



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

At Annual Report time an organisation's president ought to be able to reflect on all the successful outcomes delivered during the year, progress against the strategic plan and exciting announcements for the coming year. In 2021 we did COVID. End of report.

But seriously, 2021 was another year marked by practical pandemic precautions. Even though our sport is arguably one of the safest things you could do outdoors - in terms of social distancing at least, we have continued to adopt a safety first policy in keeping with the government's mandated public health rules around gathering limits. And of course we are affected by the rules in both the ACT and NSW, not to mention the fact that would-be interstate participants have also been affected by their jurisdictions' border regulations.

Despite all that, there were some brief between-lockdown windows of opportunity during the year, and we seized them. The fabulous Back to the Bay event based at South Durras was supposed to be a chance to support the local community in that region after the disastrous fires of late 2019 - better late than never, I guess, and a delightful way to get back into the nav-groove and ready for a real challenge at the ACT Champs at Abercrombie River National Park. No one can be in any doubt that rogaining takes you to some spectacular places, and in the case of the Champs, just getting there was a spectacular journey in its own right! Our thanks to David Baldwin and Julie Quinn, and Keira and Tom Banks, respectively for kick-starting the year in such fine form.

In July we just managed to squeeze in a Winter 4-hour event back in a return to the much more local Rob Roy Nature Reserve, with some novelty inclusions added by first-time course-setter David Poland (congratulations to all who captured the 'nine niners'). And speaking of novelty, hasn't it been fun using MapRun for Jon Glanville's Virtualgaines these past few years? Another one is planned for 2022, so get ready to go early/go often!

Everything was in readiness for the Belco-metro, but ultimately we were beaten to the line by the lockdown, so hopefully we can simply blow the dust off Nick Lhuede's well-laid plans in 2022; and just to prove that there's never a dull moment when you are organising long-distance cross-country events - how good was that rain?? Initially we had the unexpected experience of the February Twilight event having to be postponed because the Hash House/parking area was water-logged, but then in the Spring we were forced to make a last-minute call to postpone the Tarlo River event in light of a dire forecast for rising river levels. Again a big debt of thanks to the respective organisers, Benita Sommerville, Jean Douglass and Ron Simpson and their various helpers, for reinventing those events - in the case of the Twilight as a Christmasgaine, and a week later than planned at Tarlo. We can count ourselves lucky for that Spring event, as a couple of weeks later the lowest of the access causeways was metres under water!

As we emerge from our not-so-splendid isolation in 2022, the effects of the La Niña weather pattern continue to be felt, most obviously for us with the abundant growth in the nature/national parks. Always remember to check your final instructions, because when we say 'full leg cover essential' you can bet there will be blackberries/regrowth/grass seeds aplenty to deal with.

With fingers well and truly crossed, this year has started with Twilight and Paddy Pallin events at the right time of year, and we can only hope our full planned calendar of events can continue. This year that calendar includes navigation and remote first aid workshops, so keep an eye out for those popular opportunities to improve your rogaining competencies.

As usual I end with a plea for any interested volunteers to join in with event organising. A committee member will be there to coordinate each event, but if you would like to try your hand at course setting and vetting, or control hanging and collecting, or you have a 4WD vehicle you can offer to tow the ACTRA trailer to events or for safety patrols, please let us know.

**Stephen Goggs**

ACTRA President 2021