



INTERNATIONAL ROGAINING FEDERATION Inc.

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Outline of this newsletter

This newsletter is longer than normal. This is to allow all the background behind the Strategic Plan to be collected into one place. We regard the Strategic Plan as vital for the development of rogaining internationally and within each country. Successful organizations have a clear vision about where they are going. Over the next few months, Alan Mansfield (who coordinated the 7WRC) will be assisting senior rogainers in each country in developing their national parts of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan for Rogaining

The new Strategic Plan for Rogaining, released at the time of the 7th World Rogaining Championships, is serving a number of purposes.

- It guides decision making at all levels in the sport, especially in the IRF. In deciding which of several directions the IRF might take on various issues, the Strategic Plan provides a reference point that summarises the extensive consultation with rogainers around the globe.
- In formulating the IRF annual budget, the Strategic Plan provides a guide as to areas where resources should be invested. If significant funds are being budgeted in an area, and this area cannot be substantiated through reference with the Strategic Plan, then questions need to be asked about the appropriateness of the budget investment. It is likely that Members should be consulted before funds are invested in a way that departs significantly from the Strategic Plan. As current examples, the Strategic Plan has some focus on communications and broadening the awareness of the sport and publicity, and so these might be expected to appear in the annual budget (as they do).
- The Strategic Plan also guides the nature and constraints of grants, sponsorship and donations to rogaining. A grant that is closely aligned with the Strategic Plan is likely to provide good value for the

donor and also for rogaining. However, a grant that is poorly aligned might require extra funds from within the sport to meet satisfactory completion of the grant requirements, and at the same time fail to advance the sport in the directions outlined in the Strategic Plan. Such potential grants can be recognized at an early stage and can be modified or declined. Similarly, some forms of sponsorship are clearly aligned to the sport whilst other sponsorship would be seen as inappropriate by many members.

Process of developing the Strategic Plan for Rogaining

The process of developing the Strategic Plan for Rogaining has been recorded in a number of IRF Newsletters, on the Strategic Planing forum site, outlined in IRF Roles & Responsibilities March 2006, and summarized here.

- An analysis of rogaining in each country (#95 attachment)
- Discussions at 6WRC
- Synthesis of the analysis of rogaining (#100)
- Outline of stages of planning process (#105)
- Update (#106, 108)
- Draft of high level components of Plan (#112)
- Circulation of summarized mission statement (A) in President's Report
- Draft of Strategic Plan for Rogaining (#114)
- Questionnaire relating to opportunity each person has had to input into Strategic Plan (#116)
- Printing stage of Strategic Plan (#120)
- Distribution of Strategic Plan for Rogaining (7WRC October 2006)
- On-going communication of input to the draft Strategic Plan ("rogainingplan2005" forum site)
- Explanation of Strategic Plan format and direct applicability to not-for-profit organizations (IRF R&R March 2006).

Explanation of the Framework for the Strategic Plan for Rogaining

There was some resistance from IRF members to an off-the-shelf business-type strategic plan when this subject was first raised in the IRF in early 2003.

The eventual Strategic Plan is quite different in form from that used in business life. A fairly detailed explanation has been provided to explain why this was the case, and why the format used for the Strategic Plan for Rogaining is both innovative and also fairly new for not-for-profit organizations. Its nature was outlined earlier and is repeated here so that other groups may choose to follow the broad outline.

"This is a strategic plan for a Not-for-Profit organization. At the highest level, it immediately departs from corporate examples. It differs somewhat from the Stamford University Collins and Porras 1996 approach. The Collins and Porras guideline was circulated to IRF Members around 2003: it was after less-than-enthusiastic response to this outline that we looked for something a bit more tailored for Not-for-Profit organizations like the IRF, and that is what appears in IRF Newsletter #114.

This Not-for-Profit Strategic Planning framework is relatively new. For anyone interested, the work of Professor V Kasturi Rangan of Harvard Business School is of interest and relevance, e.g. his article titled "Lofty missions, down-to-Earth plans" published in Harvard Business Review of March 2004 (pages 112-119) is highly recommended for any rogaining association. His HBS colleagues have also provided ideas for not-for-profit type strategic plans that we have drawn upon.

Much of the basis for this particular framework was to provide a forced linkage between lofty goals of organizations ("... opportunity to rogaïne in as many parts of the world as practicable"), and the annual programs and budget (e.g. "... provide a clear message to landowners that rogainers respect their land").

