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**Youngstown Area
Community Cup 2025**

Captain's Handbook

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**Youngstown Area
Community Cup**

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INTRODUCTION

This Community Cup booklet is intended to provide information on all the facts about the Community Cup that captains need to know. It is a compilation of ideas from veteran captains, answers to the most commonly asked questions, and some helpful facts that any first year team captain would appreciate. While nothing in this booklet is to be considered "written in stone", it should provide some general guidelines and ideas for making your job a little easier.

Being a team captain has its rewards as well as frustrations. Often, it can seem overwhelming. But do not despair. We constantly hear team captains telling us, when all is said and done, that they really had a great time despite all the hard work. Some even include the responsibility on their resumes. There is also no substitute for experience. Veteran team captains can provide a wealth of information to a first year captain and team, so let us know if you would like to be matched up with one.

Finally, you need to get the support of upper management. A team that is successful is so because the captain has been given the time to put in their best effort. Without management support, it will be a long road for you and your co-captains. With it, it will be a great experience for everyone.

So, congratulations on being selected as a team captain. If you are organized, responsible, and have a sense of humor, you will do a great job!

Things You'll Probably Run Into As a New Captain

Uniforms

The very first Community Cup in 1990 was a simple, straight forward event. Every team captain had one thing in common - no one really knew what was going on. Things have changed, we have been surprised by the extravagance, creativity, and expense many of these companies put forth into making their teams look presentable. Uniforms are one particular area. The simple matching T-shirts have been a huge way for teams to get noticed as well as find each other the day of the events. Ask the Community Cup office to give you a good t-shirt company they use.

While it may be nice to have matching T-shirts, keep in mind that it is not a requirement. So, if you don't have a big budget, put your time and resources into recruiting, organizing, and communicating with your team members.

If you do want to invest in shirts or equipment, here are some things to keep in mind...

For the tug-o-war, boots and long sleeve shirts are a necessity. In the rules for the tug-o-war, every participant tugging needs a long sleeve t-shirt. Tennis shoes are not recommended because you can slip on the grass, but if that's all you have, then wear them. Contrary to popular belief, gloves don't allow you to get a better grip on the tug rope. Quite the opposite is true.

So how do you pay for all this? The easiest way is to just ask your company to pick up the tab. It's a small price to pay for the benefits the whole company will receive. Sometimes, however, that's not always possible. If you want, 50/50 raffles are a great idea. Some folks have dress down days where employees can pay a dollar or two to come dressed in their blue jeans or shorts. Throw a lunchtime cookout with burgers and hot dogs. Whatever you do, even if employees have to pay for those extras out of their own pocket, what you raise can go to defray at least a portion of the cost.

Recruiting

You will want to try to recruit participants from every area or department. Realizing more and more, nowadays, that employees are spread out. This is not an easy task. Each organization varies from one to the next so there are no hard and fast rules for accomplishing this. But here are some general ideas that have worked in the past.

1. Carefully choose a few people from each main department or branch to help you recruit. Be certain they are people who understand fully what the Community Cup is all about, and are motivated to help you.
2. Meet on a regular basis with these individuals to plan and implement your strategies. Communication is the key! Make it a goal that no one will come up to you two days before the competition and say, "I have never heard anything about the Community Cup." Make sure the people you choose have a good working relationship with those around them. They must have an outgoing personality to talk to and encourage employees to sign up.
3. Bulletin boards and company intranets are a good way to get the message out. But don't rely on these alone to try to see if there is any interest. By simply posting a notice, you can not guarantee everyone will see it and more importantly, understand it. One on one communication is still best.
4. Plan a sign up party. Use all that money you have saved from your uniforms to throw a pizza party or something that employees will attend. Maybe that is even a good time to get everyone to fill out their waivers so that you will be one step ahead. Find out what kinds of events they would be interested in participating.
5. Set up a table outside the lunch room and talk to people as they come in or out.
6. Monthly or weekly employee meetings are a good way to present the program. Invite the Community Cup Director to come and make a presentation to the group. It is a good opportunity to tell people what the Community Cup is all about and have an expert on the subject answer all their questions. Just call the Cup office and ask for Julie to come to your business.
7. Contests can provide a little motivation for your recruitment plan. Perhaps the department or branch that shows the greatest percentage of participation gets to leave work early that week.

