clear and to stay in contact with the teams before the event date.

*At IRI, many teams pitch in to help. Team 51 lets us use their website, Chief Delphi, to help us advertise for IRI. Team 461, Westside Boiler Invasion, brings many tarps for protecting the floor and they help with setup. Team 1024, Kil-a-Bytes, run the concession stand and also are the facility host. Many volunteers from more teams put in much effort to make IRI run smoothly. Without this help from these teams and the many volunteers who attend, the IRI could not be a great event.*

*IndyRAGE was a one-team event with significant support from IndianaFIRST and AndyMark on the field set-up and event logistics. Some of the attending teams supported field set-up on Friday night and field take-down on Saturday.*

## **6. Create a List of Facility Needs**

Before selecting a facility, you will need a checklist of what is needed. You will need to know what is provided by the facility and what you will need to bring in. A partial list of things to consider is provided below.

1. Restrooms
2. Internet Access (may not be required for off-season events)
3. Area large enough for a *FIRST* field, with space for the scoring table and queuing
4. Area large enough for pits
5. Bleachers or other seating
6. Food service
7. Power for the pit
8. Power for the field
9. Audio System
10. Loading Dock (for semi-trailer with field) or plans for a lift-bed truck
11. Air Conditioning or cooling options
12. Proximity of Hotels and Food
13. Safety of Participants
14. Ease of Getting to the Location
15. Accessibility
16. Security and Emergency Personnel

*The IRI is at a local high school, on the northeast side of Indianapolis. It is easily accessible and just a few miles from several major highways. There are several hotels in the area with a range of room rates. Several restaurants are nearby and range from fast food to steaks and seafood.*

*The school has ample parking and space for the playing field in one gym and pits in a second one. There are bleacher seats for about 2000 people plus areas to stand and watch. The school is air-conditioned and there is a power supply junction box near the gym for field and pit power.*

*The school provides a concession stand and teams are allowed to bring in their own food. The township security person is on site during the event, and the custodial staff cleans and disposes of trash during the event.*

*There is a large loading dock for moving the field in and out, and the gym sound system is used for the Game Announcers and Master of Ceremonies. A second, small sound system is used in the pits (provided by one of the teams.)*

*Extra power is provided by connecting into the schools main electrical system and running large power cords into the field area and the pit area. This option works well. Many events also use 'portable' power with large diesel generators located outside, with power cords running inside.*

*For IndyRAGE, the field and pits were in the same gym. This kept everyone close and avoided a long travel for teams queuing for matches. Pull-out bleachers provided seating for about 900 people.*

## **7. Secure the Location**

You will need some sort of a written agreement with the facility. It can be a simple document, but should include the dates of the event, any usage fees, and a listing of what will be provided by the facility and what is expected of you as the using group. The document should be signed and provide the names of key contact people.

It is always a good idea to check with the facility a few months ahead and then again a few weeks ahead of the event to be sure everything is still set. Personnel can change jobs and a verbal agreement and assumptions may not be passed on to others.

*The IRI date is set in January or February each year, after the school summer events have been set by the school. A contract is signed that identifies the days the building will be used and the times it will be available and what costs will be covered by the school and what costs will be covered by the IRI.*

*For the IndyRAGE, the date was agreed with the school administration and then re-confirmed a month before the event.*



## **8. Secure a Playing Field**

You will need to determine if you will use a custom built playing field or a *FIRST* field. Many District areas own fields and can provide them to events, and fees for use will vary around the country. You may need to provide insurance for the field and you may be responsible for fixing or replacing items that may be damaged or broken during the event. Be sure to understand what is required.

There are usually *FIRST* fields in different regions of the country. By working together with other event organizers, the shipping costs can be shared. Note that the game pieces are not provided with the field and must be procured from *FIRST* suppliers. *FIRST* can provide a recommended number of game pieces based on each game.

To secure a *FIRST* field, coordinate with *FIRST* or a local field manager.

*The IRI uses an official FIRST field and scoring system. This field is owned by IndianaFIRST and coordination is managed by AndyMark, in Kokomo, IN.*

## **9. Plan event layout**

The better your layout is planned, the better your event will run. Consider all of these things: load-in traffic, field location, pit location, people & robot traffic, robot queing, field entry and exit for each match, volunteer and judge rooms, concession stand location, and scoring table location and restroom utilization. Make sure you know of any specific safety requirements that you must meet (aisle width, power usage, etc.)

