2004 NSW AND ACT ROGAINES

Date	Event	Location	Contact
22nd February	'Metrogaine'	Hills District	Michael Watts 02 9568 3016
28th March	ACT Paddy Pallin	ACT	02 6251 6908
17th April	'The Flaming Quads' 12 hour	Upper Hunter	Melvyn Cox 02 9817 3077
1 - 2nd May	ACT Champs 24hr	ACT	02 6251 6908
20th June	Paddy Pallin 6hr	*(To be advised)*	Trevor Gollan
3-4th July	Nav 04	*(To be advised)*	**Organised independantly by Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue**
28th August	Lake Macquarie 6/12 hour	*(To be advised)*	*(To be confirmed)*
12th September	Cyclegaine 6hr	ACT	02 6251 6908
23 - 24th October	2004 NSW Champs 24 hour	Gundy	Graeme Cooper 02 6772 3584
21st November	'Socialgaine'	Terrigal	John Barnes

2004 INTERSTATE ROGAINES

Date	Event	State	Contact
7 – 8th February	12hr Upside Down	West. Austalia	08 9342 9213
8th February	12 Hour	Tasmania	03 6223 4405
15th February	Canoe-gaine	Victoria	03 9438 6626
6th March	8hr Upside Down	Queensland	07 3369 1641

**The 2004 Australian Champs will be held on 3 – 4th July in South Australia.
Visit http://sa.rogaine.asn.au for more details.**

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME ~ January 2004

A warm welcome to all New South Wales rogainers and their families, to yet another solid year of enjoyable events.

As is our tradition we begin the year with an event close to home, in an urban area of Sydney. Although with the sprawl unrelenting, 'close to home' may not be that close! This year we will begin our adventures discovering the Hills District in Sydney's northwest. Billed as being a "navigators paradise", the 2004 6 hour Metrogaine will kick start another year of discoveries.

In April the "Flaming Quads" 12 hour event takes us north to the foothills of the Barrington Tops. This years Paddy Pallin Winter 6 hour event in June is at last report taking us west into the Blue Mountains. Pack your beanies and gloves for that one! The 2004 Lake Macquarie event should be warmer on the north coast in late August. Graeme Cooper no doubt has another challenging and well set course for us to discover in October at the NSW Champs. This will once again see us enjoying the Upper Hunter Valley at Gundy. And for the last event of the year in November, John Barnes will be showing us his take on Terrigal on the Central Coast. All in all a packed year of rogaine events in New South Wales – and there is always the ACTRA events in and around Canberra. For those of you who want more don't forget the Australian Champs in July. South Australia is hosting the event this year, so after putting your best in for New South Wales you should have no trouble justifying a few extra days in the Barossa Valley sampling the wine.

As is the tradition the Annual General Meeting of the NSWRA will be held at the conclusion of the Metrogaine in February. One of the purposes of this general meeting is to elect new members to the NSWRA committee. This is open to all interested rogainers. An infusion of new blood (so to speak) into the committee would be appreciated by all. A flood (or trickle) of new ideas and approaches to the way the NSWRA manages its events and support functions, such as this newsletter and the website, would only be of benefit to the future growth of the sport in New South Wales. This is especially so with the World Champs our honour to host in 2006. Some members of the NSWRA committee will be standing down from their roles at the AGM, so the Association would appreciate some new faces volunteering their time and skills to the sport in 2004.

A brief description of each role within the current committee is printed on the reverse of the nomination form included with this newsletter. Read it and consider how you can assist. If you are keen either contact a current committee member or forward a nomination form as directed on the base of the sheet indicating a role that interests you.

We look forward to seeing you in February at the Metrogaine.

Andy Mein

2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Notice of meeting and call for nominations for Committee positions

The 2004 AGM of the New South Wales Rogaining Association Incorporated will be held at approx 3.30pm on Sunday 22nd February (at the Hash House after the Metrogaine in Sydney's Northwest).

