



Australian Rogaining Association Inc.

President's Annual Report

2022/23

Presented to AGM 11th September 2023

This President's Report is a summary of the years' rogaining activities, since the 2022 Annual General Meeting, held online just before the Australian Championship in Victoria.

Australian rogaining has returned after the pandemic lockdowns and weather interruptions of recent years to a trend of steady and healthy growth in both the number of rogaining events organised and membership.

The ARA's 8 Member state and territory associations ran an extensive calendar of 24-hour rogaines, various shorter events from 15 to 6 hours, cycle rogaines, metrogaines and paddle events. The table below shows a summary of events run in 2022. Unfortunately, RTas had to cancel their biggest event of the year due to flooding!

Events 2022	NSWRA	VRA	QRA	SARA	WARA	RTas	NTRA	ACTRA
24 hour		1	1	1	2			1
10/12/15 hour	1	2	2	2	1		2	1
5/6/8 Hour	4	10	1	2	2		2	5
Cycle			1	1			2	
Paddle			1		1			
Metro/Mini	4	2	2	2	1	1	3	4

It is pleasing to see that several states have archived all their maps, results, photos and race reports, making them available online for posterity. This year, all Members except Northern Territory are running a 24-hour championship.

Membership

Membership/participation statistics collected by the ARA Treasurer indicate that total numbers in the sport have stabilised above 8000. The table below shows current membership figures for a few key years back to 2012. Notably, our smallest association NTRA shows a steady trend of growth.

Member	2012	2015	2019	2022
NSWRA	801	1429	1386	1555
VRA	1621	2154	2073	1843
QRA	823	1008	707	898
SARA	899	1185	876	1075
WARA	1236	1104	1138	1098
RTas	184	209	357	233
NTRA	80	157	179	228
ACTRA	725	872	662	1183
Total	6369	8118	7378	8113

Paddy Pallin 6 Hour, NSWRA

The Paddy Pallin rogaine celebrated its 60th anniversary this year. The name Paddy Pallin is well known in Australia through the bushwalking/skiing gear business he founded in the 1930's. Paddy was concerned that the navigational skills of bushwalkers were lacking, thus leading to inconvenience or unnecessary search parties.

In 1988, NSWRA took responsibility for the event that Paddy had invented with a 3-hour format and which was already 25 years old. The 6-hour rogaine has always been a popular fixture on the NSWRA calendar, near the winter solstice. This has helped NSWRA consolidate its finances, in turn cross-subsidising 24-hour events further afield, including the 2006 World Championship organised by NSWRA at the Warrumbungles.¹

The statistics below are indicative of the strength of this event, even through years affected by pandemic, floods and bushfires.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Teams	184	170	199	179	172	156	186
Competitors	466	423	489	454	438	391	484

Finances

The Treasurer's Report for calendar year 2022 shows that the ARA's finances remain solid, though we have run down reserves in the last 2 years.

The 2022 AGM accepted the Treasurer's recommendation to reinstate payment of the Capitation fee at \$1 per head, due to the return of events and normalisation of Member income.

Insurance

At the 2022 AGM, it was decided to take out Volunteer Insurance on an ongoing annual basis as part of a package with the public liability insurance and association insurance.

The Treasurer has again negotiated competitive rates for renewal of our public liability insurance, which comes due in mid-December. As forecast last year, insurance costs are increasing across the board and will likely continue to rise. The impact has been a 10% increase in insurance paid by Members this year to \$3.63 per head.

Our broker remains Arthur J. Gallagher & Co, with their contact details are on the ARA website:

<https://rogaine.asn.au/documents/insurance>

Auditing

Our Treasurer Mike Aylott has worked diligently for several years to collate documentation and review the finances ready for auditing. The effort had grown to 12 years from as far back as 2010, including the complexity of the 2016 World Championship's finances.

¹ <https://nswrogaining.org/paddy-pallin-rogaine-60-years-young-a-great-tradition-and-partnership>

John Gavens has kindly completed a marathon effort of reviewing the ARA's finances. His report is tabled at this AGM. John made a number of key recommendations for improvement and rectification, which the ARA Executive has undertaken to implement:

- Ensure complete documentation/substantiation of payments.
- A better system for recording payments that are due and for recovering payments.
- Resolution of an error in SARA/WARA levy payments from 2014.

John has clarified that ARA does not require formal auditing, but rather a "review" as undertaken here is sufficient for the future.

Australian and Australasian Championships

The 42nd Australian Rogaining Championship was organised by VRA on 8-9th October 2022 in the Pyrenees Ranges, near Avoca in central Victoria. Event coordinator was Greg Robinson, while course setters were Ultra Veterans Vic Sedunary and Merve Trease.

The terrain was steep and rocky, requiring careful route planning to minimise climb. The watercourses were strongly flowing and low-lying areas were wet underfoot due to heavy rainfall leading to flooding just days before the event. This required a late move of the planned Hash House location, but the weekend saw ideal weather conditions.