Get actual dimensions for your facility and layout the playing field and pits. Pit sizes can be as big as 10x10 ft or as small as 8x8 ft. Give plenty of room for aisles in the pit area, and consider how the pits will each get power. Note where all of the doors are on your layout. Plan where the scoring table is, as that determines how the field is set up.

For some events, a battery charging area is set up for all teams to share and there is not power run to each individual pit.

*Lawrence North High School has a large gymnasium and a 2<sup>nd</sup> gym called the fieldhouse. For 2015, 55 team pits were located in the fieldhouse and 10 were located in a large hallway near the playing field. All of the used space was drawn on a CAD layout. All needed items were shown in the layout. This layout was made into a pdf drawing, approved by the organizational team, and sent out to the teams. Having this layout communicated to everyone helps to avoid confusion. This layout print was used by many people at the same time on Thursday so that setup was easily done. Everyone was working off of the same plan. Teams knew where to set up their pits, where to park and where to load-in.*

## **10. Create a Budget**

Before you can advertise your event and set an entry fee, it is important to understand all of the expenses for your event so you can set an appropriate entry fee. While there may be other unique expenses for an event, the list below captures most of the major expenses that need to be considered.

1. Field Shipping Charges
2. Game pieces
3. Computer and Printers
4. Pens, Pencils, Other Supplies
5. Duct Tape, Duct Tape, Duct Tape (6+ rolls)
6. Black gaffers tape (2 wide rolls)
7. Colored gaffers' tape for field marking (Red, White, Blue, Others (1 roll each))
8. Volunteer Food and Drinks
9. Tarps for Covering Gym Floors
10. Audio Equipment
11. Video Equipment
12. Security / Safety Personnel
13. Electricians
14. Custodians
13. T-Shirts for Volunteers
14. Event Booklets
15. Team Dinner
16. Team Number Signs for Pits
17. Hardware to mount Team Number Signs
18. Electrical Hardware for Pit Power (purchase or rental)
19. Pit Table Rental
20. Judge Shirts
21. Awards
22. Hired Assistance / Travel Support
23. Broken Equipment
24. First Aid Supplies
25. Shirts for Sale
26. Field Insurance
27. Event Insurance
28. Refunds for Sudden Changes in Plans
29. Fees for On-Line Payment Systems

*For the IRI, most of the expenses listed above are needed. Some items are donated or discounted, but the majority are paid for from the entry fees. For example, the field sound system is provided by the school, but some of the pit sound system is rented. The IRI pays for security and an electrician to make the hook-up into the school's electrical system. All of the tables are rented, but the tarps are provided by several local teams. The electrical hardware needed to provide power to the field and the pits has been developed and provided by team 45. (Note: use an FTA is HIGHLY recommended and may be required to be able to use the official FRC Field Management System.)*

*Leave room in the budget for some unknowns and some breakage or damage. One year, a power supply stopped working mid-way through the event and needed to be replaced. This was an unplanned expense, but is now budgeted as a 'just in case' cost.*

## **11. Define Money Matters**

There will be a lot of money involved, both as income and expenses, and it must be properly managed. A finance lead is critical and should be responsible for collection of fees and for paying the bills.

Depending on the state and the school, there may be very strict rules on how the money should be handled. Can funds be managed through a separate account, or will it go through a school account for audit purposes? Someone needs to do the accounting work and track everything.

The committee also must decide who has the authority to spend money and approve expenses. Can anyone on the committee spend, or does everything need advanced approval? Remember, the income will be fixed. If you do not control and manage the expenses the event could become a money losing activity for the organizers.

Schools are tax-exempt, so sales tax may not be reimbursable by the treasurer. Tax Exempt forms should be available for anyone purchasing items for the event.

