



Australian Rogaining Association Inc.

President's Annual Report

2019/20

Presented to AGM 27th August 2020

2020: An Extraordinary Year

The global pandemic in 2020 has had a major impact worldwide, affecting lives and livelihoods. With mandated travel restrictions and lockdowns, the effect on the sport of rogaining has been significant and unprecedented. Fortunately, the financial impact has to date been contained for an amateur sport like rogaining, with few fixed overheads and without paid officers.

The Australian Rogaining Championship and Intervarsity did not take place in May 2020 as planned. The ARA Executive and SARA decided to postpone it until 29-30 May 2021. Similarly, the World Rogaining Championship has been postponed for one year, now scheduled for 14-15 August 2021.

It should be remembered that we started the year with widespread, devastating bushfires in New South Wales and Queensland that had severe impacts on a large number of favourite rogaining terrains and landowners. NSWRA and QRA were quick to respond with alternate event sites and contingencies.

And at time of writing, the effect on the 2020-2021 calendar remains unclear and fluid. During the pandemic, SARA, ACTRA, NSWRA and QRA experimented with informal self-managed rogaines using the MapRun software. To meet government protocols, several states produced documented procedures to ensure the sport can adapt to thrive in a safe, clean and contactless manner. The AGM this year will for the first time take place online.

2020 Events

Whereas normally the President's Report would focus on the impressive aggregate numbers of events and membership, on this occasion we can celebrate the few events that have taken place in 2020:

- ACTRA: 6 hour in March, MapRun events, 5/6 hour Metro/Cyclegaine in August
- NSWRA: Minigaine 3 hour in February, MapRun events, 2.5/5 hour in August
- SARA: Metrogaine 4 hour in March, 3x 6 hour July, Velogaine 4 hour August, MapRun events
- QRA: Paddlegaine 4 hour in February, MapRun event, Metrogaine 6 hour in June
- VRA: CBDgaine 4 hour held in March. All subsequent events cancelled.
- WARA: 6 hour March, State Championship 24 hour held in August.
- NTRA: Metrogaine 3/4/6 hour in February
- RTas: Socialgaine 4 hour February, Metrogaine 4 hour planned for late August.

Finances and Insurance

The Treasurer's Report for calendar year 2019 shows that the ARA's finances remain in a healthy state. At the 2019 AGM, it was decided to set the Capitation fee for 2020 at \$1 (which was waived), with no International Development Fund (IDF) levy.

The ARA Treasurer negotiated a favourable rate for public liability insurance in December 2019, with return to the insurer Sportscover. Negotiations centred on the cover for Cyclegaines which are now considered higher risk, but were included at 13% extra cost. Membership decline in 2019 meant that the Insurance levy was set at \$3.53 per head, an increase of 25%. Invoices were sent out to Members in August 2020.

States running fewer events (especially VRA) have not been able to obtain good value for their insurance this year. There was less appetite for risk from the insurers last year and this is likely to have been exacerbated by events in 2020.

Our broker is Arthur J. Gallagher & Co and their contact details are on the ARA website:

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

2019 Australasian Championships – RTas

Rogaining Tasmania conducted the highly successful 40th Australian Championship (including the regional Australasian Rogaining Championship) near St Helens on 9-10 November 2019. The unique and scenic coastal granite terrain contrasted with the complex hills interspersed with thick gullies and button grass, found further inland. The full moon was out and weather was pleasantly fine and cool.

Organiser of "Binalong Day and Night" was Peter Tuft, course setter: Bernard Walker and vetter: Jeff Dunn. There were 203 competitors in 94 teams, plus a further 16 teams in the 15 hour roving event.

The overall leaders from 2018 were reversed, with winners of the open categories being:

- Julie Quinn, David Baldwin (ACT): First Mixed
- Paul Williams, David Symons (WA): First Men
- Gill Fowler (NSW), Joanna Sinclair (Tas): First Women

Unfortunately, there were few Kiwis entered this year due to a clash of dates with the New Zealand Championship. The ARA Executive has been in discussion with NZRA to ensure such clashes are avoided in future. Most NZ Championships are conducted in November, which usually does not clash with ARC.

ARA paid \$380 to underwrite a bus at the ARC in Tasmania to transport competitors safely. The Interstate and Trans-Tasman Challenge Trophy was won clearly by ACT, ahead of a pack consisting of Tasmania, NSW, Western Australia and Victoria. The Intervarsity for 2019 was conducted on 18-19 May at Merimbula, organised by ACTRA, with the top teams from ANU.

Future Australian/Australasian Championships and Trophies

Australian Championship plans have been deferred by one year. The hosts for the next Australian/Australasian Rogaining Championships and Intervarsity (according to the rotation schedule) will be:

- 2021 – SARA
- 2022 – VRA
- 2023 – NSWRA (the Australasian Championship is scheduled for New Zealand in November)
- 2024 – WARA

ARA Secretary Paul Guard manages the return of the trophies for each Australian Championship. David Baldwin arranged purchase and engraving of a new trophy for the Interstate/Trans Tasman Challenge. At present all the trophies are in good condition and have space for future awards.