Seriously, some sort of prize might be awarded that would be practical, yet provide the motivation you are looking for. There are all kinds of possibilities. Be creative. Network with some of the veteran captains who have already experienced it first hand. They will be glad to help.

8. Finally, ask everyone, and I mean everyone! Remember that spouses are eligible. This can be a significant source of recruitment for participants and volunteers.

WAIVERS

All participants need to fill one out, employees and their spouses that are participating.

First, do not hand someone a waiver and ask them to return it to you when they have filled it out. It rarely happens. It usually ends up under a pile of paperwork. Whenever possible, have people fill them out while you are standing there. If you have a meeting or other gathering to recruit participants, have the waivers available then. By the time your meeting is over, you can have them all in your hand.

The Community Cup waiver asks for information such as name, address, whether or not you participated in the Community Cup before, etc. The waiver needs to be completed in its entirety by all participants and volunteers in the Cup.

In using the paper waiver, be certain they are filled out in their entirety and are legible. A missing signature, which is most important, will only result in the waiver being returned to you for completion.

Make a copy of your teams waivers for yourself before turning them into the Cup office. Be sure to verify names appearing on your team roster which will be emailed in August. Only those that appear will be eligible to participate and volunteer.

Some companies also have their team members fill out a second waiver stating that they will not file for Worker's Compensation if they get injured during the Cup. This is optional. It is not required to be in the Cup, but you may want to check with your legal counsel, anyway.

Tents

When the Community Cup first got underway in 1990, a couple companies got the idea of providing a "hospitality" tent for their employees to eat, drink and talk strategy. The idea has really taken off. The carnival atmosphere, the smell of food, and the cheering is quite a spectacle around the Tug field on Saturday. A lot of teams get a tent and then treat it as their company picnic.

The Cup office will be sending out tent request forms later in the season. The tents are rented through Classic Tents, the Cup office takes care of ordering for all the teams. If you would like to have a tent, fill out the form and return it with payment to the Cup office by July 31st. You provide the food and any supplies you need. There is some electricity available. Cooking can be done with propane. Your team will be responsible for disposing of trash and recyclables in the proper receptacles. Some companies go so far as having the food catered or doing a pot luck. Call the Cup office for some suggestions of companies that deliver. Wean Park has some guidelines that need to be followed. For example, vehicles must not remain in the tent area. Once set up in the morning, you may not tear down anything until the last event is over (unless, of course, you wish to haul everything out by hand). No alcoholic beverages are permitted.

Tent locations will be determined randomly. If you have a preference on who you would like to be next to, let us know. We'll see what we can do. Tent locations will be sent to each company prior to the September Cup. There will be people directing you to your spot the morning of the Cup at Wean Park.

Captains' Clips

There is a lot of general information every participant needs to know. We depend on you as a team captain to relay this information. Therefore, each Captain will receive a monthly newsletter beginning in June. It includes information such as event scheduling, clinic scheduling, Cup updates and more. Please make sure that everyone on your team is informed of this information. The Captains' Clips can also be found online at ymcayo.org

Tug Rope Rental

The YMCA owns two tug ropes that may be used for practice. They are available for a week sign-out provided the person borrowing the rope signs a form agreeing that they are responsible for the rope if it is lost or damaged. Replacement cost is about \$500. Contact the Cup office, 330-744-8411 ext. 143, to make arrangements if your company would like to check out a tug rope. The cost of the rental is \$100. When you bring it back you will get \$50 back if it is dry and not damaged.

Reserving Basketball and Volleyball Courts

In order to effectively utilize all the time and space available, volleyball and basketball courts must be reserved. Reservations can be made by calling the Community Cup office. Do not make reservations at or with the Y service desk. Courts can be re-reserved on a weekly basis. If you wish to change courts, times, or days, you must contact the Cup Office. The service desk staff is not permitted to take court reservations. Please cancel one day in advance.

Due Dates

There are several times throughout the year when it is critical to have specific paperwork turned in. We may not give all dates here, but you can keep in mind these general time periods.