*All money to and from the IRI (except concessions, which are handled by the site host school) is handled by the finance lead and flows through the Perry Meridian High School treasurer. All deposits and expenses are managed in accordance with the state board of accounts and are auditable. All expenses require receipts and no sales tax can be reimbursed (an important consideration for people making purchases). Cash is tightly controlled and counted for the safety of all involved. The budget is tracked and detailed records kept of all costs.*

*During the event, there will be times where items must be purchased to maintain the event. These are approved quickly by the event coordinators, but major expenses are known before the expense occurs.*

## **12. Create the Schedule**

After determining the length of the event, and securing a facility, the event schedule can be made. There are several items to consider in making the schedule. Sample schedules for the IRI and IndyRAGE are included at the end of the paper.

1. Set-Up time for Field Crew
2. Team Load-In
3. Team Load-Out
4. Volunteer Organization Meeting
5. Key volunteer meetings (refs, judges, etc.)
6. Team Practice Time
7. Opening Ceremonies
8. Closing Ceremonies / Awards
9. Qualifying Match Times
10. Lunch / Dinner Breaks
11. Elimination Match Time / Match Cycle Time
12. Field Clean-Up and Packing

The time required for matches depends on the number of teams, desired number of matches per team, and match cycle time. More experienced crews and teams can run a fast cycle time while a newer event with younger teams may need longer cycle times. The FIRST fields and electronics have been very reliable lately and major glitches, causing significant delays, are rare. The level of activity for “field reset” needs to be considered when determining cycle times.

*For the IRI, attending teams have been to several events during the season and the volunteers are almost all veterans. This allows for a faster cycle time and the ability to run a long schedule on the first day.*

*For the IndyRAGE, many of the drive teams were new, and many of the volunteers had little or no FIRST event experience. The number of teams was also small, so a slower cycle time allowed for the field crew to learn, and gave the teams time between matches for repairs and preparations.*

### **13. Advertise the Event**

Now you need teams. Advertise your event at *FIRST* events, at other off-season events, and in the on-line forums. Consider creating a web-site or Twitter account for the event to provide detailed information and as a way to provide updates.

Important information needed in the advertisements includes:

1. Dates of the event
2. Times each day
3. Number of teams
4. Location
5. Contact information for questions
6. Registration process
7. When registration begins
8. Entry fee
9. What all is included

*The IRI advertises on the Chief Delphi forums, passes out flyers at FIRST events, and has an event website for information and registration and a twitter account to send information. Other teams assist with the promotion of the event as it is talked about and discussed. We have worked to create the IRI website as the primary location for event information so that teams can make it the primary location for all event updates. An IRI Twitter provides updates and advises teams when new information is posted to the website.*

#### **14. Register Teams and Collect Fees**

Team registration can be as simple as phone and email, or an event registration site can be set up. It is important to provide feedback to teams to let them know their registration has been received.

You will need to determine how to collect fees. Who are checks made out to? Can teams pay at the event? Can you provide an invoice or a receipt? Do you have a way to collect fees through a credit card or online account? Many schools require an invoice for a check to be written so you may need to create invoices for teams.

*The IRI has a team registration page on the event web-site. Teams enter their information into a data form and the system sends a copy of the information to the organizing committee. Attending teams are sent an invoice through Paypal and can pay by credit card or by check. Paypal provides an electronic trail of the funds and they are easily tracked for deposit to the school account.*

*The IRI Committee has set dates and deadlines for the opening and closing of registration, and when payment is due. It is important to communicate these deadlines to the teams and stick to your plan.*

*For the IndyRAGE, teams registered through a website called "Volunteer Spot" and were sent Paypal invoices. Note that online payment systems, such as Paypal, charge a fee for their services, which will reduce event income.*

## 15. Recruit Volunteers

Volunteers are the key to a successful event and you will usually find many people willing to help. Depending on the size of the event, you may be able to fill all of the roles with host team members or you may need to recruit others.

Set up a volunteer registration system so that people who are interested can submit their names and interest for particular jobs. Provide feedback to volunteers so they know what they will be doing and when they need to be on site.

Before the event, make name tags and have a volunteer sign in system.

Some volunteer roles are key to a successful event and may need to be recruited for. These roles are the Field Manager, Announcer, Master of Ceremonies, Scorekeeper, Technical Advisor, and Head Referee. The Announcer, Master of Ceremonies and Head Referee will set the tone of the event and can make the difference between having a good event or a disaster. Work to identify experienced people for key roles.

