

NSWRA CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Although a rogaining association was first formed in NSW in 1983, NSW had a history of successful organisation of 24 hour walks (much like present day rogaining) during the 1970s and early 1980s. In addition, Paddy Pallin organised an annual three and a half hour score orienteering event using topographic maps close to the Sydney area. However, these events were organised infrequently and getting your rogaining fix on a regular basis required travelling to Victoria.

By late 1982, a critical mass of expertise had developed in NSW sufficient to establish rogaining on a sounder footing. Jeremy Challacombe, an experienced Victorian rogaier had moved to Armidale, the

Northern Tablelands Orienteering Club was organising an annual six hour event, Bert and Dianne VanNetten and I had competed in a number of Victorian rogaines, and Peter and Robyn Tuft had organised several 24 hour walks in NSW.

Bert, Jeremy and I chose a point roughly equidistant between Newcastle and Armidale to organise a 24 hour rogaine on May 21/22, 1983 and called the event the NSW Rogaining Championships. The entry fee was \$12. We relied on publicity through orienteering and bushwalking clubs to promote the event. Staged just east of Murrurundi in the upper Hunter Valley, the event straddled the Liverpool Range and comprised mostly open and semi-open



Views along the Liverpool Range



Wallabadah Rock in cloud

semi-open farmland. We used the Temi, 1:25000 topographic map, and as was typical of the time, all competitors received a copy of the topographic map and a list of checkpoints with six figure grid references with which they plotted the location of the checkpoints on their map.

There had been heavy rain in the lead up and we were concerned about getting competitors into and out of the event. The rain continued off and on throughout the event so the Hash House (the shearing shed on Swegn Smith's property, with its attendant smell) was well used by competitors.



Swegn Smith and Jeremy Challacombe



Inside the Hash house

Sadly, my records are incomplete and don't include the results for the Murrurundi event. However, I mailed a note to all competitors in June 1983 advising them that they were financial members of the NSW Rogaining Association and advised them of a meeting in Sydney in the following month to formalise this arrangement and to ratify a constitution. There were 80 members of NSWRA in November 1983. The Victorian Rogaining Association kindly agreed to add our members to their newsletter mailing list

until we began producing regular newsletters in 1984.

A second NSWRA rogaine, a 12 hour event, was run at Armidale in November 1983. By the end of that year it was clear that rogaining was likely to develop strongly in this state. An indication of this was that Peter and Robyn Tuft successfully organised the 1984 Australian Rogaining Championships for NSWRA.

Ian Dempsey

(Thanks to Graeme Cooper for providing a scan of the 1983 NSW Rogaining Championships map)



Kathryn and Graeme Cooper