



# **International Rogaining Federation Inc.**

## **Jury Report from 11WRC2013**

### **1. Background**

There were two issues arising from 11WRC2013 that were reviewed and determined by the event jury. One was a report submitted pursuant to Rule B25 which was dealt with on the day and before the presentation of medals. The other was an appeal submitted pursuant to Rule B26. When this appeal was received it was determined that the event jury was best placed to deal with it both because of the potential overlap with the report dealt with at the event and because the appeal did not relate to any decision made by the jury.

As the appeal was not received until some days after the event it took some considerable time to address. This was because both the jury members and the various teams involved had all returned to their home countries and/or travelled to other events and thus it needed to be dealt with via correspondence.

These matters have identified a number of opportunities for improvement of the IRF's Rules and Technical Regulations.

### **2. Report Item**

#### **2.1. Report Summary**

One team reported seeing two vehicles, in both cases mini-buses, known to be associated with a number of different teams competing in the event, on minor roads in the event area during the event. In both cases the location that these vehicles were observed were not locations where vehicles would logically travel going between the Hash House and expected places of accommodation. The concern of the team making the report was that the driver of the vehicles may have provided support to teams during the event in breach of Rule B12. They stated that they had not witnessed any such support being provided.

#### **2.2. Investigation**

Each of the vehicle drivers were independently questioned by the jury. One stated that he had parked in that location hoping to take photographs of teams competing in the event. The other stated that he had accidentally taken a wrong turn after leaving the Hash House to return to his accommodation. Both stated that they had not provided any support of any kind to any team out on the course.

The jury found no evidence that any team had been provided with any support either from the vehicles in question or by the drivers of those vehicles.

### 2.3. Finding

The jury thanked the team making the report for bringing this matter to the organisers' attention and advised that as there was no evidence to indicate that any team had breached Rule B12, or indeed any other Rule, then no further action would be taken.

## 3. Appeal Item

### 3.1. Appeal Summary

Four days after the event a member of one team contacted the IRF President stating that they had evidence of two teams having broken the IRF Rules of Rogaining during the event. The substance of the statement was as follows:

- Both teams had breached Rule B7 which prohibits among other things carrying "GPS receivers" because both had carried GPS trackers during the event
- Both teams had breached Rule B8 because their course was being tracked on a computer and the use of computers for course planning is prohibited
- Both teams had breached Rule B9 because their tracked course showed that they had crossed a waterway shown on the map as uncrossable and thus they must not have travelled only on foot
- One team had breached Rule B12 because they had a support team member travel with them through the terrain for several hours and that same support team member had used their GPS track to locate and rendezvous with them later in the event
- One team had breached Rule B5(a) by travelling along the M20 Highway that had been declared Out of Bounds by the Organisers. The evidence for this was the team's GPS track

### 3.2. Admissibility

The first issue to determine was whether the appeal was admissible. Rule B25 requires that all Reports and Protests must be submitted within 45 minutes of the nominated completion time of the event whilst Rule B26 allows a team not satisfied with "any decision of the organisers" to appeal within seven days of the results being published.

The view taken was that by taking account of the wording of Rule B26 and the requirements of Rule A4 that requires all interpretation and application of the Rules to be guided by a sense of fair play then the appeal was admissible. In addition, there was a view that it was important for the sport that justice was not only done but seen to be done and this could only be achieved through a thorough investigation.

### 3.3. Investigation

The team making the appeal were requested to provide a formal statement. When this was received a separate set of questions was prepared for each of the two teams whose conduct was being queried. They were each given 14 days to respond albeit both responded in a shorter period. Members of the jury also spoke with a number of people who had interacted with one or more of the three teams involved during or soon after the event.

