



Australian Rogaining Association Inc. President's Annual Report 2016/17

This report to the ARA AGM occurs a little over 7 months since the 2016 AGM held at the Nannup Hash House. In that short period we have enjoyed both the Australasian Championship in Western Australia and the first Australasian Championship in New Zealand. I would firstly like to thank those who contributed to the WA AGM, particularly the extended discussion of challenges, initiatives and priorities. I would also like to record thanks to those who make the time and are regularly present for the annual meeting, held in the afternoon before the Australian Championship.

Events

Australian rogaining is continuing a steady trend in both the number of rogaining events organised and membership. The ARA's 8 member state and territory associations are continuing to run a regular calendar of 24 hour state championships and a large selection of shorter events. There are an increasing number of hybrid events with adventure racing that bring new people to the sport. Training days and school/scout events help to nurture and keep newcomers. Metrogaines, cycle rogaines and paddle-rogaines provide variety and opportunities to try new initiatives. As stated in last year's President's Report, we organised 62 events in 2016, while the ARA Calendar to date for 2017 shows we have 59 events programmed.

Finances and Insurance

The Treasurer's Report for calendar year 2016 will show that the ARA's finances have a healthy balance due to the success and good management of the 2016 World Championship. Capitation fees have remained at \$1 and the International Development Fund (IDF) levy at \$0.50 per member for many years.

In late 2016, the Treasurer finalised the public liability insurance at a favourable rate of \$2.83 per member. The insurance is aligned to the calendar year to avoid deadlines occurring during the popular winter rogaining period. Included in the state levy is Association Liability cover to protect the Directors and Officers of the Association. Our long term broker is Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. Their contact details are on the ARA website: <http://rogaine.asn.au/Insurance/Insurance-Documents.html>

2016 Australasian Championships – Western Australia

Western Australian Rogaining Association hosted the Australian Rogaining Championship at Nannup, 3.5 hours south of Perth on 17-18 September 2016. This was the 37th Australian Championship and the fourth Australasian Rogaining Championship.

WARA provided a course with a wide range of terrain, from old growth pine plantation, logged Karri and Jarrah forest and recently cleared pine plantation, to farmland with a mixture of sparsely vegetated paddocks and blue gum plantations. Atypically for WA, the course required a high degree of track walking, though competitors enjoyed the multiple route choice challenges.

Event Coordinator was Warren Smith, with course setters Jeff Conrades and Ian Thomsett, and vetters Bryan McClintock and Geoff Hearne.

The event attracted 315 competitors in 124 teams. Paul Williams and David Symons from WA won overall, followed by Gill Fowler and Joel Mackay from NSW, then David Baldwin and Julie Quinn from ACT. Andre Morkel and Tim Sikma were only 5 minutes behind, with the top 4 teams well clear of the field.

The Interstate Challenge was won by Western Australia. Winners of the open categories were:

- Paul Williams, David Symons (WA), First Mens Open
- Gill Fowler, Joel Mackay (NSW), First Mixed Open
- Tamsin Barnes (Qld), Janet Musker (WA), First Women Open

2017 Australasian Championships – New Zealand

For the first time since its establishment, the Australasian Championship moved to New Zealand in 2017. "The Emperor" Australasian Championship was organised by New Zealand Rogaining Association on 11-12 February at Waikaia, 2 hours from Queenstown on the south island. The 24 hour event attracted 119 competitors in 56 teams, with some numbers leaked to a popular 15 hour category. There were 92 controls set on a 300 sq km mixture of open hills and farmland flats with pockets of native beech forest and scrub. The superb map was described by NZRA as the most detailed map produced for a New Zealand rogaine. The Waikaia valley was flooded only a three weeks before, but the rogaine weather was fine with cloud at night obscuring the full moon, and fortunately expected rain held off until the next day.

Clear winners were Greig Hamilton and Chris Forne from New Zealand, with Australians David Baldwin, Julie Quinn and Gill Fowler second, then New Zealand's Phil Wood and Ange West in third place.

