



INTERNATIONAL ROGAINING FEDERATION Inc.

A0040409P

Newsletter No. 193 10WRC survey

Box 3, Central Park,
3145 Australia
www.rogaining.org
January 2013

IRF Team

President: Neil Phillips
Promotions and Development: Alan Mansfield
Secretary/Treasurer: Rod Phillips
Technical Manager: Lauri Leppik
World Rogaining Championships Manager: vacant

Members of IRF

Czech Republic (Miroslav Seidl, Jan Tojnar)
New Zealand (Alan Holdaway, Nick Collins)
Australia (David Baldwin, Richard Robinson)
Estonia (Lauri Leppik, Eduard Pukkonen)
USA: (Barb Bryant, Bob Reddick)
Ukraine: (Oleksandr Letychevskiy, Efim Shtempler)
Latvia (Guntars Mankus, Ilze Lapina)
Russia (Sergey Yashchenko, Evgeny Dombrovskiy)

Observer status

Brazil: José Nilton Silva Vargas
Canada: Francis Falardeau
Finland: Miia Hovi
Germany: Marko Rößler
Lithuania: Gediminas Trimakas
Spain: Felip Gili
Sweden: Bengt Nilsson
VRA-IRF Liaison Officer: Rebecca Shaw

10th World Rogaining Championships Survey of participants

Following the practice of many of our World Rogaining Championships, all participants in the 10th WRC were invited to provide their feedback on their experiences. Results of several previous surveys have been made available to Council including in IRF Newsletters, and they provide a valuable resource upon which we can modify and improve our WRCs.

Bob Reddick, Sergey Yashchenko and Rick Emerson have compiled results from the 2012 WRC in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Rogaining Association (www.rogaining.cz) organised the 10th WRC, with the location at Prebuz, near the German border west of Karlovy Vary. WRC2012 attracted 697 people (333 teams) from 28 countries. See results at:

<http://www.rogaining.cz/wrc2012/en/results.html>

The IRF invited participants to respond to a questionnaire. The 90 respondents told us what they liked about the event, and things that were not so good. Comments were received from individuals from: Australia 11, Czech Republic 15, Estonia 9, Finland 6, France 2, Germany 4, Great Britain 1, Latvia 7, New Zealand 5, Poland 3, Russia 12, Slovakia 1, South Africa 1, Spain 2, Ukraine 2, USA 3, USA/Canada 1.

The replies summarised here contain ideas to help strengthen future events. Some are definitive and cover the most important features of high quality rogaines. Others reflect the viewpoints and opinions of just one or two teams, which still may be of interest to organisers trying to obtain the best experience for all.

It was reported by most as a well-organised event and the time spent preparing everything beforehand was obvious and appreciated. At the WRC event level, it is most important to have the strongest competitors in their category always given priority. The entry system used here allowed all the top teams who applied to enter, with plenty of room left for a wide spectrum of teams, including enthusiasts and social rogainers, to compete.

Most teams found the venue to be a wide variety of forest, fields, roads, trails, towns, crops, animals, and residents. "Colourful and fascinating. The course, or what we saw of it.

Challenging and big enough to give the elite teams an endurance test.” The organisation and the layout of the Hash House (HH), and the staff seemed sufficient to cover all the many tasks to serve over 700. Many teams found the venue to be “a wide variety of forest, fields, roads, trails, towns, crops, and people. The food, which was adequate and tasty. The parking, which seemed well managed. The outhouses, which were sufficient, even at peak usage times.”

The few problems that arose follow in comments received from some teams:

The training (sample) course was well received, but its location 16 km from the event centre, with no organised transportation between, made it not accessible to many. The parking crew was especially friendly and helpful, as was the administrative staff. Communications in English helped many, but more announcements could have been used when queuing and other problems arose at the downloading of results station, and at the noon food service lines.

Flags were displayed for teams’ countries, and event signs with logos were in place for awards photos. There were podium stands for the three places for awards, and limited seating on the field for the awards ceremony. The awards ceremony was too casual, and could have gone smoother. Speeches should be timed and limited, but with an opportunity for the winning teams to make short comments on the PA system. (If not in English, translations could pose a problem.)

There were not enough seating or flat surfaces for route planning on maps before the start, and seating and tables for eating meals were insufficient at the ending meal. A rotation or time-limit plan could be announced. Some travellers had problems getting to the event, or missed scheduled buses. Well before the event, tourist information, detailed maps suitable for drivers and taxis to get to the Hash House, and map symbols and legends being used, should all be provided to registered entrants to allow translation into their languages. Many rogainers travel early to the venue, and may be out of touch in the weeks just before the event, so any changes to details should be sent when known.

