



N.S.W. ROGAINING ASSOCIATION

(24 HOUR CROSS COUNTRY NAVIGATION)

VOL. 10 No. 11

JANUARY, 1987

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NATIONAL CALENDER

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>CONTACTS</u>
1.3.87	VRA Metrogain	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
1.3.87	WARA Metro March	WARA, P.O. Box 228, Cottesloe. W.A. 6011
14 - 15.3.87	ACT 24 hour Champs	ACTRA, 3 Paroo Place, Kaleen. A.C.T. 2617
22.3.87	VRA Alpine 6 hour	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
11.4.87	VRA Autumn 12 hour	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
11.4.87	WARA Autumn 12 hour	WARA, P.O. Box 228, Cottesloe. W.A. 6011
16.5.87	VRA 24 hour Champs	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
23.5.87	NSW 12 hour	NSW, 2 Biloela Place, Gympie. N.S.W. 2227
13.6.87	MUMC 24 hour	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
11.7.87	ACT 12 hour	ACTRA, 3 Paroo Place, Kaleen. A.C.T. 2617
11 - 12.7.87	WARA 24 hour Champs	WARA, P.O. Box 228, Cottesloe. W.A. 6011
8.8.87	VRA Snogaine (nordic)	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
5.9.87	VRA Spring 12 hour	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
5 - 6.9.87	*** Australian Champs ***	NSWRA, Lot 2, Cessnock Road, Freemans Waterhole. N.S.W. 2323
3 - 4.10.87	WARA Spring 24 hour	WARA, P.O. Box 228, Cottesloe. W.A. 6011
10.10.87	VRA Spring 24 hour	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
5.12.87	STR 24 hour	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087
May, 1988	*** Australian Camps ***	VRA, 5 French Court, Watsonia. VIC. 3087

COMING EVENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>CONTACTS</u>
14 - 15.3.87	ACT 25 hour Champs	Pete Kinny, PH: (062) 49 3404 - work Entry form attached.
23.5.87	NSW 12 hour	Peter Wherry, 2 Biloela Place, Gympie. N.S.W. 2227 PH: (02) 525 4865. Details next newsletter.

ROGAINING - TALES OF A BEGINNER

After three consecutive late nights I was feeling very drowsy and in a less than enthusiastic frame of mind when we arrived at Mellong for this, my first, rogaine. Keith and Henry, the other members of the team were all fired up with enthusiasm. They had rogained before! Knowing their hair-shirt mentality I wasn't cheered.

When the maps were issued Keith and Henry quickly set to work with coloured pens to mark their maps. I copied them dutifully. Glancing around I was reassured to see that preparations had been made for a large camp-fire and luxury of luxuries - hot showers. When all the checkpoints were placed on the map I was firmly told we wouldn't be coming back to the hash-house for any cups of tea.

At last it was time to start! A motley crew of about 40-50 set off. Keith and Henry were walking quickly while I trotted to keep up. All teams seemed to disperse within a very short space of time.

We cunningly decided to skip all of the low-score and obscure checkpoints close to the hash-house and headed for the high-score checkpoints. Coming from wintry Canberra it was exhilarating to see so many wildflowers in bloom - purple boronias, grevilleas and wattles. We dashed across the ridges and then dropped down around sandstone cliffs into a scrubby creek. Ideal country for bushwalkers. We stopped occasionally for the odd bit of scroggin. Slothing was not allowed.

Leading from the rear and with two good navigators in the party, I missed out on the thrill of finding checkpoints. My most vivid memory of the event is the sight of blooming wattles which seemed to glow in the gathering twilight as we plunged down into a rainforested gully in pursuit of yet another checkpoint.

Once darkness descended we soon lost any interest in bashing along scrubby creeks. Instead we did a big U picking up points along two ridges.

Somewhere late in the night, as we sat in the middle of a creek munching scroggin, another party materialized out of the scrub and crossed near where we were seated. What a coincidence, I thought, but couldn't summon up the energy to engage in much conversation.

As we plodded on at 11.00 pm we met several parties returning to the hash-house. Reassured that we were in the home stretch we then set off in pursuit of our two final checkpoints and then headed for the hash-house at a fast walk which turned into a trot as midnight approached. Keith's threats were realized. He had kept me out walking until two minutes to twelve!

The sense of relief when you stop is overwhelming. The food and tea was the best I've tasted and took precedence over any post-mortems. All teams were in by soon after midnight. Everyone was in good spirits in spite of the long hours out. After promising myself that I was going to go straight to bed I still managed to stay up until well after 1.00 am chatting and indulging in a long hot shower. In retrospect I'd do it all again just for the sense of relief when you stop. However, that's not all; rogaining in itself is thoroughly enjoyable. For a dyed-in-the-wool bushwalker, a rogaine is just like a long day walk which extends into the evening with not as many tea breaks.

So, yes, I'll be entering in the next 12 hour rogaine near Canberra in October.

Special thanks to the organisers for putting so much time and effort into arranging such a superb event.

RENE DAVIES.

COMPETITION

One of the pre-requisites to becoming a rogainer is to have a healthy SENSE OF HUMOUR. This is vital. When you are out there in the midst of rocky hills, scratchy scrub at 2.00 am in the morning, it's raining and you are cold, wet, hungry, weary and maybe even lost, you need to be able to have a good laugh.

