



## **Australian Rogaining Association Inc. President's Annual Report 2012/13**

Overall rogaining in Australia continued to do well through 2012. We had another competitive and challenging Australian Championships in stunning country and participant numbers continue to show modest but steady growth. The shortage of volunteers remains an ever-present concern for many States with some, Tasmania in particular, struggling to maintain a reasonable calendar of events.

The ARA has continued to consolidate our position as an integral member of the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) and work within the IRF framework to take all practical measures to support the interests of ARA members at an international level without adversely impacting the development of the sport across the world.

### **2012 Australian Championships**

The 2012 Australian Rogaining Championships was conducted by SARA in the Blinman area of the Flinders Ranges. The area offered stunning scenery and an excellent variety of technically and physically challenging terrain. It was an area truly worthy of being a championship and very much worth the travel to get there. The event was well organised and gave rogainers an opportunity to again experience different terrains and use different rogaining skills.

The event was won by Paul Williams and Ben Corry.

2013 sees the first ever Australasian Rogaining Championships and the first ARC to be held in North Queensland, again offering Australian (and NZ) rogainers a new experience and challenge.

### **Finances and State Grants**

The allocated amount for State grants in 2011 were fully disbursed albeit that did not occur until 1Q 2013.

The International Development Fund (IDF) is now holding over \$14,000- and it is likely that the NAMSF will make a sizable contribution to this fund in the not too distant future meaning that it will have the capacity to make a real difference to the development of rogaining outside Australia. There have still been no applications made to the fund. This is likely to be because the broader rogaining world does not fully appreciate the availability of the fund and what it may be used for. As a result the Executive are looking to take a far more proactive approach and make some proposals to the rogaining communities outside of Australia focused primarily on having a well experienced Australian rogaine organiser and course setter run workshops in overseas locations.

The matter of IRF capitation fees is discussed in a separate agenda item.

## Information Systems

David Baldwin and David Rowlands have continued to develop and populate the ARA main website [www.rogaine.asn.au](http://www.rogaine.asn.au) and the Council website <http://rogaine.asn.au/Table/ARA-Council/>. This continues to be a significant effort and I again thank them both for their perseverance and time commitment to this activity. However, we have also recognised that continuing this task with volunteer labour would see it take many years to complete and are now investigating the option of paying for the work to be done by a professional, who is willing to offer attractive rates because of their involvement with the sport.

## Insurance

As this report was being prepared we were still awaiting quotations for the renewal of our Public Liability Insurance and Association Liability (or Directors & Officers) cover. We are expecting that this will be able to be achieved with no increase in premiums and will be able to provide an update at, or ahead of, the AGM.

## Technical Standards

David Baldwin, Technical Committee Chair, continues to work with the States to develop the next update of the ARA Technical Regulations. More significantly David has also been appointed to an IRF Technical Subcommittee reviewing the IRF Technical Standards. One of his focuses there will be to try to get closer alignment between the IRF and ARA Standards.

## Interschool Rogaining Championships

With the continued enthusiastic and material support of the Nigel Aylott Memorial Sports Foundation (NAMSF), 2012 saw the Australian Interschool Rogaining Championships held in conjunction with the Australian Championships in June with nine teams representing five universities. Whilst these numbers were down a little on 2011 possibly because of timing being just after mid-year exams it was still very pleasing to see the event continuing to be well supported.

This year the Interschool Championships are being held in conjunction with the Western Australian Championships in August which should, hopefully, make it easier for students to attend. The NAMSF has agreed to provide the same form and level of sponsorship again and this has been advertised to all of the States.

## International Rogaining Matters

A modified IRF Constitution came into effect at the start of 2013 with the primary changes being that the Executive has been expanded to eight (four voting and four non-voting) to assist better distribute the workload but without increasing the voting power of the Executive. This was described in detail in last year's President's Report. Since then we have seen a significant change in the IRF leadership with a new:

- President – Richard Robinson
- Vice-President – Lauri Leppik (Estonia) – This is a newly created position
- Treasurer – Robin Gardiner – This is a newly created position
- Technical Manager – Sergey Yaschenko (Russia)
- WRC Manager – Jan Tojnar (Czech)

Alan Mansfield has been reappointed Promotion & Development Manager and Rod Phillips continues as Secretary (previously Secretary/Treasurer) with that position due for re-election in 2014.

