

President's Report

SARA AGM 13 March 2021



Dear Fellow Rogainers,

Firstly, welcome to the start of the rogaing season for 2021.

It has been a privilege to serve as President for the last year, taking over from the very capable Kate Corner, and being part of a hard-working, capable and friendly committee.

Obviously, 2020 was a very different year – this time last year we just scraped in Jo Powell's Sturt Gorge Twilight 4-hour event before the new COVID-19 rule limiting gathering sizes came in. As you know, this led to many changes for us for event planning, the most significant being the postponement of the Australasian Rogaining Championships, originally scheduled for May 2020. It also led to some innovation with Craig Colwell designing the Mt Lofty Isolation 6-hour in April, with technical assistance from Steve Gray, and Evelyn Colwell's 3 x 6-hour staggered starts to reduce gathering size at the Bundaleer event in June, both proving popular.

As SA's COVID situation continued to improve we were able to keep planning events, much to the envy of interstate rogainers. In August, despite wet and muddy conditions, Doug Gillett's Velogaine at Mt Magnificent drew our highest number of Velogaine entrants to date. This was followed in September by Mike Broadbent's Oladdie Hills 8 & 15-hour events, again with a great turnout. What a treat it was to be out in the Flinders Ranges after so much time close to home. We are noticing the 15-hour is becoming very popular with rogainers; it is certainly my favourite length, being much more civilised than 24 hours! In October Jo enthusiastically set another 4-hour event in Sturt Gorge which again was very well attended by rogainers (and the odd brown snake.) We finished the year with Bruce Greenhalgh and Steve Sullivan's very popular Parafield Minigaine – again scraped in just days before SA's hard lockdown due to the 'Parafield Cluster'.

SARA is planning and supporting a range of awesome events for this year, COVID permitting, covering a range of locations, which you can see more about on the website. First up, a big thank you to born and bred local, Rhys Fogarty, for setting today's event in the Mitcham Hills.

Next up it is exciting to see a second generation rogaing Josie Smernik (and friends) setting her first rogaing at Second Valley Forest in April, a 6-hour event.

Then it will be time for our long awaited Australian Rogaining Championships! This will be held on 29/30 May, located 3 hours north of Adelaide, near Hallett, in the mid-north. This event represents a long-held dream by Lead Setter, Jenny Casanova, to set in this location, after she participated in a 24-hour event there as a teenager. As well as the 24-hour championship event there is also an 8-hour event, so there is something for everyone. If you have not been to an Australian Champs before this is your chance to be in awe of national (and hopefully some NZ) rogaing talent. Entries are now open.

Due to the availability of enthusiastic setters, we are holding a second 24-hour event, our State Championship, on 24/25 July, with the experienced setting team of Stephen Warren-Smith, Adam Kilpatrick and David Ottway, somewhere in the Flinders Ranges, location to be confirmed.

Then on 18/19 September we are planning a roving 15-hour event south of Bundaleer with setters Andrew McComb and Vincent Loye. For cyclists, our growing-in-popularity 4-hour Velogaine is on 16 October, at Mt Torrens, set by Bruce Greenhalgh. We finish with our fun Minigaine on 6 November set by Kate Corner and Michelle Bringham in the Adelaide CBD.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the 2020 committee for their enthusiasm and hard work, and for being generally awesome to volunteer with. I'd also like to thank all of you, our rogaing community, for your ongoing support of our great sport.

Zara Soden, SARA President