A listing of the major volunteer roles is below. For new games, you may be able to obtain a list of volunteer positions from an FRC event Volunteer Coordinator and then determine which are needed for your event.

It is also important to take care of your volunteers. Consider breakfast, snack and lunch availability for them. Some events offer a registration discount for teams that provide key volunteers.

*The IRI has volunteer sign-up through the event web site and others sign up by email, phone calls or the forums. Key roles are agreed early and individuals confirmed for those positions. Before the event, T-shirts are ordered with "CREW" on them so that volunteers clearly stand out at the event. Name tags are made and a check-in sheet is created for sign-in.*

*The IndyRAGE used a free volunteer website called "Volunteer Spot" for people to sign up and select potential roles. The site allowed for descriptions of the roles and the number of people needed for them.*

### Volunteer Roles

1. Event Manager
2. Master of Ceremonies
3. Announcer
4. Head Referee
5. Field Manager
6. Technical Advisor / Technical Lead
7. Referees
8. Scorekeepers
9. Disk Jockey
10. Field Reset

11. Queing
12. Game Piece Manager
13. Volunteer Room Manager
14. Food Manager
15. Judge Coordinator
16. Judges
17. Check-In Table
18. T-Shirt Sales
19. Pit Electrical Setup
20. Field setup and teardown

#### **14. Update Teams**

It is important to stay in contact with teams, either through forums or emails to the leaders. Keep teams advised of any changes, and keep the event in their thoughts.

The IRI provides updates and information through the event web site, Chief Delphi forums, emails to team leaders and Twitter. Team contacts also know how to contact the event organizers with questions or concerns. The organizers might send emails or use a website or twitter for updates. These emails should contain team information (who is competing), facility layout information, schedule of events, and any rule changes. Remind teams to pass the information along to their teammates. This same information that goes out to the teams should also be posted on your event website.

One key person should be sending out these emails and Twitter updates to keep a consistent communication channel.

#### **15. Hold the Event!**

The event days are the exciting time. As teams begin to arrive, have signs or people to direct them to the pit areas for set-up and to the registration table. Announce schedule reminders. Work to stay on schedule. This is the fun part and should be enjoyable for everyone involved. Be sure to thank everyone for volunteering and for participating.

Don't wait for every team to arrive before you create a match schedule. Create your match schedule before arriving to the event, or even at the time of setup. Once teams arrive, verify that all teams are accounted for (or on their way) and then pass out the schedules. A copy should be given to every team, along with several extras at the scoring table and for the referees.

As with any activity, the better the planning - the better the event. If major activities are planned and organized, it is much easier to deal with sudden changes.

At the event, be sure there is someone designated to make final decisions for any needed changes and then communicate those changes to everyone.

*The excitement of the IRI starts on Thursday night as the field begins to go together and teams begin to arrive. This is a great time to greet old friends and make new ones. We generate the match schedule no later than Thursday night. For the past few years, the match schedule has been created and distributed before the event, with a note that it could change if all teams do not arrive.*

*By investing considerable time planning the event and the supporting activities and by utilizing several experienced people for the event, the major portions of the IRI run very smoothly. When changes are needed, they can be quickly dealt with. Chris Fultz, one of the co-leaders, avoids leading any of the supporting activities during the event so that he can work through any issues that arise.*

*Also find a way to clearly identify the event leads. This could be a special hat, button or something else.*

*For the IndyRAGE, a match schedule was created in Excel and used for the event. This was done to allow for 2 team alliances due to the size of the event.*

## **16. Review and Document the Event!**

Keep detailed records of the event. Ask everyone who led a particular area for their notes and any feedback.

Hold a committee review and document what went well and what can be improved. This can be a difficult conversation, but if the focus is on continually improving, then the committee must be honest about where problems were and how to address them.

Ask attending teams for feedback. This is best done a few days after the event so that the emotion (good or bad) has subsided and the input will be more balanced.

Save receipts and information with points of contact for specific goods and services.

Then put everything away and relax until you are ready to begin planning for the next year.

*The IRI asks for feedback on the forums and several individuals send email to the event organizers. We ask for what was good and needs to be kept (so we don't drop something that was a crowd favorite) and what needs to be improved. The perspective of a participating team member is often different from the organizers and we like to know. All comments are recorded and used when the planning for the next IRI begins.*



## C. Other General Comments

Below are some other general comments and lessons learned for you to consider.