The ARA has continued to be extremely active in IRF matters over the past year. This has not been without its challenges as the direction being taken by the IRF does not always align with what we believe to be in the best interests of ARA members or the international development of the sport. A number of key issues where the ARA has taken an active role were noted in last year's report and an update on each of these is set out below:

- **WRC Entry Criteria** – The generic WRC entry criteria that were agreed in 2012 remain in place and were used for the 2013 WRC.
- **WRC Frequency** – The IRF Council vote on whether or not to conduct a WRC in 2015 was approved by the narrowest of margins (two votes). Subsequently one IRF Councillor advised that they had inadvertently voted in favour of the motion when their Peak National Body had actually instructed them to vote against it! After much lobbying from Australia and New Zealand, with some support from the USA the vote was re-conducted some months later. Again it was approved by a two vote margin. The issue remains fraught and divisive within the IRF, A number of Council members voted differently in the two ballots.

It was interesting to note that the more mature countries, in terms of length of time in conducting rogaines, being: Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Czech all voted against the motion, as did one of the Executive (Alan Mansfield). The motion succeeded because all the newer countries being: Estonia, Ukraine, Latvia, USA and Russia, plus the then IRF President, Neil Phillips, supported it. The IRF Secretary, Rod Phillips, abstained.

The ARA remains strongly opposed to annual WRCs.

There is currently an IRF discussion paper available on both the ARA and IRF website (or should be by the time you read this) which deals with a range of WRC related issues including this one. This discussion paper is aimed at stimulating debate on these subjects at a meeting to be held in conjunction with the 2013 WRC. It is essential that the ARA have a strong voice in that forum. Unfortunately the undersigned cannot be that voice. As I am now the IRF President I must act impartially and try to direct the debate rather than participating actively in it.

- **IRF Executive Structure** – As noted above, this has now been resolved and the revised IRF Constitution is now in effect.
- **Technical Standards** – There has been no change on this matter since last year. We should consider that a positive as the move towards far more prescriptive and complex standards and rules than what we have had traditionally within the ARA has been, temporarily at least, been halted. It is worth noting that during the IRF meeting held in conjunction with the 2012 WRC when this matter was raised and those promoting the increased complexity were asked to give examples of the "significant weaknesses" they considered to exist in the current Technical Regulations no specifics were able to be provided.
- **IRF Financing** – This is covered in a separate agenda item

Another key issue as regards international rogaining that is currently occurring is the ARA's bid to host the 2016 World Rogaining Championships in Central Australia. By the

time you read this the bid will have been submitted and a copy posted on the ARA website. You are encouraged to take a look at it.

Should this bid be successful, and we should know about the time of the AGM, then it will be a great thing for rogaining in Australia and a true test of who are the world's best rogainers. It will of course also involve a lot of hard work and commitment and we will be looking for each of the States to provide some support to the organisation of the event.

## **Executive Roles**

I would very much like to thank the ARA Executive team; David Rowlands as Secretary Michael Aylott as Treasurer and David Baldwin as Technical Committee Chair, IRF Delegate and IT guru for the support you have given me and the sport of rogaining during 2012/13.

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

As I have recently taken on the role of IRF President I believe that I need to stand down as ARA President in order to be able to demonstrate impartiality in the IRF role. I would like to thank the Council for the support you have given me during my five years as ARA President and my 11 years on the Executive. I genuinely feel we have made progress, particularly in the area of international rogaining.

I intend to continue to be active in the sport at a State, National and International level and expect to continue to be a very active and participative member of the ARA Council.

## **Conclusion**

The ARA and rogaining in Australia continues to thrive and evolve and we are at the forefront of the development of the sport internationally. We should be proud of our achievements and growth and look forward to continuing to develop and playing a central role in how our sport develops across the world.



**Richard Robinson**  
President