



Australian Rogaining Association Inc. President's Annual Report 2010/11

Australian rogaining had another good year in 2010. Indeed it could be argued that it has been a breakthrough year. We had another competitive and challenging Australian Championships and participant numbers remain strong although the shortage of volunteers remains an ever-present concern for many States.

However, the absolute highlight at an administrative level was the adoption by the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) of a greatly revised Constitution which addressed all of the key concerns that the ARA had had with the prior versions. This was driven primarily by the Czech, Estonian and New Zealand IRF Councillors and the ARA thanks them sincerely for their tireless efforts in this matter. The ARA has subsequently submitted a formal application for IRF membership and the IRF Membership Subcommittee has recommended to the IRF Council that the application be accepted. The formal vote on this is expected shortly. This is the culmination of 12 years effort by many ARA Council members, past and present, and is a milestone achievement.

2010 Australian Championships

The 2010 Australian Rogaining Championships was conducted by ACTRA adjacent to Lake Eucumbene in the Snowy Mountains of NSW. The area was extremely physically and technically challenging and offered a great contrast from recent prior years in terms of the type of terrain. This is a key feature for ARCs. They should give rogainers an opportunity to experience different terrains and use different rogaining skills and the 2010 ARC most surely did.

The event was won by Rob Preston and Damon Goerke.

World Championships

The 2010 WRC held in Canterbury, New Zealand in November saw many ARA members competing. ARA members continue to represent the largest non-local contingent at each WRC, a testament to the strength of and commitment to rogaining that we enjoy here in Australia. The next WRC will be held in NE Czech Republic in July/August 2012.

The increasing popularity of rogaining in general and WRCs in particular is leading to ever more restrictive eligibility criteria for these events. This will be particularly evident for the 2012 event given the extremely high popularity of rogaining in Eastern Europe. A key feature of these criteria is ensuring that some places remain available for "all-comers" (teams who do not qualify through competitive performance or extensive commitment to rogain administration). A major question within the "all-comers" eligibility criteria is whether entrants need to have demonstrated a recent track record of voluntary service to rogaining and/or other similar activities. The ARA needs to form an official view on this matter so we can participate actively in the debate.

The ARA has formally advised the IRF of the ARA's interest in conducting the World Rogaining Championships in 2014 or 2016 as agreed at the 2010 AGM. We have also advised the IRF that if there is a suitable proposal from North America for the conduct of

the 2014 WRC then the ARA would not seek to compete against this as we consider that the development of rogaining is better served by having the 2014 WRC in North America.

Finances and State Grants

The 2009 State grant applications under consideration at the time of the last AGM were awarded and fully utilised the funds available. No applications have yet been received for grants from the available 2010 funds.

The International Development Fund (IDF) that was established to permit the ARA to become more active in the promotion and development of rogaining outside of Australia is now standing at over \$10,000-. A process for the administration and disbursement of this fund has been approved by Council. Council will be requested to agree the composition of the IDF committee at the 2011 AGM. Council will also need to decide if we wish to continue to build the IDF reserves given that we expect there will be a requirement to pay a capitation fee to the IRF. The amount of such fee is not yet prescribed but expected to be in the order of \$0-60/member.

Information Systems

David Baldwin and David Rowlands have continued to develop and populate the ARA main website www.rogaine.asn.au and the Council website www.rogaine.asn.au/aradocs. This continues to be a significant effort and I again thank them both for their perseverance and time commitment to this activity.

Insurance

As noted in the Treasurer's Report we were able to secure Public Liability Insurance and Association Liability (or Directors & Officers) cover for 2010/11 with no increase in premiums.

Technical Standards

There has been no major activity in the area of technical standards since the last AGM. The key technical issue that has been discussed by the Executive is the potential to mandate electronic punching with one tag per entrant for Australian Rogaining Championships. The practice varies widely between States with many States already doing this for all or most of their events.

David Baldwin, Technical Committee Chair will shortly be reactivating the Committee to deal with this and a range of other technical issues that are currently on the table.

Interschool Rogaining Championships

With the continued enthusiastic and material support of the Nigel Aylott Memorial Sports Foundation (NAMSF), 2010 saw the Australian Interschool Rogaining Championships held in conjunction with the Victorian Championships in September. Unfortunately the participation rates were not as high as in recent years and we are seeking the support of all States to ensure that this event is well patronised in 2011.

The NAMSF has agreed to provide the same form and level of sponsorship again this year and it is planned to agree on the event to be used for the 2011 Interschool Rogaining Championships at the 2011 AGM so that publicity can commence immediately.

International Rogaining Matters

As noted in the introduction, the constitutional change required to progress the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) into a representative and democratic international peak rogaining body that is comprised of national peak rogaining bodies has now occurred. As a result, and as Council are aware, the ARA has now formally applied for IRF membership and the IRF membership subcommittee has recommended to the IRF Council that the application be accepted. We anticipate that the formal IRF Council vote on this matter will occur during January/February 2011.

This has been a long and arduous process but it is extremely pleasing for the ARA and for me personally that it has finally reached a successful conclusion. I must acknowledge the substantial efforts of many members of the IRF Council, particularly those from Estonia, Czech and New Zealand in getting us to this point. I also thank the ARA Council for the continued support in this matter through this past 12 years.

Under the terms of the motion agreed by Council the ARA will be represented on the IRF Council by its President and one other Councillor to be elected annually at the AGM. At the 2011 AGM we will be seeking nominations, and if required conducting an election, for this role.

I am very much looking forward to the ARA being able to participate openly and actively in the international development of rogaining. It should be noted that the sport is continuing to grow strongly around the world as evidenced at the recent WRC where seven countries were represented in the top ten teams with a further three countries in the top 20 teams.

Executive Roles

With Michael Aylott now firmly in the Treasurer's position it has been very pleasing to have a full compliment of Executive members available to share the load. Michael, together with David Rowlands as Secretary and David Baldwin as Technical Committee Chair (and IT guru) have given me great support during 2010. I sincerely thank all three of them for the support they have given to me, to the ARA and to the sport of rogaining.

The Executive has continued to have telephone hook-ups at approximately six week intervals which have assisted greatly in keeping key items moving forward.

Conclusion

Overall it has been an extremely good year for the ARA. We have seen:

- Continued strong participation rates in our sport
- A significant growth of the sport outside of Australia
- Inception of a representative and democratic international peak rogaining body that is comprised of national peak rogaining bodies
- Continued high quality events organised by the affiliated State Associations

I thank Council for their support during the year.



Richard Robinson
President