

How to Start A Kinetic Sculpture Race

by Kati Texas, Queen President of Kinetic Universe



Here's how it works:

You can do it! Each kinetic sculpture race is its own local event. Teams travel all over the country, as do we royalty, so as they say... If you organize it, they will come. There's lots of people who would let you pick their brains, including myself. The late Hobart Brown, the inventor of the sport wrote a book on the subject that can often be found on Amazon or eBay: **Kinetic Sculpture Racing: A Complete Guide (Glorious Founder Hobart Brown Tells All) Paperback – 1990**

The three main things you need are:

1. A course- The race course needs to be challenging, with some body of water, and be able to accommodate crowds of spectators. There should also be access to somewhere close by where the racers can stay with their machines. Every municipality has different permitting requirements for gatherings, food and drink, etc.

2. People- It takes a good core of people, and lots of hands on the day. Kinetic Universe, for example (the non-profit that runs the KGC) has a board of around 7 to 9 people. We have a race director, a course director, a registrar/head judge, head medic, event heads for each location, a bookkeeper, a sponsor liaison, a merchandise maven, and 2 graphic artists. Not all of these jobs must be done by board members, may be done by folks who answer to the board. At the event we have between 150 and 200 volunteers and legally, we have to hire a contractor to deal with traffic, according to local laws... this is the championship though. Your event could be smaller, but this gives you an idea of the scope of skills involved.

3. Money- Finding a sponsor (or several) is very helpful. Perhaps a university? A group may have to start a 501(c)3 nonprofit or work with an existing nonprofit organization to accept donations. Think about the purpose of the organization and think about larger groups or companies who have similar philosophies, and start there. You'll need to pay for permits, advertising, insurance, and logistics like porta potties, and road cone rental. This part can be easier if you start as part of a larger established event. Is there a local street fest or something that would go well with Kinetics?

If your town is ready, you'll find the people to put it all together. Art schools, engineering clubs at the university, high school science classes, Scouting troupes (older ones though, this sport isn't for little kids), are all good places to find teams or event organizers.

Run with it! The world needs all the fun we can get! I hope this gives you an idea of what it takes to have a kinetic event in your town, but doesn't make it sound too scary. It's worth the work, and the more you do it, the more people will want to help. :-)

Please write or call me with any questions you may have.

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