June: Putting together Youngstown Meltdown teams. The Youngstown Meltdown starts the week of June 2. Six participants make up one Youngstown Meltdown team. Email: cup@youngstownymca.org to give your team(s) names to put them in the data base early for the Youngstown Meltdown.

July: Company applications are due July 1, 2025, so we know we can count on your involvement. July 31 is the deadline for waivers, event rosters, volunteer rosters and tent requests. After August 1, changes maybe accepted by the Community Cup Director, you just have to email or call.

August: Time predictions are due August 30. If your predictions are not ready by this date, your team will be assigned one based on your actual time from the year before or the average actual time from your division the previous year, if you are a new company.

September 7: It's Community Cup time! If you have planned well and communicated well, be prepared for a super couple of weekends! Kick-off events will be held August 8 & 9 and the Preliminary weekend August 22-24.

A final word about due dates and deadlines - It is not the Y's intention to make life difficult for you. On the contrary, we are ready to bend over backwards to help you out depending on your situation. While there are exceptions to every rule, we do need to establish some sort of cut-off date. If you run into difficulty, let us know ASAP.

Other Considerations

People Dropping Out At The Last Minute

We don't think there is any way to avoid last minute drop outs entirely. You will always have that person who comes to you the day before the event and says, "Oh, I forgot that..."

It goes back to communication. Be sure your recruits know what they are getting into. Be sure they know what times they are to arrive for the event. In addition, make sure they are committed to participating. While you have to understand that situations arise, make sure that they know the dates and times of all the events they are participating in.

Finally, try to have alternates ready on your final rosters and have them there on the day of the event. It will save you and the rest of the team a great deal of disappointment if a key team member is late or doesn't show.

Clinics

There will be one scheduled tug-o-war clinic in August that is led by the "Tug Meister" Al Leonhart. Basketball, Volleyball, Walk and Run clinics are per team request by calling the Cup office. When calling we will arrange a time for the team to reserve the court at the Central YMCA or meet at Wean Park.

Fair Play

The success and the integrity of the Community Cup depends largely on the trustworthiness of those involved, and although you cannot be held responsible for the actions of a teammate, you can establish an atmosphere of fair-play and sportsmanship that will permeate the entire team.

Many stories are rumors. With others, people just don't know the full story. If you hear of such stories from other captains or teammates, please let the Director know. Chances are we already know what's going on. Do not make unfair assumptions.

Please play fairly, remember, your team represents your company or organization.

The Events

EVENT CHANGES

The routes for the 10K Relay and Time Prediction Walk will be the same as last year. Maps and course descriptions will be in the Rules and Regulations Handbook. There will be no Saturday weigh-ins at the Central YMCA, but they will be available at the Davis Family YMCA. You will only have to do your first weigh-in at the YMCA of Youngstown, the last weigh-in can be of your choosing. Complimentary Y memberships will not be provided, however team members are eligible for a guest pass card for the summer. Reserving a court to practice basketball or volleyball will be available. The Golf Scramble will not be an event for the 2025 Community Cup. Volleyball is back as an event and back to its regularly scheduled Sunday. Cornhole will be an event not a preliminary event and be before bowling on a Saturday. From the past, the T-Shirt Competition will be reinstated and be combined with the Pep Rally. More details to follow about that. The Time Prediction forms will be due at the end of August again, instead of at the beginning of August.

Torch Lighting Ceremony

In order to have an official start of the events, the torch will be lit ceremonially before the first event takes place (Banner Competition, Pep Rally-Cheer Competition, and t-Shirt Competition) on Friday evening August 8.

Banner Competition

Immediately following the torch lighting ceremony, the banner competition takes place. This event gives the artists in your organization a chance to shine. The event allows five team members (males or females), to complete your team banner within an established date and time for the event. Banners will then be on display to the public on that same evening for voting. The rules are pretty open in reference to what you can use as supplies. The Community Cup puts down a plastic drop cloth for each banner being made, if you are worried about markers or paints bleeding. Your banners should be treated as your company's "team flag" and should lead your team throughout the weekend.