Winners of the open categories were:

- Greig Hamilton, Chris Forne (NZL) - 1st Mens Open
- Tamsin Barnes (AUS), Janet Musker (NZL) - 1st Womens Open (also 1st Womens Veteran)
- David Baldwin, Julie Quinn, Gill Fowler (AUS) - 1st Mixed Open

Other Australian category placegetters were:

- Coleen Mock, Colin Mock - 1st Mixed Ultra Veteran, 3rd Mixed Super Veteran
- Don Baker, Vic Sedunary - 1st Mens Ultra Veteran
- Mike Hotchkis, Walter Kelemen - 2nd Mens Super Veteran
- Marina Honey, Stephen Honey - 2nd Mixed Super Veteran
- Sue Clarke, Nihal Danis - 2nd Womens Super Veteran
- Andrew Baker, Kevin Humphrey - 3rd Mens Veteran
- Andrew Smith, Toni Bachvarova - 3rd Mixed Veteran

Future Australian and Australasian Championships

The 2017 Australian Championship is hosted by ACTRA on 6-7 May, near Cooma, NSW. Coordinators and course setters are Jeannie Douglass and Ron Simpson. The vetter is David Singleton. Terrain is detailed spur gully with open vegetation and areas of old gold mining. The altitude of the course ranges from 750m to 1050m and most of the area is nicely undulating with a few steep pinches. The map is 1:25,000 scale with 10 m contours, printed on waterproof Teslin paper, as used at the 2016 World Championship. At the official close of entries, there were 320 competitors in 140 teams.

The hosts for the next Australian/Australasian Rogaining Championships (according to the rotation schedule) will be:

- August 2018 – QRA
- November 2019 – RTAs
- 2020 – SARA.

Intervarsity Rogaining Championships

Convenor: Gill Fowler

This year's Intervarsity is being held in conjunction with the Australian Championship at Cooma. It is sanctioned with Australian University Sport at Level 3 (AUS endorsed events) and advertised on the AUS calendar and website (<http://ausunichamps.com.au/index.php/sanctioned-events/sa-challenge>). Intervarsity Rogaining has been conducted under the auspices of the AUS and its predecessors since 1969.

In recent years, AUS has broadened its audience to include TAFE students and in keeping with that trend, the ARA Executive decided to expand the Intervarsity definition to all tertiary students including TAFE. This year, there are 19 teams entered, from 4 states/territories, including one TAFE team.

The Intervarsity Rogaining Championship is open to all tertiary students (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, or post-graduate). NAMSF has continued to cover the travel costs of one team from each state in full. Many states have organised State University Championships and selection processes to choose their representative team.

Technical Sub-Committee

Chairman: David Baldwin

Water provision issues have adversely affected the several recent ARC events, including 2015 (NSW), 2014 (Victoria), 2013 (North Queensland), 2012 (South Australia). The 2016 AGM passed a motion and the Technical Committee has implemented this as follows:

- The ARC organisers are required to formally prepare a Water Management Plan detailing water locations, volume, resources and planned replenishment procedures.
- The ARA Executive will review the organiser's Water Management Plan (or appoint a Water Steward) to manage the competitor water drops at each future ARC.

- The Technical Sub-Committee will retain the details of each plan and recommendations, in order to build knowledge and assist future organisers.

The ARA's Water policy is on the website at: <http://rogaine.asn.au/policy/documents/policy/water>

A significant focus before the 2016 Australian Championship was WARA's in-house built electronic scoring system and the necessary testing to ensure it was adequate as a substitute for Navlight and to ensure it could integrate with WARA's Pebbles administration system.

Following the event it was apparent there were some teething issues with reliability of the new punching system, with most notably one punch suffering a hardware failure. David Baldwin worked extensively with WARA to resolve this and was able to satisfactorily finalise the results of the championship. The Technical Committee decided that where there were abnormal missed punches, teams were given the benefit of the doubt.

State Grants

The ARA Grants Policy enables the ARA Executive to allocate up to 40% of annual capitation income to grants to support the sport through Member projects and capital expenditure. These grants are best suited to assisting the smaller associations.

No grant applications were received by the deadline of 30 November 2016. The ARA's grant policy is on the website: <http://rogaine.asn.au/policy/documents/policy/grant-policy>

Wristbands

The ARA has purchased 20,000 cloth wristbands for Navlight at a cost of \$8140, sufficient for the next few year's events across the country. The design is similar to those used successfully at the 2016 World Championship. These are more comfortable and more secure than the hospital bands which have resulted in some lost tags. The wristbands will be distributed to states on a pro-rata basis at the Australian Championship.

