



Working the Chapter Olympics Program

Announced at Gold Rush this year, and highlighted in a Touring News article last month, the new Chapter Olympics program is up and operating, and your Chapter is in the running for the Gold!

What's the Chapter Olympics, you ask? Let me tell you. The GWTA Chapter Olympics program is designed to recognize and celebrate successful Chapters, while providing ideas and tools to everyone so that all Chapters can benefit. The program is designed around four general areas (Membership, Riding & Safety, Beyond the Chapter, and Administration), with a total of 20 credits build around characteristics of successful Chapters. Earning 10 of 20 credits gains a Chapter a Bronze rating, 14 of 20 earns a Silver rating; and achieving 18 of 20 gets a Chapter a Gold rating, and a paid admission to next years Gold Rush, where we will honor all award-winning chapters at a special event. Complete details can be found at www.gwta.org/olympics.

But what's really in it for you, I bet you wonder. This intra-Chapter (internal to the Chapter) program gives you a way to compare yourself to how successful Chapters operate. You can review the ideas and tools, and you might see that you're already doing most of it, but could perhaps consider this or that new idea. There are really only two minimum requirements (submitting chapter registrations on-time, and having net positive growth between July 1, 2004, and April 30, 2005). You might set a goal of achieving all 20 of the various credits. Or set a goal of taking the template materials for a "New Member Welcome Kit", and customizing it for your Chapter. Or simply growing your chapter by some percentage over the Chapter Olympics period. Something to prove to the world that you deserve the Gold.

Take, for example, the "Membership" area. In addition to the net positive growth, and on-time Chapter registration submission, this area includes credits for having a Membership Recruitment program, a Membership Retention program, and a "Sunshine" person. (You can find out more about these at the www.gwta.org/olympics web site.) Your Chapter probably has some aspects of all of these positive characteristics, but might still benefit from the ideas and tools provided in the program.

Same with Riding & Safety. Here, the credits involve having after (or before) meeting rides, an annual ride calendar, some major event during the year, implementing a Rider Education program, and having two members achieve Level IV in the Rider Ed program. Chances are good that your Chapter already does some or all of these points. That's why we want to celebrate your Chapter. Nonetheless, perhaps you could use the goal of any of these points to add to your program. You might find something among the Ride Ideas that would work for you and your Chapter.

The Administration rubric of the Chapter Olympics considers a variety of areas experience has found important to successful Chapters. Having a Welcoming Committee (with new member kits, etc.), and productive Business meetings are specifically chapter related. The program also looks for contributions to charity and

Helping Hands as characteristics of successful Chapters. Last, but certainly not least, the program rewards Chapters that have and utilize a Chapter newsletter, because communication with members is so important.

At the Gold Rush presentation, most new initiates to the Chapter Olympics program actually thought it might be too easy. Some questioned the idea of numbers versus percentages, but, in general, the program was very well received.

How will your Chapter do in the Chapter Olympics? You might consider setting a goal of achieving a level now, and work toward it during the next few months.

Go for the Gold while you pursue Destination Friendship!

Jerry Weltner
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