Test your sense of humor against that of other rogainers. Complete the following cartoon strip. Entries will be judged by a panel of committee members. Send your entry to:

Dianne van Netten,
Lot 2, Cessnock Road,
FREEMANS WATERHOLE. N.S.W. 2323

PRIZE: Free entry (for one competitor) in the Australian 24 hour Championship - 1987.
ENTRIES CLOSE: 30th May, 1987 (rogainers need plenty of time!)



FIND A PARTNER

Having trouble finding someone as crazy as yourself? There are now 2 people willing to help rogainers find partners. They are:

Peter Wherry	2 Biloela Place, Gymea. N.S.W. 2227.	PH: (02) 525 4865
Phil Creaser	3 Paroo Place, Kaleen. A.C.T. 2617.	PH: Work (062) 46 7309 Home (062) 41 4604

SYDNEY SANDSTONE

In the last newsletter Ian Dempsey wrote an editorial discussing the pros and cons of rogaines held in Sydney sandstone terrain. Before making a specific response to his points, let me set out three principles which I regard as axiomatic:

1. Rogaining is not solely a physical sport. The skill and experience necessary to devise an optimum course strategy, to select efficient and navigable routes and to navigate with precision are at least as important as speed, strength and stamina.
2. Rogaining is a sport of skill, not of luck. Competitors should have available to them sufficient information to make a reasonably accurate judgement of their expected progress, and hence their strategy. While on the course they should be neither hindered by unexpected barriers, nor aided by unexpected tracks, which were unknown and hence not considered in devising a course strategy and / or selecting a route.
3. Rogaining is not a dangerous sport. For people possessing common sense and reasonable physical fitness, rogaining should offer little risk of serious injury or death. Major natural hazards such as high cliffs or large rivers (which may flood) should be excluded from course areas.

Although not necessarily always the case, there is a tendency for events held in Sydney sandstone terrain to violate all three of these principles.

Firstly, terrain which is rugged tends to offer little topographical subtlety, and hence it is difficult to set a course which is navigationally challenging. The result can be a course which is physically very arduous, and which offers little mental stimulation to take one's mind off the physical grind. In other words, pretty boring.

Secondly, the more rugged sandstone areas are liberally sprinkled with cliffs and are frequently very scrubby. Cliffs and scrub are usually very poorly mapped, if at all. Sandstone country shares with many other areas the common problem of unmapped tracks. These and other unmapped features can invalidate pre-planned course strategies, which are usually based on an estimated speed derived from the information shown on the map.

Unmapped features can also either favour or disadvantage teams unevenly and hence unfairly, depending on individual routes taken. For instance a route choice may lie between a direct route across a valley, or a longer circuit around the ridges, with neither route offering any apparent advantage. If the valley contains unmapped cliffs and / or the ridges carry unmapped roads, a team which chooses the direct route will be unfairly penalised relative to a team which chooses the ridges.

Course setters should be obliged to update maps as fully as possible, showing all significant features. If this is an impossible task, the area is unsuitable for rogaining.

Thirdly, the cliffs which make sandstone navigation unpredictable also make the terrain dangerous. Occasional cliffs may be unavoidable in any rogaine course area, and are acceptable if clearly shown on the map. However, rogaining is a sport for walkers, not rock climbers. It is unfair to competitors to put them in a position where they are required to negotiate cliffs of height such that a fall could result in serious injury, especially in a remote and rugged location, and especially at night.

The attraction of sandstone country for course organisers is its utter uselessness for anything else, and hence its ready availability for rogaines without the need to consult dozens of landowners. Certainly some recent events have demonstrated that two or three people can organise an event on this basis, in contrast to the cast of thousands (actually 20 - 30) who have been involved in some previous events such as the Australian Championships at Bungonia in 1984.

However, we must recognise that events run to a tight budget (of man-hours or money) will reflect that budget in the quality of the event, as measured by the quality of enjoyment of the participants. This in turn may be reflected in the low rate of growth of the sport in N.S.W., as novice rogainers are turned away by events which are too tough and which they fail to enjoy.

Sydney sandstone terrain will, as Ian Dempsey noted, continue to have a place in the NSWRA programme, if only because as a fledgling association we do not have the resources to mount large events in more suitable terrain more often. Nevertheless, I believe that we should attempt to organise at least one, and preferably more, 24 hour events each year in more "conventional" rogaining terrain. This will only be possible with more involvement of NSWRA members in assisting with event organisation.

PETER TUFT

If you would like to contribute to the debate on Sydney sandstone send your article to Dianne van Netten - address on first page.

SELECTED RESULTS

AUSTRALIAN ROGAINING CHAMPIONSHIP - SEPTEMBER, 1986

<u>Winning Teams:</u>	Men	David Church, David Rowland
	Women	Claire Middle, Liz Kessell
	Mixed	Fay Lewis, David Kessell
	Veteran	Bob Jenkins, Barry Heys
	Junior	Craig Johnston, David Clifton, David Walkley
	Novice	Garry Clarke, Han Dopheide
	University	Frank van Hooft, Grant Else
	Scout	C. Bradbury, R. Ritchie, D. West, G. Ritchie, P. Bass

A.C.T. 12 HOUR - OCTOBER, 1986

<u>Winning Teams:</u>	Men	Phil Crease, Andrew Calder
	Women	Rene Davies, Anne Baylis
	Mixed	Kerry Taylor, Trevor Vickers
	Veteran-men	Darryl Erbacher, John Struik
	Veteran-women	Anne Sawkins, Kathy Saw