Agenda
Adoption of Minutes of the 2003 AGM
President's Report – Andy Mein
Treasurer's Report – Tony Maloney
Adoption of Reports including 2003 Financial Statements
Election of Office Bearers/Committee Members
General Business

All Committee positions are up for election and nominations are now open – for details of the role of each office bearer see this newsletter. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary prior to the AGM. New blood is very welcome so if you have some ideas, would like to make a contribution and nominate for a role or would just like to know how it all happens then contact President Andy or another Committee member. Some of your time and enthusiasm can help make for even better Rogaining in New South Wales in 2004.

2004 COMMITTEE LISTING:

President: *Andy Mein*
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andy_mein@bigpond.com

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Volunteer Coordinator:
[*POSITION VACANT – volunteer required*]

Equipment Officer:
[*POSITION VACANT – volunteer required*]

General Committee: *Sue Clarke*
9816 2508 (home) sclarke@efs.mq.edu.au

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Event name: ***The 2004 6 Hour Metrogaine***
Date: ***Sunday 22nd February***
Location: ***Hills District - Northwestern Sydney***

A navigators paradise! Where? Let's just say the course is 5 minutes from Pennant Hills Station, and is well endowed with parks and reserves, and as some of you will be surprised to find, is rich in heritage. If it is a hot day there are at least two swimming pools you might like to visit on either side of the course and plenty of creeks you could soak your hot feet in. It is possible to do the majority of your course in the 'bush' reserve system or you may like to just get a picture of the 'real estate' of the area or visit the local shops. The course is set with beginners, families and those who like a challenging run in mind. If you've been enjoying the Sydney Summer Series of mini rogaines run by NSW Orienteering then the 2004 Metrogaine is for you.

Bronwyn & Paul Batten

Sue, Walter & Caesar *(the one with the floppy ears)* invite you to join them at the:

Event name: ***The Flaming Quads 12 Hour***
Date: ***Saturday 17th April***
Location: ***Upper Hunter Valley***

This event will take place between in the Upper Hunter region. There is no shorter event than the 12 hour being offered because:

a) Who wants a pre-dusk curfew when they have the opportunity to stay out till midnight ?
b) We would like you all to stay for breakfast on Sunday morning *(please tick the box on the entry form to help the caterers)*
c) Its only 12 hours anyway – hardly long enough to get warmed up

So why travel all that way for a 12 hour event? Well I believe that 12 hour rogaines are the most social of all events. They are the only ones where you get to stay the night without feeling guilty about not getting up before dawn and picking up some more controls, for one thing. And I think the 12 hour events are the easiest too. For 6 hours you (or at least I, or rather my partners) feel obliged to run as much as possible – 12 hours is too long for running, unless you are called Mike or Emma. 24 hours means that at midnight you are a long, long way from home, with the prospect of doing it all again in front of you – 12 hours means that by 10 pm you are headed home (or in BIG trouble). And as for the occasional 50 hour event – well that's just down right crazy, unless you have a name like Nigel, Tom, or Alina.

So 12 hours is the perfect compromise. Not too fast, not too far, not too serious. (To the best of my knowledge there are no trophies for 12 hour events, although there may be an Easter Bilby or two to be won.)

So come along to Aunty Gaye's place at Craigmhor, climb a few hills, walk a few ridges and have a great weekend with us. The hills are steep, but we ensure that you can get away with only one significant climb and a pleasant stroll along the ridge tops. Of course for the more ambitious there is no limit to the number of climbs we will cater for.

It's a beautiful place - just check out the enclosed Craigmhor brochure (unless we ran out by the time we got to your envelope, in which case follow the link from our web site). Most of us are well overdue for more socialising with our fellow rogainers, so we really do hope you stay for breakfast and swap a few tall tales.

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EVENT REPORT: *The 2003 Socialgaine ~ Belanglo State Forest*

It was a bit damp. I blame the rugby world cup, in particular that sudden influx of English visitors who seemed to bring their weather with them. The 22-23rd November was like English autumn weather, 'season of mists, etc.', to quote that other well-known rogainer John Keats. But now, we are again adjusted to Aussie summer sun, tennis and cricket and Australia on the winning side (at the time of writing).

Rollie Burford was keen to get back to Belanglo, a place he knows well from earlier days orienteering there, and set a rogaine. I talked to Rollie a few times, looked over maps with him – he had many control sites selected, from map and memory. Then, just before he could get out there and start setting, Rollie suffered an injury at work which put him out of action for several weeks. So I stepped in to take on the job, and used what I could of his pre-planning. Actually, on advice of the vetters, I cut back the course size a bit – there's plenty of room out there for a 12 hour course!

