



Australian Rogaining Association Inc. President's Annual Report 2013/14

Australian rogaining remained strong through another busy and successful year. Our 8 member states and territories continue to run an extensive calendar of 24 hour state championships, shorter 6-12 hour events, cycle rogaines, metrogaines and school events. We held a competitive and technically challenging Australian Championships for the first time in North Queensland, while overall participant numbers in the sport continue to show modest but steady growth.

With former ARA President Richard Robinson now leading the International Rogaining Federation (IRF), the ARA has continued to work to support the development of rogaining internationally through the International Development Fund, and to further the interests of ARA members and the sport in general through our representation on the IRF and its sub-committees.

Membership

The membership statistics for the past 10 years are listed below, as compiled by ARA Treasurer Mike Aylott. This shows a steady situation in the mature markets Victoria and Western Australia, with growth of about 60% in Queensland, South Australia and ACT. The smaller numbers in Northern Territory and Tasmania appear more volatile. It is pleasing that NTRA have recently successfully turned over their key leaders with new blood. ARA should continue to monitor NTRA and RTas to ensure retention of a critical mass of administrators and organisers.

Affiliated Organisation	Year									
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
NSWRA	918	952	1010	955	1192	1152	1309	801	973	1127
VRA	1,825	1817	1493	1647	1845	1411	1629	1621	1489	1830
QRA	581	546	827	786	649	861	848	823	1014	915
WARA	1,130	1233	1109	1106	1048	1268	1377	1236	1290	1132
SARA	590	599	475	585	579	602	761	899	945	995
RTas	100	181	216	164	169	136	114	184	221	139
ACTRA	548	580	478	560	511	524	440	725	764	878
NTRA	74	72	59	62	77	84	72	80	84	127
Total	5,766	5,980	5,667	5,865	6,070	6,038	6,550	6,369	6,780	7,143
ARC host	SARA	QRA	VRA	NTRA	NSWRA	WARA	ACTRA	RT	SARA	QRA

Finances and State Grants & Insurance

The Treasurer's Report for calendar year 2013 shows that ARA's finances continued a steady balance. The available funds for State grants closing November 2013 were over-subscribed, with part-grants approved to WARA (\$1150 for defibrillator) and RTas (\$1200 for equipment shed) and a possible grant to SARA pending.

Since payment of the insurance in June 2014, cash flow has become tight. The necessary investment into the 2016 World Championship will increase and potentially stretch the ARA's position further. ARA Members are requested to pay capitation fees promptly once agreed at the AGM.

Insurance

As proposed at the 2013 AGM, the Treasurer has secured public liability insurance for 18 months, rather than the usual 12 months. The previous mid-June renewal date had regularly caused stress for event organisers at that time of year. An unexpected benefit was the reduction in premium assisted by the longer term and a change of insurer. The broker OAMPS has been retained with contacts unchanged.

2013 Australasian Championships

The first Australasian Rogaining Championship took place on 22/23 June 2013 in conjunction with the 34th Australian Championship. The event was fittingly won by New Zealanders Phil Wood and Robert Jarvis. This was the first ARC to be held in North Queensland, organised by Mike Coleman under the auspices of QRA in the Mareeba area near Cairns. The course setting by Andrew Campbell and Rod Gray made excellent use of the terrain to provide complex technical navigation challenges. Numbers were down on expectations, despite the close proximity to the domestic transport hub and tourism centre in Cairns. Some rogainers may have assumed tropical vegetation, which was not seen up on the Atherton Tableland. They missed a well organised event and the chance to take home some gorgeous hand crafted glass trophies.

Age Group Winners were:

- Men – Phil Wood, Robert Jarvis (NZ)
- Women – Tamsin Barnes, Wendy Reid (Qld)
- Mixed – Gill Fowler, Joel Mackay (NSW)
- Interstate Challenge – Western Australia

World Championships

The 2013 World Championship was held in Russia. 27 Australians travelled to the Pskov region near the Latvian border on 26-27 July. Leading Australians were Rod Gray and Geoff Lawford, retaining the Men Super Veterans title they won in Czech Republic.

Australian medallists were:

- Rod Gray, Geoff Lawford, 1st Men Super Veterans
- Tamsin Barnes, Thor Egerton, 2nd Women Veterans
- Tim Dent, Graham Anderson, 2nd Men Ultra Veterans
- Robyn Spriggs, with Sharon Crawford (USA), 2nd Women Ultra Veterans
- Paul Williams, Mark Imbert, 3rd Men Veterans.

The 2014 World Championship was held in USA on 17-18 August 2014 in the Black Hills west of Rapid City, South Dakota. Australia's small representation of 31 was highly competitive, with over 50% gaining places. Four Australian teams won world titles. Julie Quinn and David Baldwin came sixth overall, while Geoff Lawford and Rod Gray won a third Men Super Veterans title.