The overall winners were David Baldwin and Julie Quinn from the ACT with 3200 points. They climbed over 5km during the event. Victoria won the Interstate Challenge Trophy narrowly from ACT and NSW.

Intersarsity was won clearly by Toby Cazzolato, Max Grivell and Jack Marschall from University of Adelaide.

The top places and winners of the open categories were:

- David Baldwin, Julie Quinn (ACT) – 1st Overall and 1st Mixed Open
- David Williams, Ronnie Taib (NSW) – 2nd Overall and 1st Men Open
- Ivan Koudashev, Xanda Kolesnikow (NSW) – 3rd Overall and 1st U23 Men
- Shelley Bambrook, Elizabeth Dornom (Vic) – 4th Overall and 1st Women Open

NSWRA is hosting the 2023 Australasian Championship at Goobang National Park between Parkes and Orange on 30th September/1st October. The terrain promises a mixture of grazing farmland with plenty of natural bushland at the western edge of the Central Tablelands. Organiser is Trevor Gollan, while the course setters are NSW's most successful Mens' rogaining team: David Williams and Ronny Taib. This event will also be the 2023 Intersarsity Championship.

As discussed at the 2022 AGM, there is an unfortunate date clash with the Australian orienteering carnival in Western Australia. ARA Council requested that NSWRA consider moving the Australian Championships to a date at least one month separated from the Australian Orienteering Championship. However scheduling conflicts with orienteering are difficult to avoid if ARC is held in the period September-October of any year.

NZRA are hosting the Australasian Championship on 16/17th December 2023 at Lake Tekapo on the central South Island. This is a very scenic location with a mixture of terrain from flat to rolling hills, tarns

to steep alpine country, at a perfect time of year for holiday plans. Australian rogainers are encouraged to support this event which visits New Zealand only every 5 years or so.

WARA is organising the next Australasian Championship at Mt Singleton, the venue of the 1996 World Championship, on 7/8th September 2024.

The hosts for the following Australian Rogaining Championships and Intervarsity (according to the rotation schedule) are planned to be:

- 2024 – WARA
- 2025 – ACTRA
- 2026 – QRA
- 2027 – RTas

There is also provision for NTRA to hold the Australian Championship at any time in the future when suitable. ARA Council has a standing offer in support of NTRA to facilitate this opportunity, such as via event underwriting and coordination of volunteers.

Technical Sub-Committee

Chairman: David Baldwin

At the 2022 AGM, two alterations to the Technical Regulations, as proposed by the Technical Committee, were passed:

- An amendment to Rule T17 to accommodate non-binary competitors. The intent of the rule is to improve inclusivity, with those who identify as non-binary placed in the Mixed category.
- An additional rule C10 to set out requirements for electronic scoring and dual punches at the ARC. This overcomes a gap in the existing rules and tightens requirements to overcome issues experienced in the past. The rule applies to the Australian Championship only.

A new motion is now before the Council to change rules T17 and C6 applying to the age categories.

- Age will be calculated by year of birth, rather than date of birth.
- The Veteran category is changed from age 40-55 to age 45-55.

If passed, these amendments will ensure that the ARA regulations remain aligned with the IRF Rules of Rogaining.

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 are relatively low value grants, best suited to assisting the smaller associations.

Grant applications were received from QRA and SARA in 2022. QRA was granted \$965, being 50% of the cost of 4 Garmin Messenger units. These will be used to provide real-time communication for volunteers, in areas without any other form of communication, whilst planning, or during QRA events.

SARA's grant was \$1265 as a contribution towards purchase of a new equipment trailer, valued at \$12,650.

Grant applications are encouraged before the deadline of 30 November each year. The ARA's grant policy is on the website: <https://rogaine.asn.au/documents/policy/grant-policy>

Special Grant

The ARA Executive received a request from the Australian Under 23 team who won the World Championship in 2022, requesting financial assistance towards defending their title at the 2023 WRC in USA. While the ARA does not have policies in place to provide direct grants to individuals, the Executive determined that limited funds could be made available for promotion and development of the sport (as per the Constitution). We recognised that there are very limited potential sources of funding for representative teams. The Executive decided that support of our youth is important to the future of the sport and provided a small grant of \$500 each (total \$1500) towards travel and entry expenses.

2023 World Championship California, USA

Australians performed outstandingly at the 2023 World Rogaining Championship held on 29/30 July at Lake Tahoe, California, USA. A superb performance from the "Dream Team" of Joanna George, Abigail George and Meredith Norman to again win Womens' Under 23. Two Aussie teams Rod Gray and Geoff Lawford, Richard Robinson and Vivienne Prince, took home 2 trophies, winning against much younger competitors.

The WRC was the culmination of the Cal-O-Fest orienteering carnival. The event centre at Northstar ski resort was surrounded by 250sq km of hilly pine forest from 1900 to 2600 metres elevation. Most teams survived the hot dry summer weather during daytime and moved faster in the night, especially due to the reflective controls. The navigation was surprisingly technical and the catering of a high standard.