Taking over as course-setter, I felt that irresistible urge to try something different. Vetter quote: "why are you doing this Mike, you'll just get competitors very annoyed!" Well, I thought I'd just take that risk… Participants found themselves with a map showing 26 checkpoints and a checkpoint description list showing 37. There were 11 'mystery' checkpoints, which they could only find out about by first visiting a 'clue' checkpoint. It was all explained in the course-setters notes.

The idea here was to give people some extra strategic and navigational challenges. Clearly, teams would have to be prepared to modify their course plan on the run, depending on whether they reckoned a particular 'mystery' checkpoint was worth visiting or not.

Long ago, in the golden age of rogaining (before my time), competitors had to plot all the checkpoints on to their map at the start, from a list of grid references, so I have heard. Being afraid that plotting grid references might be becoming a lost art, I used grid references for several of the clues for mystery checkpoints.

Two of the clues required teams to follow a bearing for a fixed distance into an area with limited visibility, to find an unmapped feature. Just checking that you guys know how to use a compass! I think rogainers try to get by without really using their compasses – just using a series of 'left turn here, look for gully, turn right there' etc. This technique would explain 90% of errors made on rogaines. Careful use of the compass saves a lot of geographic embarrassment.

Checkpoint 73 is a case in point: looking at the map, it appears quite easy, on the edge of a large cliff formation – yet several teams, and the vetters, had trouble with it, ending up on the wrong side of the gully to the north. Use your compass!

In spite of the weather, we had a good turn-out with over 80 teams on the day. From the feedback I heard, a good day out was had by all. What did people make of the mystery checkpoints? In general, people enjoyed the novelty and the extra challenge. The course was large for a 6 hour. Only a few teams ventured to the western checkpoints, where the bigger hills were, and fewer still reached the farthest north. While the small area of pine forest is not so interesting, there is plenty of really nice bushland around Belanglo, and the course was designed to take full advantage of it.

The name 'Belanglo' is imprinted on the minds of many as the scene of a series of horrific murders in the early 90s. The forest has not been used much for orienteering or rogaining since that time. Checkpoint 50 took participants to the memorial for the victims, many of whom were young backpackers visiting Australia. It seemed appropriate to include this spot on the course. More than ten years on, I hope that we can again associate the name 'Belanglo' with the attractive bushland that it is.

Mike Hotchkis

Now let the credits roll:

Organiser / Course setter: *Mike Hotchkis*
Assistant course setter: *Rollie Burford*
Vetters: *Ron Hutchings, George Collins*
Flag hangers: *George Collins, Ron Hutchings*
Deputy sub-assistant flag hanger (ret'd): *Maurice Ripley*
Administration and entries: *David McKenna*
Administration assistants: *Rollie Burford, Jitka Kopriva, Alexa McAuley*
Hash-house: *George and Evelyn Collins, Cherie Harding, John and Val, Debbie Hotchkis*
Refreshments on the course: *Ron Hutchings*
Flag collection: *Alexa McAuley, Belinda Bright, Phil Whitten, Helen McAuley and John Zvonar*

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TWO TRIPS AND A WHINGE:

I recently competed in the NSW 6 hour Socialgaine in Belanglo forest, and in the ACT Spring 12 hour near Nimmitabel. Both events were enjoyable and (apart from the leeches) relatively painless; thanks to the organisers. For those that missed the Belanglo event, a new (to me) concept was to have mystery controls, which were not marked on the map, but had clues at other controls so that route choice could not be finalised before the start. This made it more interesting; I am not sure what it did to the overall score-line.

During both of these events, partly due to the number of participants who chose similar routes to my team, I witnessed extensive cheating. For some teams, notably consisting of a couple or father and child, the normal practice seems to be to leave the girlfriend/child waiting at the trail while the (presumably faster) team member leaves the trail and goes to punch the control. In part, the map of the Nimmitabel event encouraged this, as most of the controls were within 100 m of a trail (due to rough terrain the organisers placed them this way deliberately). Some of the teams doing this were very experienced, and it was done in a blatant manner - the slower team member often did not even attempt to leave the road, in front of several other teams.

