

THE BLACK HILL -The 2004 Oz Champs

On the 3rd and 4th of July the 2004 Australian Rogaine Championships were held 400 kms north of Adelaide in the magnificent Flinders Ranges. The event area covered landscape features typical of the Flinders from the impressive craggy bluffs, expansive views from the lofty hills, to the quiet pleasant valleys and undulating plains with extensive native pine groves and mallee scrub forest cover.

150 teams competed, including four from New Zealand and one from the USA. The weather was clear and windy on the first day, but the moon was fantastically bright, and night temperatures were not too harsh.

The course was designed to be navigationally testing, requiring around 100km in 24 hours to clean up. This lured at least six teams to plan to collect all controls. Only two teams achieved it, the first being from ACT, David Baldwin, Adrian Sheppard and Trevor Jacobs, with 32 mins and 32 secs to spare and second place to ACT as well, Tom Landon-Smith and Alina McMasters, with 5mins and 13 secs left. The terrain varied from the fast flat plains at around 7.5km/hr, to native pine covered spurs and gullies, at around 4.5 km/hr and the slow scree slopes of the Black Hill Range, at around 2km/hr.

Phil Davill had the challenging task of crafting a map using Ocad, from a 1:50,000 scale topographical map supplied by the South Australian Department for Environment and Heritage, which enhanced contours and creeks. The setters and vetters, Rob Tucker, Steven Dose, Detlef Ringewaldt and Sigrid Attenborough, were particularly pleased that the scoring rate was fairly even over the course, and proved a test for navigational skills and fitness.

The Hash House was sited on the Warwick family's pastoral property of Holowiliena. The family has held this pastoral lease continuously since the 1800s, and consequently the historic buildings and other farming items are well preserved, which provided a window on outback sheep farming life. The event was excellently catered for by the Jackson family and helpers, with an extensive, sustaining menu.

The top 12 places were:

- 1 David Baldwin, Adrian Sheppard and Trevor Jacobs, 1st mens. (ACT)
2. Tom Landon-Smith, Alina McMaster, 1st mixed. (ACT)
3. David Rowlands, Mike Hotchkis, 2nd mens, 1st mens vets. (NSW)
4. Nigel Aylott, Darren Clarke, 3rd mens. (VIC)
5. Julie Quinn, Emma Murray, 1st womens. (ACT)
6. John Jacoby, Novak Thompson, 4th mens. (VIC)
7. Ricky Thackray, Mark Dowley, 5th mens. (WA)
8. Richard Robinson (QLD), Vivienne Prince (TAS), 2nd. mixed, 1st mixed vets
9. Paul Hoopman, Dave Nicolson, 6th mens, 2nd mens vets. (SA)
10. David Janmaat, Paul Sharp, 7th mens. (NT)
11. Greg Morcom, Scott Morcom, 8th mens (SA)
12. Alan Holdaway, Robert Holdaway, 9th mens (NZ)