1. Try to recruit an experienced “headliner” for the Master of Ceremonies and Announcer Roles. These individuals can keep the event moving, keeping the energy level high.
2. Determine if you are playing by the *FIRST* rules or making modifications. Be sure to advise everyone of any rule changes.
3. Have the National Anthem ready to play. Find someone to sing it live if possible. If you have other countries represented, decide in advance if you will sing their National Anthem also.
4. Create a script for the opening and closing ceremony. Do this in advance.
5. Awards are great if you can do it. Be creative and they can be inexpensive.
6. Have one person in charge, and do not give them any other role during the event. This is important so that questions can be answered and issues can be dealt with.
7. Accept that someone or some team will be unhappy with you, with a referees call, or with something else from the event. Do what you can to address the issues, but keep calm and focus on keeping positive.
8. Think of what will make your event unique. For the IRI, we have added new things each year, and dropped a few when necessary.
9. Be creative with finding ways to finance the event. Search for donations.
10. Create an event booklet or flyer with information. Include a team list and the schedule at a minimum.
11. Sell T-shirts or take orders (or both).
12. Say what you will do, and do what you say. Significantly falling behind schedule will frustrate teams from far away. Having inconsistent refs will take away the accomplishment of the winning teams and frustrate others.
13. Plan for fun.
14. Be flexible with the schedule and allow for adjustments as needed.
15. Plan for emergencies – weather or other types – and know where to have people gather.

**D. Attachments / Other Documents**

**1. Sample Event Schedules (IRI and IndyRAGE)**

**2. Sample Event Layout**

## 1. Sample Event Schedules

### SAMPLE IRI Schedule

<b>Thursday</b>	
Noon	Setup begins
	Field mechanical complete
	Run test match
6:00 PM	Dinner Break
6 - 8 PM	Early Team Check In and UnPack
7:00 PM	Talent show sound check
	Mentor Dinner
8:00 PM	DS&K band practice
10:00 PM	Doors close
<b>Friday</b>	
7:00	Doors Open for Crew
7:30	Doors open
9:00	Match list released
9:00	Practice matches begin
10:15	Opening announcements / anthem
11:00	Qualification matches start
6:00	Qualification matches end
6:00	Dinner begins
7:00	Talent Show begins
8:30	Dean Simmons and the Kamen Brothers
10:00	Doors close
<b>Saturday</b>	
7:00	Doors Open For Crew
7:30	Pits Open
8:00	Opening Ceremonies / Awards
8:30	Qualification matches resume
11:30	Qualification matches end
11:45	Alliance Picking
12:00	Mentor Tournament
1:00	Elimination Rounds Begin
3:15	Elimination Rounds End
3:30	Awards Begin
4:00	Awards End
4:30	Tear down & pack
5:00	All Teams Out of Facility
6:00	Doors close

# **SAMPLE – IndyRAGE SCHEDULE**

## **FRIDAY – OCTOBER 2**

3:00 PM – 7:00 PM Pits and Field Set-Up  
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Team Load In and Pit Set Up,  
Radio Programming

## **SATURDAY – OCTOBER 3**

7:30 AM Doors Open  
9:00 AM Opening Ceremony / Guest Speaker 1  
9:30 AM Qualification Matches Begin  
Judges and Team Hosts in Action  
  
11:30 AM Open Mingle & Lunch (provided), Cafeteria  
NOON Panel Discussion, Cafeteria  
1:00 PM Panel Ends, Return to Gym  
  
1:30 PM Qualification Matches Resume  
3:00 PM Guest Speaker 2  
Alliance Selection  
Playoffs  
5:00 PM Awards Ceremony & Closing  
6:00 PM All Teams Exit  
  
8:00 PM Field / Pits Dis-Assembled and Packed  
Clean Up Complete  
  
8:00 AM – 3:00 PM College / Company Displays Open  
  
Alliances 2 team alliances for Qualifications and Playoffs  
Playoffs Top ranked teams blind-draw partner  
Modified Playoff Structure

## 2. Sample Event Layout - IRI