Pep Rally/Cheer Competition

The purpose of this event is to generate enthusiasm for your team which will last throughout the competition. One team of 1-10 participants with any combination of male(s) or female(s). may participate in a routine that is created by the team. Routines may range from traditional cheerleading to more elaborate routines and skits.

T-Shirt Competition *(past event brought back)*

The fashion show is comprised of a model(s) from each team walking across the stage sporting their team's t-shirt. Teams can have more than one model. While modeling the t-shirt, a description of the t-shirt and the model's name is read. Participation in this show is not mandatory, but teams who are involved receive a 1/2 point bonus for participation.

*The Pep Rally and T-Shirt Competition will be ran together. A team can choose to be in just the Pep Rally or just the T-Shirt Competition or both together. Teams will just have to note this on their event roster.

Bocce Tournament – Sponsored by Cassese’s MVR

The Bocce Tournament is held at Cassese’s MVR in Youngstown on Saturday, August 9. It is a double elimination tournament. The tournament is played according to the MVR’s house rules. Due to timing and venue restraints, there are only two teams permitted per company in the tournament. Teams will consist of a minimum of four players, two male and two females.

Kickball Tournament – Sponsored by Youngstown State University

The Kickball Tournament is held at Harrison Common, across the street from the MVR, the same day as the Bocce Tournament. It is a single elimination tournament. Teams will consist of 10 players (8 minimum) with half and half ratio, male and female players. Due to timing and venue restraints, there are only two teams permitted per company in the tournament.

Basketball “Hot Shot” Competition

This event has become a popular one. Virtually anyone can participate. The event will take place on a Friday, August 22. For this event, the team will consist of six players (three males and three females). There are 12 areas on the court in which to shoot from to get a variety of points. Each member of the team has one minute to play and the clock will be continuous. Each member of the team will have a rebounder from their team to help. The team scoring the most points within the allotted time period is the winner.

Scavenger Hunt

The Scavenger Hunt will be the evening of Friday, August 22 right after the Basketball “Hot Shot” Event. Teams of four (any combination of males and females) will receive a list of items to find around Downtown Youngstown, no two lists will be alike. The only means of transportation will be walking, to keep true with the Community Cup healthy theme. There will be all kinds of fun places to venture and see with a little history of the YMCA, Community Cup, and Downtown Youngstown involved as well.

Cornhole

The Cornhole Tournament will be held at Henry Stambaugh Golf Course in Youngstown on Saturday, August 23. It is a double elimination tournament. The tournament is played according to the American Cornhole Association. Teams will consist of a minimum of two players, one male and one females. An alternate may come to sub in and be on the roster as well. If participants can, they will be asked to bring a set of corn hole boards and bags. They will be measured according to guidelines set. No team will play on their own cornhole boards to be fair.

Bowling

The same day as cornhole, a bowling competition will be held at Camelot Lanes. Bowling teams will consist of a four member team, of which at least two must be female. Teams of three females and one male are permitted. Teams will bowl three games (ten frames) with the total pin count determining the winner.

Volleyball – Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Shaffer

Did you know that volleyball was invented at the YMCA: this competition is becoming more and more popular every year. Not only has the interest level increased, but so has the level of play. Teams will consist of six players, three male and three female.

There will be an open gym schedule available at the Central YMCA, for teams that want to practice throughout the summer. The schedule will be posted and given to all the team captains. To schedule gym time all you need to do is call the Cup office. Many teams get together with other teams and even have a scrimmage. A captains list with phone numbers will be given to captains so they can arrange scrimmage times and then schedule with the Cup office.

Clinics can also be scheduled throughout the summer, to get a good understanding of the rules if the game.

All volleyball matches take place on Sunday, August 24. Make sure your team members can devote three to four hours to playing. They may be required to play several matches. We will be using three courts, in two gymnasiums.

Rally scoring will be used for the entire match. In rally scoring, a point is scored regardless of whether or not you served the ball. Also, remember to have alternates on hand.

10K Medley Relay – Sponsored by Sapphire Aesthetics and Wellness

This is the first event the day of Saturday, September 6. This event will consist of a minimum of five runners (three male and two female). The first three runners (of which one must be a female) each run approximately one mile. The third runner tags off to the remaining two (or more) runners (of which at least one must be female) who proceed to run a 5K course. Only the top two runners, the first male and the first female will count in the scoring.