International Development Fund (IDF)

Convenor: ARA Treasurer Mike Aylott. The fund balance is currently just under \$35,000.

There have not been any IDF projects completed in the past year. A planned Course Setting Workshop at WRC 2016 did not receive enough interest and therefore did not go ahead. However in 2017, WRC Course Setter David Baldwin has proposed to again utilise his considerable expertise through a Course Setting Workshop after the 2017 WRC in Latvia.

Members are again encouraged to propose potential IDF projects and promote the fund's opportunities when in contact with international rogainers.

International Rogaining

The ARA is formally represented on the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) by President David Rowlands and delegate David Baldwin. IRF President Richard Robinson is immediate past president of the Australian Rogaining Association.

The following is a summary of IRF news:

- The IRF held elections for President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Technical Manager. There was no change in personnel.
- The Peter Squires has stood down as President of the New Zealand Rogaining Association after many years and is replaced by Tim Farrant.
- Finland has formed a rogaining association and is in the process of joining the IRF. Finland organised the World Championship in 2015.
- The next WRC will be in Latvia on 18/19 August 2017, held in Rāzna National Park. Entries are close to filling the limit of 1000.
- There will be no WRC in 2018, since no bids were received. The 2019 World Championship has been awarded to Spain.
- USA has regional priority for WRC 2020 and has recently submitted an impressive proposal to the IRF for an event based at Lake Tahoe, California.
- Rogaining in USA is changing its name, with proposals including “map trekking” or “nav24”. In USA, rogaining is affected adversely by the advertising presence of the hair restorer product with a similar name.

World Championship Frequency

The ARA is currently putting a motion to the IRF to set the frequency of WRCs to every two years, as it was until 2012. Currently, the IRF is holding a World Championship as often as once a year, if there are acceptable proposals from member countries. However, the IRF Council has never established a formal policy for the frequency of WRCs.

This remains a significant issue affecting Australian rogainers, which ARA has been requested for many years to address. The IRF’s survey in 2014 and discussion with other IRF member countries indicates strong support from the national associations in the southern hemisphere and many groups in the northern hemisphere.

The key arguments in favour include: that the IRF is currently struggling to obtain quality proposals for the conduct of annual WRCs. Annual events have resulted in the vast majority of qualifying rogainers choosing not to attend some WRCs. For those from outside of Europe, it is very difficult to find funds to attend all WRCs if the frequency is annual.

Members of the ARA will be asked at the AGM to support this motion.

Information Systems

The ARA website is the visible face of the ARA. The website is accessed by rogainers and state committees as a source of reference, particularly for insurance information, technical regulations (rules) and Australian Championship (ARC) results.

The ARA website is in the process of being upgraded and improved. The ARA allocated \$5000 towards a new website using Joomla CMS. As stated in the Presidents Report 2014-15: "Of the original website refresh \$5000 budget, \$2378 has been spent to date. There is an opportunity to complete this task by utilising some of the skills amongst our broader membership."

David Baldwin and Paul Guard have continued to populate the ARA website <http://www.rogaine.asn.au> and Facebook page www.facebook.com/ausrogaining with new items, results and notices. Recently, the Council Policies have been revised on the website and new policies added including Water Plan, Intervarsity, and Australasian Championship.

Executive Roles

This year, the Executive is up for election for a 3 year term. At the AGM, a motion will be put for ARA to in future adopt a rotating executive, whereby one position becomes vacant each year. We believe this can be achieved within the current constitution.

The ARA Executive will benefit from a steady rotation of roles and injection of new talent. I would encourage our experienced state/territory administrators, particularly those from the more remote states, to consider a future role in the ARA, in order to best represent the sport.

The Executive has held Executive Meetings via Skype, at regular six week intervals through the past year. I would like to thank the ARA Executive team: Paul Guard as Secretary, Michael Aylott as Treasurer, David Baldwin as Technical Committee Chair, and Richard Robinson the Immediate Past President, for their time and dedication to the sport of rogaining during 2016/17.

Finally, a big thank you to the volunteers, committees and administrators within the 8 state and territory rogaining associations who continue to ensure rogaining's success.

**David Rowlands
President**