

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE NSW ROGAINING ASSOCIATION - 1994 to 1998

Prepared by Warwick Marsden October 1993

1. INTRODUCTION

The NSW Rogaining Association is now over 10 years old. In this time it has grown from a handful of members running an event each year for less than 50 participants to an association with almost 400 members and five events a year with an average of about 250 entrants. Throughout this period of growth the NSWRA has maintained its high standard in all aspects of event organisation while remaining a friendly association almost totally free of internal politics and bureaucracy.

With the growth in membership and numbers attending events, and the planned increase in the number of events there is a need to look ahead and plan if only to ensure that we retain those aspects of rogaining in NSW, and in the NSWRA, that we cherish. There has been a few signs of the strain of growth over the past year so it is important that we remain in control of this healthy growth rather than do nothing and find it overwhelming us.

To this end I have prepared this Proposed Development Plan for the years 1994 to 1998. The NSWRA is not a huge organisation and there is little at the moment that is in need of urgent attention. And, the last thing I want to do is encourage a bureaucratic structure with a vested interest in its own importance. Hopefully, this will be reflected in the brevity of the proposed plan!

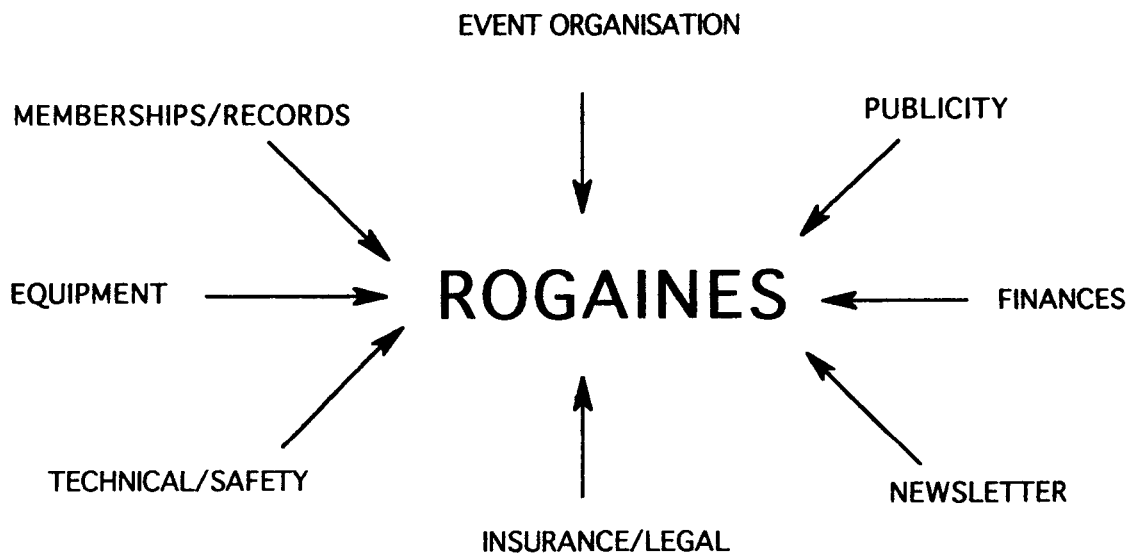
"Before forming the plan it was important to review the NSWRA as it is at present. Julian Ledger suggested a SWOT analysis which lists the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the organisation. This analysis is attached and shows that the NSWRA is essentially in good shape (Strengths) with the foundation established over the first ten years providing a solid base on which to build (Opportunities). The Weaknesses listed can be overcome with a little reorganisation and effort on the part of those with time to give. The Threats, particularly 1, 2 and 4 are of greater concern in the longer term and so any Plan must attempt to address these before they become major problems. You may care to add your own ideas to these lists and then see whether they support or are addressed in what follows.