Rather than receiving a time at the finish, each runner receives only a place. The race is scored by the combined total of the two runners' places. Like golf, the lower the score the better. At the finish line, each runner must tear off the bottom portion of their race number and have it stapled to the place card they receive. There is nothing to fill out. However, team members must turn in both team cards at one time.

Race numbers must be worn by each participant. Numbers and pins must be picked up by one representative of the team the morning of the event. The first three runners must wear a number that corresponds to their order in the relay. The last digit will be a 1, 2 or 3 designating which leg they will run.

The course will be the ran through Wean Park, Covelli Centre parking lot, Youngstown Foundation Amphitheatre and the streets of Downtown Youngstown (same as 2023).

3 Mile Time Prediction Walk

The Time Prediction Walk has more participants than any other event, scheduled right after the 10K Relay. Its popularity is based on the fact that almost everyone can walk, and even if you cannot, you can still participate. (We have had a few wheelchair athletes over the years). The key to this event, or in any other time prediction event, is practice walking – for the whole team, not just one or two on the team. It makes no sense to have one participant hit his or her time right on the nose if nine others are nowhere near their predicted times. It is the total team time that counts. A team is made up of 10 walkers, any combination of males and females. Five participants will walk one mile while the remaining five walk two miles.

There are a few strategies we have seen over the years. Some walk teams predict a time based on two team members individual times. On the day of the event, everyone on the team walks with one of those two people. Those who walk the one mile cross the finish line together, and the two milers follow the same procedure. If your "pacer" walks too fast or too slow, everyone will walk too fast or too slow. Additionally, keep in mind that only one person at a time can cross the finish line.

By walking independently, you may take advantage of an averaging effect. For example, differences will be canceled by having one person walk 30 seconds too fast, while another teammate walks 30 seconds too slow. Because of the sheer number of walkers, (some years as many as 500) participants will be sent off in waves of 20 to 30 walkers at regular intervals. All captains will receive a wave sheet a week or two before the event so you know exactly in which waves your team will be. Make sure your walkers know this! Your one mile walkers will leave first. Your two mile walkers will leave several waves after. Your team members are responsible for getting in the correct wave.

Obstacle Course

After all the running and walking, it's time for some fun with the Obstacle Course. Teams will consist of 6 people, including 1 executive and at least 2 females. (A female executive fulfills two requirements!) Each team member will complete one of the following stages in the fastest possible time: hula hoop run, balance beam walk, tire run, batons in basket, corn hole toss, and slalom run to finish. A successful field goal kick at the end of the course counts for an additional bonus for your team. You can practice this event the morning of the event, as it will be set up approximately two hours before the start.

Tug-O-War

The last and most exciting event of the day is the Tug, which has become the premier event of the Community Cup. There are more people that lose their voices at this event than any other. If you are under the impression that the only thing you need to know about tug-o-war is which way to pull, you are in for a rude awakening.

There is so much strategy and technique required that the "Tug Meister" himself holds a clinic during the summer before the event. Your team will consist of a maximum of ten and a minimum of eight tuggers, of which half must be male and half female.

Since the Tug-O-War tournament is double elimination (your team is guaranteed at least two pulls), fourth place and beyond cannot be determined by simply looking at the brackets. Therefore, individual places will be determined by the length of time on the rope. Should you lose a tug, the longer you are able to keep your opponent tugging, the better your team will do in the final standings.

Youngstown Meltdown – Sponsored by Ohio Scale Systems

Teams of six (number of males and females does not matter) will participate in a three month long weight loss competition. The goal for the team is to have the greatest total percentage of weight loss during the designated time period. Each member of the team must weigh-in once a week. Missing two consecutive weigh-ins will result in an elimination from the team. A ghost weight will be in effect for any participant that is eliminated from the competition.

Awards

The top three team will receive an award (the “Cup”) immediately following the Tug-O-War on September 6th. The winners of the Youngstown Meltdown will also be announced at this time. All other event winners will receive their recognition at the Team Captain/Sponsor Recognition Luncheon held in October 2025.