It would be nice to provide a tent accommodation renting option for overseas

visitors so they don't have to carry large amounts of equipment. There were some sales booths with compasses and other gear for sale.

Although some time restriction on e-punching in at a control by all teammates can be used, the one-minute limit in this rogaine was seen as too short. Whatever restriction is imposed, any teams who fail it should be queried about the circumstances before final scoring.

The map scale was appropriate at 1:40,000 and a 10 metre contour interval on a 16” x 23” sheet. The scale bar and north grid lines spaced at 2 kilometres were shown. The standard colours used by the IOF on the map are recommended by some for rogaining. The orienteering-like map may have been too detailed for a rogaining event. Consistency across the entire course map is desired. The German and Czech parts of the map had some differences in mapping detail.

Checkpoint locations need to reflect IRF standards. Ensure placement uses mapped features and that flags are visible from the appropriate distance, both day and night. Identify adequate close-in placements with sufficient electronics to minimise bottlenecks. A very large queue occurred at checkpoint #80, which could have been anticipated and eliminated by better course design. Design checkpoint placements to support multiple lines of travel – providing both track and terrain approaches. Some participants wanted better delineation of roads, tracks, and paths in order to help to estimate in advance the possible speed of travel.

Several problems arose with the SI checkpoint readers. It is necessary to ensure multiple punching devices at the checkpoints likely to be visited by numerous teams simultaneously (i.e. nearest to hash house) to minimise queue forming. These multiple punching devices should be spread out over a sufficient distance so that if multiple queues form they can pass quickly through the control. Locations for controls and location of punching devices in particular shall allow ease of punching, preferably not in ditches or too high to reach. Punching devices should be secured properly. Some provision should be made for backup punching devices in case of possible broken or stolen electronic punching stations

(manual punching devices, or small paper pieces around controls).

Clean drinking quality water should be available at all water drops indicated in the map throughout the whole duration of the rogaie. Water drops should be located in such a way to be easily found by competitors in all weather conditions. It is desirable to provide unlimited hot/cold drinks (tea, water) immediately after finish. Extended period of shower and food service operation after the finish is desirable for those participants who feel exhausted. Not every place has opportunity to organise a shower; here, the Army showers were only available on a limited schedule. Better to extend the use from, say, an hour before the noon finish to three hours after. It is absolutely necessary to maintain strict hygiene (food, water, toilets). Hand washing or sanitising stations should be at many places around the toilets and food service lines.

Food service must be continuous from the announced starting time through the period at least one hour after the finish. Food line queuing can become a problem as many teams finish in the last 1/2 hour, so helpers should be on hand to assist tired, hungry teams find what they need.

It was suggested that higher entry fees might allow more and better prizes; the women's junior team received only toy-like items. The event WRC T-shirt was cotton. Some purchasers desired a higher-quality running/orienteering tech fabric T-shirt.

A big campfire is traditional for the evening in Australia, but many venues such as this one did not allow it. A substitute place for a group gathering for both the evening and after the event could be large, heated tents.

Was there sufficient advertising to bring in a larger field? This event could have taken many more entrants, and last-minute notices to local clubs and nearby countries might have brought more rogainers in.

Although most had no trouble finding the HH in daylight, some direction highway signs should be used for taxi drivers and rogainers driving in late at night. Parking crews or signs are helpful, also. There was no entertainment. Local musical groups and dancers could have been a nice addition in the evening or while waiting the one hour for the awards ceremony.

The website provided lots of information about the event itself, but could have been better used both to promote the event, mention tourist-type activities, and to facilitate communications between participants. At an earlier stage there was a forum, but this was taken down after the server collapsed several months before the race.

With almost 700 competitors and limited staff, long waiting lines developed at the finish area for results and food service. Volunteers should be planned to manage these situations, and a trouble-shooter official designated to be in charge of finding and fixing bottlenecks. Volunteers here jumped in to help those faced with a big food queue at lunch.

A final and amusing comment: One team reported on the many wild animals in the forest: "In the south of map we scared a bear. Because of it, we had to get off our route; we spent 2.5 hours on that to get away from the bear, to go to the village and gather strength to continue the race. Back on the field, we frightened sheep whose eyes glow green in the night. And a lot of foxes watched us from the bushes in the forest area. And when we went out at dawn to the village - from the forest out of the bushes jumped out at us a little deer. It is recommended to ask the next championship that wild animals be less active!"

In all, this WRC will be remembered as a very successful event, with 333 teams finding new friends and sharing much good food, drinks, and navigational fun in a great country.