Going through the Strategic Plan for Rogaining that you have in #114 (the A, B, C, D terminology follows the Plan):

- A. This is the Mission. Nothing too surprising, and this set of words was circulated within the IRF in 2004, and

agreed some time ago (copied to many people in January 2005 within the President's Report).

- B. The Operational Mission is critical in putting some quantifiable control on the Mission. You will notice each one of these dot points can be measured. Most of the five dot points were circulated widely in 2005. The one to do with WRC is an addition after Peter Taylor's suggestion.
- C. The Strategy Platform has only vague parallels with the corporate environment. It identifies stakeholders, structures, finances and activities, and forces the sport to look at each of these. The implicit message is that each of these needs to be addressed and none can be omitted.
- D. Programs. This part has not been filled in yet, and would logically be the annual plan linked to the budget. By having some lengthy discussion within the Strategy Platform under its four headings, many of the annual programs have been effectively outlined already. It is a matter of selecting what can be done first, and fit these in with IRF workloads and budgets.

The Process to arrive at our near-complete document has been fairly conventional and here we did follow some corporate advice. In the process of building up the Strategic Plan we looked at over twenty company reports and ten other non-listed organizations. This has been recorded in the IRF Newsletters: the analysis of rogaining globally, the form of the SWOT analysis with face to face meetings whenever we could, extensive drawing upon rogaining newsletters to pick key issues from various rogaining associations especially in Australia. This is basically an Analysing → Planning → Implementing sequence as outlined in books such as *Managing for Excellence*.

Involvement of rogainers worldwide in the strategic planning process

A large number of rogainers accepted the invitation to have input to the Strategic Plan for Rogaining. Additionally, information, ideas, trends and opinions were gathered from all available rogaining association newsletters and websites about the directions, priorities, and concerns of various groups. Naturally, a significant input came from Australian rogainers through direct contact and the regular state association newsletters, however, great effort has also been made to involve

every single country that participates in the sport.

In IRF Newsletter #116, Members and Observers were asked three questions regarding the Strategic Plan for Rogaining and the planning process leading up to the draft provided in IRF Newsletter #114.

Q1. Have you had adequate opportunity to have input to the Strategic Plan over the last 2 years?

Q2. Have your ideas been adequately incorporated into the Strategic Plan?

Q3. Do you want to make any further changes to the Strategic Plan up to the end of Part C?

Ten people replied to the questionnaire representing eight rogaining countries. All respondents said that they had adequate opportunity for input to the Plan, all agreed that their inputs had been incorporated, and none had major changes to make.

How did we perform against first and second strategic plans for rogaining

Previous Strategic Plans for Rogaining were produced under the guidance of the International Rogaining Federation in 1989 (at the formation of the IRF) and in 1995 (after lengthy collaboration particularly with the Australian Rogaining Association). The Inaugural Plan of 1989 owes much of its success to the leadership of David Stephens in its development. Rod Phillips, David Rowlands, and Nigel Aylott played major roles shaping the 1995 plan of *Rogaining towards 2000* in 1992-1994.

From the First Plan:

“The International Rogaining Federation was formed in 1989 to:

- consolidate rogaining where it already had a presence,
- foster the spread of rogaining to other countries,
- improve the quality of all rogaines,
- promote international participation in rogaines,
- establish and maintain an international rogaining code.

A vision at the time was to be one of the best organized sports, and to hold a major rogaine to mark the millennium (4WRC in New Zealand). The groundwork for all of these aspirations was laid during the life of the First Plan, but in reality, the major benefits have come over the last few years. Incorporation of the IRF in 2000 followed by a major effort for improved governance, communication and transparency were necessary before we could claim to high organizational standards.

In the Second Plan of 1995, six broad areas were identified:

- fundamental principles of rogaining
- culture of rogaining
- communication and co-ordination
- assistance to new rogaining groups
- international meetings
- World Rogaining Championships.

We have made headway in each of these areas, but still there is more to do in each. The quality of rogaines continues to improve as does uniformity of practice globally. The four major international rogaining championships, for example, are now a successful international series.

The Strategic Plan for Rogaining is available on the website (www.rogaining.com) in English and in Portuguese (courtesy of José Nilton Silva Vargas); other versions are welcome.

Next step

The International Rogaining Federation has developed its 2007 budget based around the 2006 Strategic Plan for Rogaining - *Rogaining: 2010 & beyond*. The next step is a detailed annual plan (stage D of Strategic Plan) that guides annual activities and is regularly updated: this needs to be for the IRF and for each country. With these annual plans in place, everyone knows one another's priorities and can assist in achieving respective goals. For individual countries, annuals plans of one-page have been suggested as convenient length summaries.