Then, as with any organisation or endeavour, it was important to clearly define the objectives or goals of the NSWRA. I believe that the NSWRA only really needs or has three objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE NSWRA

- 1. Run "good" rogaines - interesting areas, fair courses, smooth admin, good catering, sufficient helpers, insurance, safety**
- 2. Provide information about rogaines and rogaining for its members.**
- 3. Promote the sport of Rogaining in NSW.**

Of these the first is by far the most important; if the NSWRA did nothing other than run good events its members would be pleased! There simply isn't the need (or the resources) for an association which has to justify its existence by building a bureaucracy. To achieve Objective 1 the NSWRA would be expected to provide expertise and organisers manuals, equipment, financial support such as budgetting and a float, membership lists, insurance etc. This objective is encompassed in the diagram at the top of the next page.



Objective 2 is important to maintain the strengths of the NSWRA, while Objective 3 is needed to help sustain growth and assist with organising events by reducing the need to explain endlessly what Rogaining is all about.

2. PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR THE NSWRA

I believe that the NSWRA would best be served by having three levels of administration: the current NSWRA Committee, a small Executive and a number of Groups to focus on specific issues. I would probably see the following Groups as necessary to cover the essential areas; note that these are the same as shown in the diagram above.

1. Membership/Records Equipment
2. Financial - both NSWRA and event
3. Publicity
4. Newsletter
5. Technical and safety
6. Insurance and legal
7. Event organisation

The Executive would be made up of the President, Secretary, Treasurer and probably a representative from the membership, event organisation and technical Groups. The Executive would meet bimonthly with half of these being at events. Depending on the agenda a meeting might also require the presence of members from other Groups.

The Groups would have three to six members, preferably living in the same general area, and would meet four to six times a year on an "as needs" basis. Their meetings could be at events or at newsletter folding sessions. It is hoped that some people will be prepared to be in a couple of these Groups to help the informal flow of information within the NSWRA.

The Full Committee will meet two or three times a year plus an AGM held at the first event for the year. It will be made up of The Executive plus at least one member from each of the Groups.

A listing of suggested duties and responsibilities for each of the Groups is attached. The Executive will act as the public face of the NSWRA and will be responsible for giving the Groups direction and ensuring that there is efficient communication between all parts of the NSWRA. Minutes will be prepared of all meetings within the NSWRA and will be channelled through The Executive.

The two Groups which will have an increasing workload as the NSWRA membership grows are the Newsletter and Membership/Records. For this reason we must make sure that these Groups have sufficient members and resources to prevent these jobs from becoming overwhelming. Graeme Cooper has proposed that the Membership/Records function could also take entries for individual events. This proposal has some merit but I think that in the longer term it is better that this Membership/Records function is seen as a service function rather than a part of the organisation of each event. This is just my opinion in the context of this Plan; as such, I believe that Graeme's proposal should be considered by the NSWRA Committee when reviewing this Plan. There may also be a good case a couple of years down the track to employ someone on a part term basis to take the load off these two Groups as well as the secretarial function of The Executive.

(Note that I have avoided the term "sub committees" which has bad connotations. I am tempted to coin terms such as Gullies or Spurs for the Groups, with The Executive being The Ridge or The Creek and the Full Committee being The Summit or The River. What do you think?)

3. PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF EVENTS FOR 1995 to 1998

The calender for 1994 gives a good balance of NSW events throughout the year with two 24 hour events, two 12 hour, a 6 hour Metrogaine, the 6 hour Paddy Pallin and an 8 hour "Xmas" event. The balance geographically is not so good with no night events to the west; the main reason for going west for the Paddy Pallin and Xmas events is give "The Westies" something closer for them.

To address this issue, and help maintain some of the "small is beautiful" aspect of the NSWRA I recommend that the organisation of rogaines in NSW be divided into four loose groupings:

Wollongong/South
Newcastle/ Armidale/North
West
City

The allocation of events for the four years, 1995 to 1998, would give each of these groups a major rogaïne each year so that over the four years each grouping would have two 24 hour and two 12 hour events. The "City" organised events will hopefully focus on the west (personal bias?) because the north is well served by active groups in Newcastle and Armidale while to the south the Wollongong based events will be complemented by the ACTRA events.