I have confronted teams about this on my last two rogaines, following the example set by my teammate on the NSW champs. On that occasion, after we struggled back up to a track after descending steeply in the dark through thick undergrowth to one control, he mentioned to a team (which had left the female partner sitting at the track) that the rules state that all team members must approach within 20 m of a control and see it. They denied having broken this rule in spite of the obvious nature of what they had done. In the two rogaines where I have mentioned this to teams, I have had similar responses, and once "I'm not a mountain goat like you".

Cheating like this breaches both the rules and the spirit of rogaining. It is not acceptable. If a person is too slow and it is frustrating to wait for them, their "partner" should rogaine with someone else. The family category is not expected to achieve the same point score as the open category, precisely because the child must visit every control. A girlfriend or wife is not going to learn navigation and be empowered if she is "dropped off" at the trail while her partner punches the control. If a person is not prepared to scramble down a cliff to a control, the team does not punch that control, unless they find a way to get to it together.

Apart from the moral objection to cheating, there is also a safety issue - if one person became injured while the team is separated, they may have trouble finding each other.

I believe that the solution to this problem is two-fold:

  - any team, which sees another team cheating, should remind them of the rules on the spot (please don't leave it to me - I can't patrol everyone!). If someone thinks you are cheating and you are not, but your partner is out of sight, don't be offended at the accusation.

  - organisers should be prepared to disqualify a team which is reported by several other teams as having cheated. I realise that this is harsh, but they certainly wouldn't do it again.

The setters can also assist by setting a course in which most route choices will take people past a control, continuing from there, rather than short "there and back" sections to punch controls. Obviously, this is not always possible, but it can be kept in mind. I am not a great rogainer, but I love this unique sport and I think that those who chose to participate should do so within the rules, or find another sport (orienteering?).
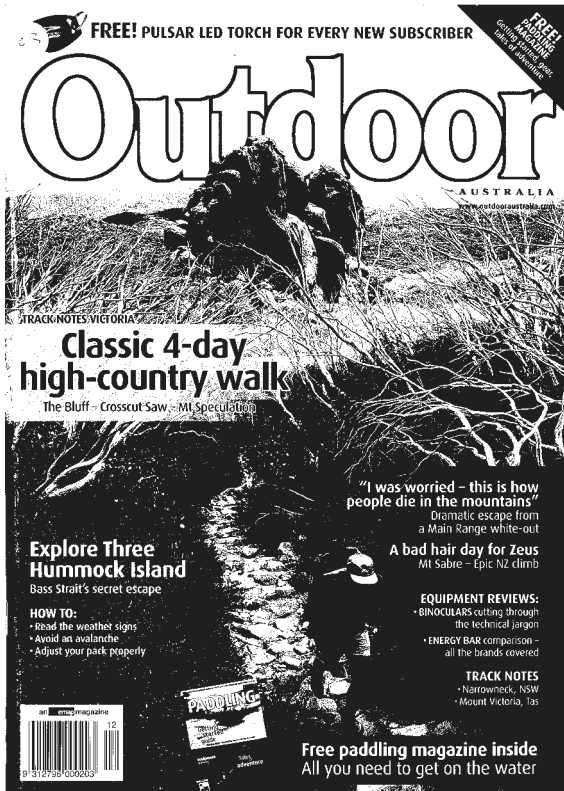
Madeleine Schultz

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Image shown is the previous issue – Dec/Jan '03

The **February edition** of **OUTDOOR MAGAZINE** should now be in your newsagent and includes an article on Rogaining along with the first part of a piece on "Navigation - How to". The rogaining article is short but quite good and emphasises the participatory and family friendly nature of the sport and includes web contact details. A couple of NSWRA committee members, Sue Clarke and Nihal Danis, are quoted as saying that women may be better than men at Rogaining (to prove their point one of our current State open champions is a woman - and the event was run after the article was finalised). If you have a view on this proposition, or any other on rogaining, send your letter to Outdoor Editor, Lucas Trihey, at outdoor@emap.com.au and maybe we can get some more coverage in the next issue!