World Champions and Australian medallists are:

- Rod Gray, Geoff Lawford, 1st Men Super Veterans
- Richard Robinson, Vivienne Prince (NZ), 1st Mixed Super Veterans
- Tim Dent, Rob Taylor, Graham Anderson, 1st Men Ultra Veterans
- Robyn Spriggs, Sharon Crawford (USA), 1st Women Ultra Veterans
- Julie Quinn, David Baldwin, 3rd in Mixed Open and 2nd in Mixed Veterans
- Tamsin Barnes, Thorlene Egerton, 2nd Women Veterans
- Paul Williams, Andre Morkel, 2nd Mens Veterans
- Derek Morris, Ted van Geldermalsen, 3rd Men Super Veterans

Technical Standards

David Baldwin, the ARA's Technical Committee Chairman, has worked behind the scenes as an integral member of the IRF Technical Subcommittee, reviewing the IRF Technical Standards. The main area of focus has been management of the trend to real time tracking and influx of support crews, matters which were brought to a head by a protest and jury decision at the 2013 World Championship.

Through 2014-15, we expect that David will continue to work with the States to develop the next update of the ARA Technical Regulations, with a goal to address the current issues, and improve alignment between ARA and IRF. The IRF's standards should also be finalised in that time period and we will encourage IRF to adopt ARA's standards such as the Under 23 category.

Future Australian Championships

Following the host rotation schedule, the 2015 Australasian Rogaining Championship was scheduled to be held in the Northern Territory. Due to the fact that the 2016 World Rogaining Championship has been awarded to Australia and will be held in the Northern Territory, the ARA decided to take some of the pressure off key NTRA personnel by reallocating the 2015 ARC to NSW. This brings NSWRA and WARA forward by one year in the original schedule and I would like to thank NSWRA and WARA for accommodating these late changes.

The hosts and dates for the next two Australian Rogaining Championships will be:

- NSWRA - 10/11 October 2015 (Australasian Championship)
- WARA - 17/18 September 2016

2016 will be a busy year, with the Australasian Championship planned for New Zealand; Australia hosting the WRC in Alice Springs in July; and the Australian Championship in September.

Intersivity Rogaining Championships

ARA Intersivity Convenor is Gill Fowler.

With the continued support of the Nigel Aylott Memorial Sports Foundation (NAMSF), 2013 saw the Australian Intersivity Rogaining Championships held in Western Australia in August in conjunction with WARA's state championship. Universities competed from 5 states/territories: Tasmania, ACT,

Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. Intervarsity Coordinator Gill Fowler again gained level 4 sanctioning for the event from Australian University Sports (AUS).

This year the Intervarsity Championships are being held in conjunction with the Australian Championship. Entry numbers at time of writing are high. The ARA's goal is to grow the event numbers towards self-sufficiency and increase the recognition level within AUS. NAMSF has agreed to provide the same form and level of sponsorship again and many States have organised selection processes to choose their representative team.

International Development Fund

The International Development Fund (IDF) is managed by a sub-committee consisting of Mike Aylott, Greg Robinson and Robin Gardner. In 2013 the ARA received an application to the IDF from the organisers of the 2014 World Championship with support from OUSA, the national body in USA.

The ARA was able to provide personnel with extensive experience of competing in, organising, course setting and mapping for Australian Championships. Eric Andrews and Jon Potter provided remote desk vetting assistance during the period late November 2013 to May 2014. Merv Trease and Vic Sedunary visited South Dakota, USA for 2 weeks in early June 2014 to provide on-site vetting and setting advice.

IDF expenditure was AUD \$4800 to part-fund the travel costs for Merv and Vic and \$1670 for 120 control flag sets used by WRC 2014, with ownership to be transferred to OUSA after the WRC. The fund balance stands at about \$25,000.

The educational role of the visit in particular was believed to be very successful and the event was better for all of the above efforts. The ARA trusts that the learning will flow through to higher quality events in South Dakota and USA. On behalf of ARA, I wish to express our debt of gratitude to Eric, Jon, Merv and Vic for their significant contributions to the sport through this worthwhile exercise.

As stated at the 2013 AGM, ARA has identified an opportunity for IDF to support course setting or event organisation workshops outside Australia. Members are encouraged to identify suitable personnel who could volunteer for this or other projects.

International Rogaining

The ARA is represented directly on the IRF by the President David Rowlands and delegate David Baldwin. In addition, Australia is well represented on the IRF in a number of the key roles:

- President – Richard Robinson
- Secretary – Rod Phillips
- Treasurer – Robin Gardner
- Promotions & Development – Alan Mansfield

The ARA has continued to be very active in IRF matters over the past year. David Rowlands is a member of the IRF's membership sub-committee and is leading the IRF's Strategic Plan sub-committee.

The IRF holds a meeting of national representatives and interested individuals at each of the world championships. ARA was represented by Rod Gray in 2013 and by David Baldwin & Julie Quinn in 2014.

