

NSWRA Presidents Report for 2011

Alexa McAuley, 18 March 2012

This year I'm not going to talk about events – I'm sure you'll find there have been plenty of opportunities to hear about each of them, take part and even participate in follow up discussions online. Instead I'd like to share with you a few of the key things which the committee has been working on "behind the scenes" during 2011.

During 2011 (with the exception of the equipment officer which remains a vacant position), we filled most of the key committee roles and so were more able to get on with some longer term goals as well as keeping up with the day-to-day activities of NSWRA.

A key focus in 2011 has been providing **better support to event co-ordinators** with activities like site finding, budgeting, organising volunteers and equipment and preparing a safety plan. It's always hard to measure the effect of being better organised, but hopefully we've avoided some hiccups and last-minute problems, and kept stress levels down!

Some of our other noteworthy activities in 2011 have been:

- We've been dabbling with our **online forum** for a while, but in 2011 we really got it going properly and it's been nice to see the discussion developing on there after each event. A key challenge for NSWRA is to promote and maintain a sense of community amongst rogainers, and I hope that the online forum is one tool that can help with this.
- We've also recently trialled a system where you can provide anonymous **feedback** about events, and we used this for the first time following the 2012 Metrogaine.
- We have started to set up an **online map** of past NSWRA events. We hope this will be a useful resource for future course setters, as well as being an interesting way to explore our past events from the comfort of your computer. Look out for it to go live some time soon.
- We wrote a set of **guidelines** for course setters and vettors doing urban style (Q&A) events. It's always difficult to devise good questions which are cunning yet fair, and hopefully these guidelines will be a big help.
- Neal and Emma McDonald joined us in mid-2011 to take on the **administration** role at our events. They have been fantastic and I'm sure they have become familiar faces to many of you. They've



taken a break from the Metrogaine and Minigaine while they welcomed a new baby, but we are looking forward to having them back for the remainder of 2012.

- We have updated our **entry categories** to better reflect the makeup of participants. We've now got an over-65s ("Legends" or ultra-veteran) category and the Junior (under-18) category has been replaced by Under-23s. However the 1st Waitara Scouts donated a new Junior trophy for the Paddy Pallin event, so we retain the Junior category as a special feature of the Paddy Pallin event.
- We resurrected the **Warwick Marsden Award** for voluntary contribution to rogaining, with Mike Hotchkis our first recipient since 2007. This should return as a regular annual feature.
- We've started to set up a **database of "trailer towers"** to make it easier to share this job around. Unfortunately we are still calling on the same few people all too frequently, but we're in a better position than this time last year.

Thanks

Thanks to all of the people that have volunteered at our events over the last year – you've all done a great job and I hope you've enjoyed it too. Volunteering is a great way to meet fellow rogainers and see what goes on behind the scenes. Some jobs (e.g. course setting, vetting, flag hanging and collecting) still let you get out on the course, and others (e.g. helping in Admin or the Hash House) still let you enjoy the atmosphere of the event. Often there is also the opportunity to spend time out on the course, as there are quiet times at Admin and the Hash House between the start and finish of most events. Most of the jobs require no special skills and for the few that do, there is plenty of support from the committee and others who've done it before.

Second, the committee members that have kept things running smoothly over the last year – you've all worked hard and I'm glad that you are keen to continue in 2012. A special thanks to Gill this year, who has been a huge help and has been willing to take on the baton of President for 2012!

I hope to see you out on a course or around the hash house in 2012!