GENERAL

Rules Committee

The YMCA has enlisted the help of dozens of individuals to help run the events. One particular group, the Rules Committee, comprised of representatives from the community have some of the toughest decisions to make during the Community Cup. It is probably the fairest, most objective group of individuals that could be assembled.

Their mission is to revise and modify event rules each year as needed. They must also make decisions on issues not specifically addressed. All decisions are made only after carefully weighing all the information and evidence available based on the official rules and goals of the Community Cup.

Filing a protest is the only official way to ask the Rules Committee to investigate an incident. The decision they reach is final and cannot be appealed. To save us all some time, keep in mind that the committee has never overruled a judge's or official's decision in any event based on the observations of any participant. The judges and officials utilized are all qualified individuals who would not have made a call had they not had a reason.

Parking at Wean Park

All parking will be at Covelli Center. Get there early if you want a good spot.

Sponsorship

The Community Cup would not be possible without the support of many community minded businesses throughout the area. All team fees and sponsorships go directly toward offsetting the costs of running the program. If your company is interested in becoming a sponsor, we would love to talk to you! All sponsorships are tax deductible. Contact the Community Cup office at the YMCA for more information on the benefits and levels of Cup sponsorship.

Team Designation Definitions

Full Team: Competes in 6 or more of the 15 events. Cost is \$700.

Partial Team: Companies wanting to compete in only one, two, three, four or five different events can participate in the Cup at a cost of \$100 per event plus a \$75 registration fee. (Multiple teams in any one event are permitted.) These teams are not considered in points toward the Cup, but are able to place in the event itself.

Single Event Team: In addition to a Full Team, a company may enter a Single Event Team at a cost of \$100 per event. Since a Full Team allows you to enter only one group of golf players, for instance, in the bowling tournament, you may find that you have an over abundance of bowlers and cannot use all of them on one team. Entering a single event bowling team allows a company to enter multiple teams in that event. A company may enter as many Single Event Teams as they like at a cost of \$100 each. Single Event Teams are not considered in points toward the Cup, but are able to place in the event itself.

Trouble Shooting

Being a team captain definitely has its rewards. Here are a few of the situations you may run into as a captain...and some possible solutions!

Event over sign-up

Don't panic if too many people sign up for a single event. By July, you will likely have people drop out for any number of reasons. Encourage those still signed up for the event to sign up for clinics and schedule gym time to practice. This will show who is really interested. If there are still too many participants, you may want to select team members not participating in other events, or consider adding a Single Event Team. The over-sign up will most often happen in the Walk event.

Employee Morale

Keep morale in mind always! Although everyone wants to win, try to keep as many employees involved as possible. Make them feel a part of the team.

Co-Captains

Get employees involved from all areas and departments to be event captains or co-captains. This will really help share your load. For instance, find a captain for each event. Some one can coordinate the bowling while someone else coordinates the tug.

Time Predictions

Make sure you've checked and verified your time predictions before you turn them in. Remember to add times together in terms of minutes and seconds, not as a decimal. For instance, 15:45 + 14:41 + 15:19 = 45:45 not 45:05.

Team Captain's Checklist

Week of the Cup

- Confirm deliveries to the park: who is bringing the decorations, food, plates, drinks, etc.
- Don't forget ice for your team tent. There are places that deliver right to the park.
- Do you have someone to take pictures over the weekend? Video?
- Double check your roster, age requirements, substitutes and volunteers.
- Make sure all team members and volunteers have their team t-shirt and a schedule of events.
- Bring extra uniforms or team t-shirts all weekend in case someone forgets.
- Remember to hashtag every picture so the other Community Cup participants can enjoy them too.
#communitycup2025
- Give your phone number to team members and volunteers in case of a problem.
- For simple cuts and scratches, it is a good idea to bring a first aid kit.

Conclusion

There you have it, everything you have always wanted to know about the Youngstown Area Community Cup but were afraid to ask. The main thing to remember is, if you have any questions about anything, call us. It is our job to make your job as easy as we can. Do not feel like you are being a pest, we love to answer all your questions and there are never any we think are not important. Best wishes for a successful year.

Email: cup@youngstownymca.org

Call: 330-744-8411 ext. 143

Community Cup Director: Julie Walker