

Safety Officer Report – Lake Macquarie Rogain 2009.

Location: - Archery Road Wakefield – Sugarloaf Conservation Area

Wallsend 9232-3-S and Quorrobolong 9132-2-S, Topographic map.

Date: - 15th October

(2 events: - 6 hour 12noon till 6pm and 12 hour noon till midnight)

Introduction

366 registered competitors enjoyed beautiful winter sunshine and a cool clear starry night at this year's Lake Macquarie Rogain held on private land and the imposing Mt Sugarloaf range. 6 hour event 86 teams with 222 members entered. 12 hour event 59 teams with 144 members entered.

Administration Tent and Hash House were set up on private property belonging to Alan McCarthy off Archery Road Wakefield, a lovely location with a big grassed paddock. A very experienced management committee ran the event. All competitors were provided with an accurate map and checkpoint descriptions. The pre-event briefing covered all likely problems such as very steep terrain with many unmarked cliff lines, very slippery rocks in wet watercourses, vehicular traffic on roads, etc.

The Safety Plan was prepared based on last year's safety plan, adapted for the changed location and environment. This was forwarded to Cooranbong SES for comment prior to the event. NSW Police Hunter Regional Command and NSW ambulance were notified prior to the event.

As in past years, the Cooranbong SES provided an experienced safety response team of 6 members (4 during daylight hours, an extra two for the night time) with a 4wd vehicle and all necessary equipment: - satellite phone, mobile phones, portable GRN radios for infield communications, ready packs with maps and compasses for team member to operate in the field as necessary, base tent for protection from the weather, generator and lighting equipment.

The Safety Officer had a soft 4wd vehicle, five BWRS UHF radios and a Etrex Vista gps. The BWRS also provided Geoff Dale as a second Safety Coordinator to increase involvement for other members of this squad and promote skills transfer for succession planning.

Event

I am pleased to say that there were no major incidents. The minor incidents were: - one six hour team phoned to say they would be 2 hours late back, 5 other teams were up to an hour late. First aid assistance: - a scratch on a forearm caused by a barbwire fence was cleaned up by Cooranbong SES. One competitor seen to be assisted into the car park was approached to offer assistance but he and his team mate said that he was ok. He was from team 7, this was his first event since a knee operation, he was

just exhausted and knee was hurting. He looked ok. He was advised that assistance was available if he needed it.

Seven safety sweeps of the course roads were carried out by the Cooranbong SES but there were no calls for assistance. The roads in the area are in a very poor state and two of them were blocked, to the vehicles available, part way along. However it was possible to access these roads from the other side of the block.

The weather was ideal warm winter day and cooler clear night.

Five 6 hour teams were late up to 21:30; a sixth team phoned about 21:00 pm to say they were ok but would be about 2 hours late. All 12 hour competitors returned on time, before the midnight deadlines.

Conclusion

A very well run event and only very minor incidents reported to the SES safety response / first aid team or Safety Officer.

The SES GRN radios, on duplex, provided good coverage back to base, during the road sweeps. The SES GlobStar satellite phone was not used. Mobile phone coverage to event organisers was generally good.

The BWRS UHF radios were used satisfactorily particularly with the new high gain unidirectional antennae (we were testing their suitability for use during the NSW Rogaining Championship in September).

A particular thanks to the Cooranbong SES for their, professional approach, skills and friendliness, that contributed to a very successful event. Thank you also Geoff Dale for his friendly contribution to the smooth running of the event.

The Safety Officer assisted with the collection of flags on Sunday.

Dug Floyd (Safety Officer)