



INTERNATIONAL ROGAINING FEDERATION Inc.

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President's Report 2007

The 18th year of the International Rogaining Federation has been marked by continued strong growth of the sport internationally. The IRF has provided a focal point with its mission of supporting the development of rogaining in as many parts of the world as practicable.

Some highlights of 2007 include the first 24 hour rogaines in three countries, namely Sweden, Finland and Hong Kong. The year also saw the largest ever single rogaine with 1157 participants in an 8 hour event in Estonia, and rapid growth in northern Europe, particularly Russia where many 24 hour rogaines are held annually. Just as important is the continued success and growth of major rogaines in Czech Republic (11th), Ireland (10th), North American Rogaining Championships (10th), European Rogaining Championships (4th ERC in Latvia), and Australia (27th Australian Rogaining Championships). Most of these major rogaines are attracting competitors from several nations.

The quality of rogaining events is fundamental to the sport's attraction and growth. Having participants from other countries at major rogaines means a fruitful exchange of ideas, organizational methods, and standards. The Rules of Rogaining (sometimes with local modifications) are now followed in all rogaining countries, and provide the uniformity and predictability that ensures fair competition especially at the elite level. There have been no changes to the rules during 2007 but one of the tasks for 2008/09 is to consider some changes, particularly relating to electronic punching. Australasian and European rogainers have already done much work on this.

Over the last seven years, there has been a deliberate shift of the International Rogaining Federation away from the entrepreneurial needs of a young organization to a stable administrative structure that aims for the IRF to be well planned and managed, proactive, and consensus-driven.

Maintaining excellent communication with members and the broader rogaining community remains a high priority. Thirteen IRF Newsletters have been produced in 2007 including special editions focussing on the Strategic Plan process (#129),

Membership of IRF (#131) and Roles & Responsibilities (#136). There have been twelve monthly reports updating progress on the IRF Executive Roles & Responsibilities, and there have been less formal discussions between various parties deciding our major championship rogaines, and rule modifications for 8WRC.

The year has been a busy one for the IRF. We have worked through many items with considerable thoroughness. These items include a complete review of our IRF membership, major elections, updating of European Rogaining Championships, the award of 5ERC in 2008 to St Petersburg in Russia, the development of a Code of Conduct for rogaining, annual national plans as Part D of the strategic plan for rogaining, promotional material, and progress towards 8WRC in Estonia.

The IRF approved the membership of Estonia (2 Members), Latvia (1), Russia (2) and Ukraine (1) during the year. Senior rogainers in each of those countries elected Andres Käär and Lauri Leppik, Guntars Mankus, Sergey Yashchenko and Evgeny Dombrovskiy, and Efim Shtempler to represent their respective countries as IRF Members.

IRF elections were held during the year for Promotion and Development (Alan Mansfield), President (Neil Phillips) and Technical Convenor (Lauri Leppik). The two other executive positions, Peter Taylor (WRC Manager) and Rod Phillips (Secretary / Treasurer), were not due for re-election in 2007. Other members have been co-opted to assist the IRF Executive on specific tasks, including Pete Squires, Bob Reddick and Pieter Mulder.

The Code of Conduct for Rogaining was adopted during 2007 and provides a basis for fair, open and respectful dealing between rogainers at all level.

The Strategic Plan for Rogaining was no minor task for a volunteer sport that now covers so many languages and all continents. Now the Plan is in place, it provides a guide to budgeting, Executive Roles & Responsibilities, and setting priorities. The annual plans for each country are the next logical step to follow the longer-term, high level Plan.

Planning for the 8th World Rogaining Championships is well underway led by Lauri Leppik. He has been able to meet up with Peter Taylor (IRF WRC Manager) in Europe in November to discuss details of this event. Entries for the event have been very strong. This event will have a new overall IRF trophy, and individual IRF medals to compliment the perpetual trophies provided by the Western Australian Rogaining Association at 2WRC in 1996.

Financially, the IRF is sound due to successes of our recent World Rogaining Championships and a very modest annual expenditure. For the IRF and Rogaining to take our next step, we will require funding to allow for a secretariat, media and promotion, and website development. Government sources of funds, national rogaining association contributions, and a broader contribution from international rogaining championships (e.g. NARC, ERC, ARC) need to be considered. Currently, national funding comes from

the New Zealand Rogaining Association and has been much appreciated for four years; but having rogainers from only one country contributing is not sustainable.

Several years ago, three important changes to the IRF were identified, namely a representative membership, financial system, and legal safeguards. Representative membership is discussed in detail in #131, the financial system was set up in 2000 and is audited annually, and incorporation in 2000 provides legal safeguards.

This has been a year of shifting focus toward Europe. There are probably more rogainers and rogaines in Europe than any other continent – if not already, there will be soon. With this demographic change, we see European rogainers playing a much larger role in the IRF and the sport. Canada and USA continue to run high class events in North America, as do all the Australian states with their well-organized rogaining associations. New Zealand continues to innovate with the Navlight scoring system and shorter mid-week rogaines in cities, complimenting the traditional 24 hour rogaines that fine-tune their elite competitors. South Africa continues to run regular rogaines and has provided much appreciated support for international rogaining. Several countries in Asia compete in the World Rogaining Championships and we expect a growth in countries running rogaines there; and in South America, Brazil has introduced the sport and is planning longer rogaines. Overall, nineteen countries have organized rogaines, and 34 countries have competed in World Rogaining Championships.

Land access and volunteering are at the heart of rogaining, and crucial to our on-going success. Land access is recognized in many national plans as a critical issue, and the Victorian Rogaining Association has pioneered a two-year study to retain and eventually regain some of their prime 24-hour rogaining territory: others may need to follow soon.

We have hard working volunteers at all levels of the sport in all countries. We need to recognize the contribution that these volunteers make. It is with pleasure we announced the Geoduck Award to Francis Falardeau of Canada for his leadership of eight Laurentian 24 hour rogaines in Quebec culminating in the 2007 10th North American Rogaining Championships, and his leadership of the sport in eastern Canada. Interestingly, Francis was overall winner at the Most Awesome Rogaine in Alberta in 1990, the first international rogaine in which the IRF played a major role, and an event that initiated the growth of rogaining in Europe.

Planning for 2008 is already well advanced. One major task is a discussion of the membership structure of the IRF. At present, if a country is running regular rogaines but does not have a national rogaining association, the rogainers in that country can directly elect their representative to the IRF. This system ensures a very democratic IRF with as many countries represented as possible, but there may be better systems. During this constitution discussion, other IRF functions will continue. Peter Taylor will be working with Lauri Leppik and the other Estonian organizers to ensure the success of 8WRC, and Peter is planning 9WRC. After the completion of 8WRC, Lauri will be working with all countries to revise and update the international rules and standards. Alan Mansfield will

work to put the Strategic Plan into action with each country. An election for WRC Manager is due in late 2008.

On behalf of all rogainers, my gratitude to the IRF Executive who work tirelessly for the IRF and the sport, and to IRF Members, Observers and our auditor, for your on-going support and work within the IRF and at national level. Thank you.

Neil Phillips