Organisation of the Metrogaine, Paddy Pallin and Xmas events will be the responsibility of the more populous City membership although it is hoped that the Paddy Pallin and Xmas events will move around the other three areas. There is also scope for Metrogaines and other local events in Newcastle, Wollongong, Armidale and the Blue Mountains which will be in addition to the Sydney events. (I haven't really explained to all of you what I hope to achieve with the Xmas event. There is a feeling that a number of rogainers, sufficient to justify such an event (?), would like to round off the year socially. I propose that this event, to be held on the last Saturday in November each year, is held on a previously used area and that a simple course of twenty or so checkpoints is set by novice course setters. The event will go from noon to 8pm or similar. The catering will be basic to minimise the organisational effort required but sufficient to allow for a few hours of socialising after the event. Should we have a Santa at one of the controls for the kids?)

All rogainers will remain members of the NSWRA although it is hoped that area based groups will form in the various centres and hold gatherings to ensure that the sport doesn't become too centralised. While it has been difficult with Graeme Cooper in Armidale, Bert and Dianne Van Netten and Ian Dempsey in Newcastle, Trevor Gollan in Wollongong and myself in the Blue Mountains it has meant that Rogaining in NSW has retained a broad base. We must strive to retain and expand this base.

I would also like to see the ACTRA become involved in the allocation of dates and event location, i.e. as a kind of fifth grouping. It is probably inevitable that with time there will be clashes between NSWRA and ACTRA events but we should do our best to restrict these to lesser events or at least ensure that coinciding NSWRA events are north of Sydney. To a lesser extent we should continue to work at avoiding clashes with major orienteering events in NSW.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

I see this implementation as a three stage process. While I believe that the implementation of much of what I'm proposing shouldn't be rushed I believe that Stage 1, deciding on a plan, should be completed in readiness for the 1994 rogaining season.

Stage 1 is to review, revise and approve this Development Plan. I hope to ensure that all committee members plus others such as Bert And Dianne Van Netten, Ian Dempsey, Peter Wherry, Robyn Arthur, Robyn and Peter Tuft and Keith Thomas (ACTRA) will have a copy by the first week in November. I also intend forwarding a copy to Jonathon D'Arcy, along with a copy of our Incorporation, to check that we're not compromising our Incorporation. Jonathon offered earlier this year to help out with legal matters.

I invite comments (preferably written) with suggested amendments and refinements over the following two or three weeks. From these I will prepare an Agenda for a meeting to be held hopefully after the ACTRA rogaine on November 28th at Trevor Gollans' or in Sydney sometime early in December. I will circulate all comments received along with the Agenda so that those who can't make it can still have their say.

Provided a consensus can be reached at this meeting NSWRA members can be informed in the January Newsletter.

Stage 2 The 1994 AGM will then be held at the Belanglo event on the last weekend in February. Apart from Trevor's resignation as Secretary I am hoping that most of the present committee is prepared for another year with a bit of new blood. The Groups can then be formed by one or a couple of committee members volunteering to set each one up and to recruit rogainers to help out. I believe that newcomers are far more likely to commit to a specific small task than to a large non-specific committee.

I expect that it will take the first six months to get all of the Groups up and running and most of the year before we all get used to the idea.

Stage 3 is by far the most important aspect of this proposal. It is my hope that the allocation of events by regions will stimulate the growth of regional offshoots of the NSWRA such that by 1998 the influence of the NSWRA Executive has been diminished relative to regional groupings and that other regional groups might grow in places like Albury, Wagga Wagga and Bathurst/Orange. This will help to retain the focus of Rogaining in NSW on events rather than a sporting bureaucracy. The challenge for the NSWRA is to facilitate this process rather than frustrate it.

I await your comments. Until then, Happy Rogaining!

DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR NSWRA

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

SEPTEMBER, 1993

STRENGTHS

1. Rogaining is a sport with broad appeal.
2. NSWRA runs well organised, enjoyable events
3. Enthusiasm for the sport by rogainers helps spread the sport
4. Steady growth in membership/participation
5. Low impact activity (w.r.t. environment)
6. Good support from the orienteering community
7. Additional support from LIC, YHA and Paddy Pallin
8. NSWRA has accumulated a good assets base and is sound financially
9. NSWRA Committee has been/is friendly, cohesive and social

WEAKNESSES

1. Low public profile
2. Small pool of skilled organisers
3. Loose structure of NSWRA
4. An increasing number of NSWRA issues are not being addressed fully
5. NSWRA Committee is geographically widespread
6. Small number of events - people don't see themselves as rogainers
7. No geographical or other systematic basis for event allocation
8. Dates for major events restricted by full moons
9. Production and distribution of the newsletter is becoming a major task

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Can expand through bushwalking and other endurance type activities. Scouts?
2. Its being an "Australian sport" should help attract publicity
3. Should be able to get support through gov't bodies such as Sport and Recreation
4. Large number of NSWRA members who may be willing to help out at events or on the NSWRA committee if encouraged.

THREATS

1. Problems with access to land
2. Accident and/or insurance claims
3. Competition with other related activities
4. Burn out by experienced organisers with no replacements

SUGGESTED DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NSWRA GROUPS

Note that these lists are not meant to be comprehensive but should act as a guide to show the sorts of things that these groups will be addressing. The actual list will be dynamic and will be determined by requests from other Groups and the Executive as well as by the initiative of the Group members.

EVENT ORGANISATION

1. Work out the calendar for the following year by June each year.
2. Organise for Event Coordinators and key personnel.
3. Assist with finding helpers for each event.
4. Prepare information in the form of guides with respect to Course Setting and Vetting, Administration, Catering and Creche.
5. Liaise with Finances, Gear, Membership and Publicity groups to ensure that event organisers are supplied with necessary information and resources. Note that this doesn't mean that they will become involved in every event but rather ensure that each of these groups knows what is required to run events.
6. Set up and maintain a database of organisers and helpers.

FINANCE

1. Keep records of the financial transactions of the NSWRA
2. Prepare an annual budget for the NSWRA.
3. Set up and monitor a system for handling event finances.
4. Liaise with the person responsible for the finances at each event to ensure that they know what is expected of them.
5. Carry out banking for the NSWRA; banking for events may be delegated.

EQUIPMENT

1. Maintain NSWRA equipment in good order.
2. Maintain an inventory of NSWRA equipment.
3. Issue and receive equipment from event organisers.
4. Submit quotes for repair and purchase of equipment to the Finances group.

INSURANCE/LEGAL

1. Inform the NSWRA of its legal obligations to its members, organisers and landowners.
2. Ensure that the NSWRA fulfils its obligations under its Incorporation.
3. Advise the NSWRA on insurance matters.

MEMBERSHIP /RECORDS

1. Receive and process Annual Memberships.
2. Keep an up to date and accurate list of members and their addresses.
3. Supply lists of members to organisers for events which require membership.
4. Supply membership numbers and a sets of labels to the Newsletter group.
5. Set up and record participation in NSWRA events.

NEWSLETTER

1. Compile five or six newsletters each year - these will include entry forms, results, articles and information supplied by other groups in the NSWRA.
2. Arrange for the production of the required number of newsletters.
3. Arrange for preparation for posting and the postage itself.

PUBLICITY

1. Obtain suitable publicity for the spon of Rogaining.
2. Assist organisers in obtaining publicity for specific events.
3. Attempt to obtain sponsorship and grants where possible.
4. Prepare an annual brochure as in previous years.

TECHNICAL/SAFETY

1. Maintain an up to date list of rules for Rogaining in NSW.
2. Monitor safety issues in Rogaining and make recommendations for how they may be remedied or addressed.
3. Answer technical questions from event organisers, rogainers and other Groups in the NSWRA.
4. Prepare newsletter articles/handouts to increase the level of awareness of technical and safety issues.