The top teams overall were from Estonia, Spain, Latvia, USA and Ukraine. The following were the Australian placings:

- Joanna George, Abigail George, Meredith Norman - 1st Women Under 23
- Gill Fowler, Elizabeth Dornom – 1st Women Veteran
- Thorlene Egerton, Christine Brown – 1st Women Super Veteran, 2nd Women Veteran
- Rod Gray, Geoff Lawford – 1st Men Ultra Veteran, 1st Men Super Veteran
- Richard Robinson, Vivienne Prince (NZ) – 1st Mixed Ultra Veteran, 1st Mixed Super Veteran
- David Baldwin, Julie Quinn – 2nd Mixed Veteran
- Sharon Crawford, Robin Spriggs (USA) – 2nd Women Ultra Veteran

World Rogaining Championships

The World Championship will be reverting to a biennial cycle, with the next WRC in 2025. The IRF has formally awarded the event to the Spanish Rogaining Association (IbeRogaine), to be held near Madrid on 5/6th July 2025. The WRC will comprise hilly, mostly forested terrain at altitude from 1000 to 2000 metres.

The following World Championship in 2027 should return to the southern hemisphere. This will be an opportunity for Australia, as New Zealand may not have the resources to bid. The Australian WRCs to date have been:

- 1992 Beechworth, Victoria (VRA)
- 1996 Mt Singleton, Western Australia (WARA)
- 2006 Coonabarabran, New South Wales (NSWRA)
- 2016 Alice Springs, Northern Territory (ARA/NTRA)

The call for expressions of interest may be as soon as January 2024. ARA Members are encouraged to research suitable event locations and consider the opportunity as a matter of priority. This could be supported by an ARA coordinated administration, as was so successful in 2016.

International Rogaining

The ARA is formally represented on the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) by President David Rowlands and delegate David Baldwin.

Changes to the IRF Technical Standards for age categories, as proposed by the IRF Technical Committee and strongly endorsed by European representatives, were passed by IRF Council. These rules apply to the World Championships and take effect as of 1st January 2024.

- Age will be determined by year of birth, rather than the date of birth. ARA supported this change on the basis of simplicity and privacy.
- The Veterans age class will apply from age 45, rather than 40. This is based on evidence showing that rogainers over 40 are very competitive in the open categories.
- The Youth category is relaxed to “all team members must be age 23 years or under”.

ARA was represented at the informal IRF Meeting held at Northstar resort prior to the 2023 WRC in USA. Topics for discussion included:

- Several of the IRF Executive are due for election next year, including the Treasurer, President and Vice-President.
- An Event Advisor is being sought for WRC 2025. This role requires someone with extensive knowledge of major event organisation and course setting.
- Appointment of a coordinator for European Championship host selection.
- Improvements to the IRF website and need to fill the existing IRF Communications role.
- Potential for growth of the sport in Europe. Currently there are 5 countries running rogaines, with Russia and Ukraine excluded.
- Potential for shorter IRF sanctioned events, such as a series of 6-hour events.
- Cost issues for competitors from holding the WRC in the peak summer period, and whether IRF should limit the entry fees.

International Development Fund (IDF)

Convenor: ARA Treasurer Mike Aylott.

There has been no further activity by the IDF Committee this year.

The International Development Fund provides an opportunity for ARA to leverage its skills and resources to assist the growth of rogaining internationally. Members are encouraged to suggest projects or initiatives that could benefit from funding. Support guidelines are on the ARA website:

<https://rogaine.asn.au/documents/policy/international-development-fund>

Information Systems

The entry system developed by the Secretary has been successfully adopted by ACTRA, NSWRA, QRA and VRA.

The ARA Executive maintains the National Calendar on the ARA website, together with the archive of ARC results, Council policies and major news.

The Secretary has done a great job promoting rogaining news on ARA's Facebook page.

The ARA's website is www.rogaine.asn.au and Facebook page www.facebook.com/ausrogaining.

Executive Roles

The ARA Executive has continued to hold regular Executive Meetings via Skype, at approximately six-week intervals throughout the year.

Once again, I would like to thank the Executive team: Secretary Paul Guard, Treasurer Michael Aylott, and Technical Committee Chairman David Baldwin, for all your work on behalf of ARA throughout the past year.

The infusion of new blood we have talked about for years is now happening as Mike Aylott is standing down after more than 13 years as ARA Treasurer. It is fitting that Mike has stayed on until completion of the thorough review of all the accounts, which is a major achievement this year. We will miss Mike's knowledge, experience and common sense recommendations across all topics.

With this AGM we will have a new President to take ARA forward. I would like to thank the Council for the support you have given me during 10 years as ARA President and 19 years on the Executive.

Conclusion

A special thankyou to each of the Council delegates, state committees and rogaining volunteers across Australia for your work at the grass roots which ensures professionally run events, continued promotion, innovation and success for our sport.

David Rowlands
President