The following are a summary of key IRF developments and issues with emphasis on those affecting ARA:

- The IRF produced a World Championship discussion paper in 2013, which ARA contributed to. The ARA's submission was circulated at the 2013 AGM and Rod Gray presented this at the 2013 IRF Meeting in Russia. Most notably, the ARA's proposal that WRCs be restricted to member hosts (or joint member organiser/non-member host) was adopted by the IRF.
- Paul Guard designed and implemented a survey of WRC participants which was advertised through IRF councillors and completed in May 2014. The stated purpose was to assess the major factors which attract competitors to the WRC, to gauge opinion on the regional rotation policy and to gain feedback on the preferred frequency of WRCs. David Baldwin briefed the 2014 IRF Meeting on the results and conclusions. The survey found that the preference for bi-annual WRCs is very strong amongst regular WRC attendees from Australia/New Zealand. The preference for annual WRCs is strongest amongst infrequent attendees from Eastern Europe, but also supported (to a lesser extent) by regular attendees from Eastern Europe.
- The IRF is currently voting to choose the host for WRC 2017 between Latvia and Ukraine. The ARA remains strongly opposed to annual WRCs and intends to abstain from the vote. The IRF's 2013 WRC discussion paper flagged that annual WRCs may continue until 2018. ARA plans to hold the IRF to its proposal to survey participants after WRC 2014 and re-evaluate annual events beyond 2018. The shrinking pool of WRC bids may support ARA's approach.
- The IRF has developed a draft Strategic Plan. This was essentially a minor revision of the 2006 plan with amendments, updates and improved layout. A discussion paper was circulated at the USA IRF Meeting in August, to encourage enhancements to the plan with recent "hot" topics including real time technology, event types, orienteering and professionalization. ARA members are encouraged to discuss this within their committees and provide input to ARA by end of 2014.
- Based on learnings from WRC 2014, the IRF has recently established a formal WRC Host Agreement with each world championship organiser. The agreement documents the various technical, financial and administrative obligations of both the IRF and the WRC host and the practical processes by which the IRF's WRC Manager works with the WRC host to achieve this. A significant improvement has been achieved through the role of WRC Event Adviser who acts as the IRF's representative in directly overseeing the conduct of the WRC.
- The IRF has over recent years discussed various formulas for member capitation and levies. The IRF has now passed a membership fees capitation policy which is very much in ARA's favour. The fee for year 2014 is USD \$50. In addition, levies on the Australasian Championship and 2016 World Championship will affect Australia.
- In June 2014, the IRF voted to accept a proposal from its Membership sub-committee to accept Spain as a member. The IRF members are now: Czech Republic, New Zealand, Estonia, Australia, USA, Ukraine, Latvia, Russia and Spain.
- David Baldwin has produced new trophies for the new Ultra Veterans category at both the World and Australian Championships.

World Rogaining Championship 2016

In July 2013, ARA won the right to host the 2016 World Rogaining Championship. The bid team lead by Richard Robinson produced a highly professional proposal which led to an IRF decision 13-1 in favour of Australia, against competition from Latvia, Ukraine and Finland.

The competition area, near Alice Springs, promises technically challenging navigation amidst spectacular scenery in terrain that is typically Australian.

The event is being organised by ARA, with each of the affiliated State association contributing their unique skills and manpower. At time of writing, all the key roles such as catering (WARA), transport (ACTRA), equipment (QRA), sponsorship (NSWRA), website and treasury (VRA) have been allocated. This event will inevitably involve a lot of hard work to ensure a world class event that we can be proud of. The organising team of Richard Robinson, course setters David Baldwin, Julie Quinn and local liaison through Jon Potter of NTRA have already been active on site. Peter Squires from New Zealand has been appointed as the IRF Event Adviser.

Promotions

In partnership with ACTRA, the ARA has secured a large stock of rogaining stickers in two formats: the traditional orange and black “Rogaining: The Sport of Cross Country Navigation” and a white on clear version of the above. ARA’s share of the cost was \$1518.

Information Systems

David Baldwin and Paul Guard have continued to develop and populate the ARA website www.rogaine.asn.au. Paul has brought the Executive into the world of Google documents which have proven much more efficient for the editing of shared resources such as Executive agendas and minutes.

A new ARA website is about to be implemented to provide modern features and a clearer layout, whilst addressing limitations caused by the age of the current content management system. Andre Morkel, a website professional and leading rogainer, has been engaged and David Baldwin is coordinating. The website refresh budget is \$5000.

Executive Roles

The Executive has continued to hold Executive Meetings via Skype at approximately six week intervals through the past year.

I would very much like to thank the ARA Executive team: Paul Guard as Secretary, Michael Aylott as Treasurer and David Baldwin as Technical Committee Chair and IRF Delegate for their support and dedication to the sport of rogaining during 2013/14. I feel that we have worked together very effectively as a balanced team. IRF President Richard Robinson has been an active participant who has provided valued support and guidance through the transition.

Conclusion

Thankyou to each of the Council delegates, state committees, volunteers and rogainers all over Australia who continue to ensure that the sport grows and prospers.

David Rowlands
President