

46th PADDY PALLIN, COOLENDEL 2009 CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The hardest part is handling 600 people. There's plenty of time at the start, with registration Saturday night and people trickling in from noon Saturday until 9AM Sunday. But at the finish most people arrive in that ten minutes before the 3pm close and in the next hour they need tucker, clean-up and hit the road back to far-flung(*) residences. Plus the winter solstice isn't far away so it's dark by 5pm.

The results are difficult to achieve, quickly & accurately. Navlight makes a huge difference, but we haven't before put sensors on all 600 participants' wrists (I don't know about rogaines beyond NSW.) With Gordon, David & Bruce recording incoming teams, Richard, Vicky & Martyn snipping wrist-bands and passing to Graeme & Bob for scanning, we had all results entered by 3:30 and printed by 3:45. I reckon that's a great effort, and then on nswrogaining.org by Tuesday night.

There were a few hiccups: hard to avoid queues with such a crowd, an inability to find a wall to post all the results, and eight teams that didn't register their sensors at the start, now corrected in the results on our website. One of the eight teams was Robert Preston and Bert Van Netten who ended up pipping Val & John Hodsdon by one minute in the SuperVets category. My apologies to both teams. (Val & John, expect a burly enforcer someday, sometime to recover the trophy that we presented you. It belongs to Robert & Bert.)

On that subject, at the end a person reported a "weird guy" crossing the river with just his head above the water. Sure enough, a couple of minutes later, there's Bert, totally saturated, dripping in the finish queue. Hopefully, there was nothing in the backpack that minded being dunked, and a good thing I didn't place too many rocks in his backpack. Other stories have since emerged of river crossings that were a bit more than calf-to-knee deep.

The online entry could be smarter in editing some of the input data. For example, Chris & Miles Waring showed as a Junior team because Chris' birth date was entered as September... this year.

I'm disappointed at the number of NFP's (Not For Publication) in the results - surprised that there are so many rogainers in witness protection. C'mon people, be proud of your effort - put your name up there!

The course was fully set by Shoalhaven SES, headed by Cliff Harris with keen helpers in Gordon McKeown, Greg Mitchell, Dave Jones, Scott Wells, Bec Davies and Hamish Perry. They've set, checked, hung flags and will be collecting the flags too, excellent training for them to defend the NavShield title that they won last year.

Cliff made the paperwork simple. Just one A3 sheet of paper, map on one side, instructions and clue-sheet on the other. It was simple but there was some comment about inability to read the clues when the folded map is in a mapcase. We inadvertently didn't provide a punch control card which didn't matter because all navlights worked. It meant there was less paraphernalia to carry - what do you think?

(It seems quite appropriate to have a coursesetter whose name is a geographical feature, like Cliff, Glen, Dale, Noel, River, Rocky, ...)

I was associated with the Paddy Pallin Rogaine at Coolendel in 1999. The two event courses had obvious similarities but very few controls in exactly the same position. Cliff set the 2009 course without comparison to the previous construct, and only repeated the following: 43, 25, 52, 20, 30, 22, 104. Three of those were obvious lookouts.

Despite my plea there were a few injuries, calmly and competently handled by Anthony Chater. Two people were retrieved with sprained ankles and a punctured shin was patched and sent back onto the course to claim more points.

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Waitara Scout caterers are magnificent. Many, many people involved, efficiently planned and managed by Keith Fone. I heard several compliments about the Saturday night dinner, and the pumpkin and sweet potato soup that I had on Sunday was exquisite.

Also many thanks to the Paddy Pallin organisation for support, promotion and the prizes we were able to share at the presentation. I note in the Wikipedia entry for Paddy Pallin that one of his notable achievements was to start "the annual Paddy Pallin Orienteering Competition in 1963." That's the origin of the Paddy Pallin rogaine. Initially a long orienteering score-event on standard topographical maps, it turned into a six-hour event, hosted by the NSW Rogaining Association in the mid-80's.

I received several emails, and solicited comment from others about their experience, both good and bad, and have compiled their feedback separately.

For the record, the people who helped deliver the 2009 Paddy Pallin Rogaine were:

Course: Cliff Harris, Gordon McKeown, Greg Mitchell, Dave Jones, Scott Wells, Bec Davies, Hamish Perry

Administration: Bob McNairn, Graeme Cooper, Vicky Cooper, Richard Barnes, Michelle Harris, Lynne McNairn, Martyn Robinson

Catering: Keith Fone and about 30 family and friends of 1st Waitara Scouts

First Aid: Anthony Chater

Transport NSWRA Trailers: Michael Watt, Paul & Debbie Stein, Mike Hotchkis

Promotion: Julian Ledger

As a long-term rogainiser it was a pleasure to work with all of them,
Trevor Gollan 22-Jun-09

(*) How far-flung? Here's a summary of regions where entrants came from.

Region	Count
Northern Sydney	165
Inner Sydney	118
Outer West Sydney	62
Wollongong	52
South Coast	48
ACT	39
The Shire	32
Newcastle	31
Blue Mountains-Orange	31
Southern Highlands	16
Central Coast	4
Qld	3
Unknown	3
Riverina	1
Vic	1