Technical Sub-Committee

Chairman: David Baldwin

Members were surveyed on their experiences in using Navlight wristbands. The plastic wristbands, introduced with Navlight many years ago are popular, though can occasionally break. High quality cloth wristbands were purchased for the WRC in 2016. These wristbands are clearly more secure and tamper-proof, but have proven difficult to use without practice, due to a requirement for specific tools. David has sourced a better product, made with a stiffer cloth. The ARA Executive has subsequently decided to purchase a further stock of 2000 wristbands at about \$1 each, for use at future ARCs.

The Water Management Planning process approved at the 2016 AGM, requires the ARC organisers to formally prepare a Water Management Plan detailing water locations, volume, resources and planned replenishment procedures. This process has been successfully implemented at all subsequent ARCs. The ARA's Water policy is on the website at: <https://rogaine.asn.au/documents/policy/water>

For the Australian Championship, the Technical Committee is recommending that ARA mandate at least 2 punches at each control flag. This would mitigate against risk of failure, as well as easing congestion at busy locations and times. A change to the Rules and Technical Regulations will be required to formally implement this change.

David Baldwin is continuing to manage the stocks of about 450 Navlight tags and 80 punches held in Australia, coordinating with Peter Squires to address any technical and software integration issues.

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.

A grant of \$2643 was awarded in 2019 to SARA for assistance with the purchase of a marquee.

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>

International Rogaining

The ARA is formally represented on the International Rogaining Federation (IRF) by President David Rowlands and delegate David Baldwin. Due to the pandemic there will be no IRF meeting this year.

The following is a summary of IRF developments in 2020:

- A motion is expected to be put to the IRF Council to change the date at which a competitor's age is calculated for the age categories (eg Under 23, or Veterans). This issue has arisen due to the postponement of the European Championship, changing the eligibility for some teams. The proposal is to alter Rule C15 to replace the current delineation of age categories based on the day of the event, to age categories based on the year of birth. This would make most sense if it resulted in an alignment with the sport of orienteering. Depending on the outcome of a vote, the ARA's own rules and technical regulations could ultimately be reviewed.
- The European Championship in Latvia was postponed from June and took place on 22/23 August. There were 596 participants in 284 teams entered. Travel restrictions required that international visitors from most countries self-isolate for 14 days, unless able to show proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test. IRF supported the organisers' decision to go ahead with the event, despite likely reduction of up to 25% in the breadth of competition.
- The WRC planned for Lake Tahoe, California in 2020 was postponed for one year, made possible by the bi-annual scheduling. The associated 10 day orienteering festival has also been postponed. Entries made in 2020 have been held in credit by the organisers, or refunded.
- The IRF awarded WRC 2022 to Czech Republic, to be held on 19-20 August 2022 around Staré Město on the Polish border. This will be the third Czech WRC.
- The WRC for 2024 will rotate to the southern hemisphere and is likely to be held in New Zealand. NZRA have suggested that ARA provide a contingency in case their plans fall through. This is a topic that ARA should canvas at the AGM and continue to monitor.

International Development Fund (IDF)

Convenor: ARA Treasurer Mike Aylott.

The IDF loan to the organisers of the 2020 World Rogaining Championship of US \$17,000 (AUS \$24,450) was repaid in January 2020. ARA lost \$843 on the loan due to the exchange costs charged by the financial institutions.

The International Development Fund provides a unique opportunity for ARA to leverage its skills to assist the growth of rogaining internationally. Future opportunities that have been discussed include additional vetting for WRC 2021, or underwriting WRC 2022. Members are encouraged to promote the fund when in contact with international rogainers.

Information Systems

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

The ARA is responsible for hosting a number of websites including the ARA, IRF, smaller Member websites, WRC 2016 and the IRF qualification database.

Subsequent to the major failure in August 2019, David Baldwin has migrated ARA to BinaryLane, an Australian VPS provider, with inclusion of regular automated backups.

Executive Roles

The ARA Executive holds regular Executive Meetings via Skype, at approximately six week intervals through the year. Elections for the Executive are now due for a three year period.

I would like to thank our outgoing ARA Executive team: Secretary Paul Guard, Treasurer Michael Aylott, and Technical Committee Chairman David Baldwin, whose dedication to the sport, knowledge and rogaining experience and has been invaluable during 2019/20.

Conclusion

The aims of the Australian Rogaining Association are to promote the sport of Rogaining, to encourage the development of state rogaining bodies, and to foster the running of the Australian Rogaining Championships. Thankyou to each of the Council delegates, state committees and rogaining volunteers, who have worked hard, problem solved and adapted to keep the sport alive through this difficult period.

David Rowlands
President