The February edition also reports that the 7th World Rogaining Championships will be here in Australia (New South Wales for the first time) in 2006 what will be ten years after the 2nd world championships were in WA back in 1996. Plenty of time for training. If you are planning to go to the 6th championships in Arizona they are of course in May this year and not next as is stated incorrrectly.

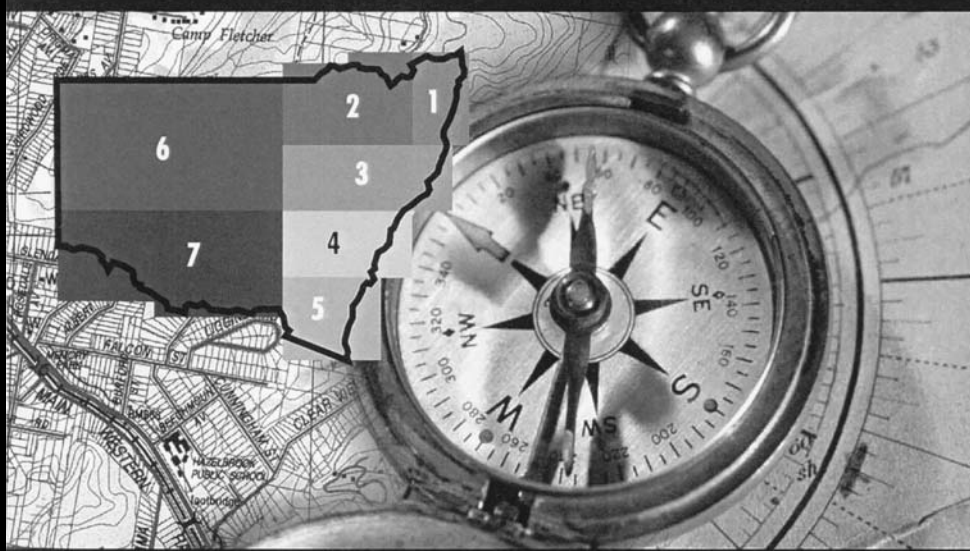*Julian Ledger*

NSWRA Public Officer

What is Rogaining?
Rogaining is the sport of long distance cross country navigation, in which teams of two to five people visit as many checkpoints as they wish in a set time period. The traditional rogaine is 24 hours in duration; however, there are shorter events of 6, 8 and 12 hours. Most NSW events are held within 2/3 hours travelling time of Sydney.

Most rogaines are on foot and held in attractive bush and farmland locations, however, some events are held in metropolitan areas ("metrogaines"), or on bikes ("cyclegaines"). Rogaining is a challenging adventure sport and is a lot of fun.

Who is it for?
Rogaining is a team activity for people of all ages and levels of fitness. Everyone from elite athletes to families with young children can enjoy rogaining. New rogainers are always welcome and assistance is always available from organisers to help get novices started.

The parts of the course you visit are entirely up to you and your team members. There are no set routes and you don't have to spend the whole time on the course. You can return to the "hash house" at any time for hot food and a rest around the campfire, or a sleep, before heading out again.

Some competitive teams may cover 50km in a 12-hour event and even more in an event of 24 hours duration. However the distance you travel is entirely up to you. The satisfaction comes in finding your way around the course according to the route that you have chosen, and navigating back to the finish within the time limit.

What do you need?
Rogaining is good value for money; all you need is basic bushwalking gear including a compass, whistle, pencil, water bottle, comfortable and warm clothes and shoes, a waterproof jacket and a basic team first aid kit. On 12 and 24-hour events you may also wish to bring along camping gear and spend overnight at the hash house.

What does it cost?
In New South Wales the entry fees vary from $30 to $50 depending on the event. This covers hot food during the event, your map, information sheets and facilities at the hash house. Family teams need only pay two adult entry fees.

An annual membership fee is required to cover insurance costs and a regular bi-monthly newsletter. Membership fees are currently $20 per individual. Family membership $20 first adult, $10 for second and dependant children free. Household membership is $20 for first person $10 for each additional where all members share the same address. You can join when you enter your first event.

Contact Information:
If you are interested in trying Rogaining then get in touch with one of those listed below or the contact specified for the next event:

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