



PR Toolkit for RAAM Time Stations

Talking Points for Time Stations Managers

RAAM - General

- RAAM is the **toughest endurance event in the world**; a non-stop, continuous race in which cyclists ride as fast as they can, 3,000 miles, from Oceanside, California to Annapolis, Maryland.
- RAAM participants face **challenges beyond the bike riding** that include scorching heat, violent winds, thunderstorms, and even tornadoes, altitude, the dark of night, sleep deprivation, muscle injuries, organized crew coordination, navigation, and mental acuity.
- RAAM 2008 features **the largest field in its 27-year history**, with a 20% increase from last year. Over 250 courageous athletes will race in June, supported by an entourage of over 1000 people, and representing **13 countries and 26 US states**. This year's field boasts 26 women, two of whom will attempt a solo crossing.
- Competitors dedicate their race to **over 30 charities around the world**, benefiting organizations fighting cancer, **leukemia, diabetes, cystic fibrosis** and Hutchinson's Disease, and others, foundations that assist families of the American military, children's associations and community groups.
- When asked their **motivation for racing**, many RAAM participants mention the desire to demonstrate the champion in us all, to show the power of believing in yourself- and sometimes in a higher power, regardless of obstacles.
- Each year, a number of solo riders and teams set **incredible speed records** for their category (based on number of teammates, sex and age range). In general, the 1st place solo rider will cross the finish line in 8-9 days, with an overall average speed of 11-12 mph. Four- or eight-person teams will normally finish in 5 – 8 days, and two-person teams in 7 – 10 days.

Historically speaking...

- **Over 1500 cyclists have raced RAAM** in the 26 years since its inception. Previous competitors have included Tour de France racers, Olympians and Paralympians, World IronMan champions, cycling Hall of Famers, and other accomplished ultra-endurance cyclists of all ages, backgrounds, and nationalities.
- RAAM has inspired hundreds of athletes already facing **personal challenges**. Among those who have finished solo RAAM are a one-legged cyclist with a prosthesis and a one-armed cyclist. RAAM teams have included blind cyclists competing on tandems, athletes with diabetes and donated organs, cyclists recovering from cancer and serious accidents and handcyclists.



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As challenges go...

- Only 178 riders have officially finished Solo or Tandem RAAM at least once, compared with over 1,300 individuals who have climbed Mt. Everest.
- Austrian adventurer Wolfgang Fasching has won solo RAAM and climbed Mt. Everest. "Everest is more dangerous, but RAAM is much harder," Said Fasching.

Time Station Talking Points

- Time Stations are **spaced out over the route** at approximately every 50 miles. At each one, a rider's crew must call Race HQ to report their arrival time and any other updates.
- About **30 of the 54 Time Stations are staffed** with anywhere from one to 50 volunteers, with the average being eight.
- These **volunteers who work tirelessly** for days before the race comes to town – often getting less sleep than the racers themselves!
- The **whole community gets involved** in the planning and participating at RAAM Time Stations. Some organize year-round websites and week-long parties that include kids, animals and festivities.

YOUR Time Station Talking Points

Make a short list of the key messages you want to talk about. Here are some ideas to start with, but feel free to add your own

- Is this the Time Station's first time as such, or has the community gotten involved before? What does it mean to have a first-time or second-time Time Station? Why do people want to get involved?
- What effect has the TS preparation and planning had on the community thus far, and what do you expect of race week?

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