1. **Setting SMART Goals:** Instead of vague objectives, set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for this fundraiser, such as attracting a certain number of new donors or engaging a specific number of businesses.

2. **Outreach Calendar:** Develop an outreach calendar for March Muttness to keep track of communications and ensure consistent engagement.

3. **Thoughtful Storytelling:** This is the perfect opportunity to showcase your organization's story telling skills. What is the messaging you want to share behind your fundraiser? How does that play a role in your larger mission?

4. **Marketing and Advertising:** Utilize free channels on social media and networking to advertise the event. Create a calendar for communications to keep your message consistent and frequent.

5. **Communications:** Create a dedicated email list for March Muttness communications to allow active donors to opt out if they prefer.

6. **Technology and Donor Management:** Use platforms like DonorCharm to streamline donations, but make sure donors understand the process. Coordinate with major donors to enter their credit card information in advance for seamless donations.

7. **Donor Engagement**: Some donors may be annoyed by frequent communications. Find a balance between keeping them engaged and respecting their preferences.

8. **Business Engagement:** Establish authentic relationships with businesses before asking for support. Cold calling businesses for support was not successful for us.

9. **Acknowledging Participants**: Make sure every participant is acknowledged and appreciated. This step is crucial for maintaining good relationships and encouraging future participation.

10. **Strategizing for Wins**: Connect with a segmented group of Donors who are willing to help you in the last few hours of each round. Work with them to time donations in order to close the gap and ensure you move on to the next round!

I hope everyone enjoys this unique fundraising experience and I wish you all the best of luck!