The key facts that we able to be established were:

- One of the teams in question had taken two GPS trackers to the event at the request of a tracking service provider for testing during the event. They had provided the second tracker to the other team in question. They stated that they did not consider these to breach Rule B7 as they were not “navigational aids” because they could not extract any data from them during the event.
- The team who provided the trackers had, approximately two weeks before the event, asked the organisers to provide a copy of the event map electronically to the tracking service provider after the commencement of the event. The organisers advised that this would be a breach of Rule C12 which prohibits the organisers releasing any data about the results, route or progress of any team during the course of the event. The team stated that the Rules do not prohibit them from releasing data about their own route or progress during the event.
- An individual well known to both the teams in question who was not competing in the event did accompany one of the teams for a significant period immediately after the start. This same individual used the GPS track to predict where that team might be the following morning and intercepted the team. Both the individual and the team concerned stated that this was done only for the purposes of taking photographs and no support was provided to the team during their times together. There were a number of photographs of this team posted by that individual on social media during and after the event.
- The team that provided the trackers stated that they had not specifically intended to make the tracks publicly available during the course of the event but this did occur. It is known that a number of people in at least; Russia, the Baltic States, Scandinavia and Australia followed the track of these two teams during the event.
- Both teams did cross a waterway shown as uncrossable during the event, as did a number of other teams. They had intended to swim if required but found a derelict bridge not shown on the map.
- One of the teams had travelled adjacent to the M20 Highway during the event, as had a number of other teams. They stated that they did not travel on the Out of Bounds road embankment but on a rough path on the edge of the forest.
- Both teams stated that they had not received any outside support or assistance during the course of the event.

### **3.4. Finding**

The jury found as follows:

- The GPS trackers carried by the two teams did not constitute “navigational aids” as they provided no data that was able to be used by the teams. Thus, they did not breach the intent of Rule B7
- A team voluntarily providing information about their own; score, route or progress during the course of rogaïne does not breach the Rules
- There was no evidence to support any breach of Rule B8
- Rule B9 is not intended to be read literally and thus swimming during the course of a rogaïne is not a breach of this Rule
- There was no evidence to support any breach of Rule B12

- There was no evidence to support any breach of Rule B5(a)
- There IRF Rules of Rogaining as currently written contain a number of anomalies which should be addressed as soon as practical

Accordingly the results of the event stand as published.

#### **4. Future Actions**

Beyond closing out the appeal process with the relevant teams the jury proposes two other short term actions:

- Prepare and distribute a briefing note that will provide a high level summary of the circumstances of the report and the appeal which provides an advice that competitors fully understand the Rules and ensure that their supporters conduct themselves in a manner that eliminates the risk of suspicion. The intention is that this briefing note be distributed as widely as practical across the rogaining community.
- Prepare a proposal for some immediate changes to the IRF Rules of Rogaining that can be promulgated well in advance of 12WRC2014. These are contained in 5. below.

#### **5. Recommended Rule Changes**

As a result of the experiences gained through the investigation of this report and appeal the jury recommends that the following changes to the IRF Rules of Rogaining be made. It is a matter for the IRF, and particularly the Technical Subcommittee, to determine if these changes are combined with a number of other changes currently under discussion but it is strongly recommended that the changes proposed below, or changes that have the same effect, be promulgated well before 12WRC2014.

Rule B7 be changed to the following:

- a) The only navigational aids that may be carried on the course are magnetic compasses, watches and copies of the competition map*
- b) The possession of other navigational aids, including pedometers, altimeters and GPS receivers, other than GPS data loggers or trackers that provide no visual display or audible feedback, on the course is prohibited*
- c) The possession, at the event site, of maps that provide additional information not shown on the competition map is prohibited*

Rule B8 be changed to the following:

*The use of aids for course planning other than for distance measurement and scoring estimation is prohibited, in particular route optimisation software or other sophisticated planning tools*

Rule B9 to be changed to the following:

*Competitors shall travel only on foot. This rule does not preclude competitors from crossing water objects, even if this requires swimming, provided the water object has not been designated out of bounds.*

Rule B12 be changed to the following:

*A team shall not accept assistance from, nor collaborate with, other people during course planning or on the course nor deliberately follow another team*

Insert a new Rule, probably after the current Rule B12, as follows:

*The use of electronic communications equipment including mobile (cellular) phones on the course is prohibited. Any team using such equipment for any purpose during a competition must withdraw or be disqualified.*

Rule B30 be changed to the following:

*Any team hearing a distress signal must abandon their course and help in any way needed. No team shall be penalised for any rule breached in the course of giving such help or reporting matters solely to the event organisers.*

Rule C4 should have the following sub-paragraph (e):

*(e) Known prohibited routes shall be clearly marked as such*

Rule C8 be changed to the following:

*Maps, checkpoint descriptions, any known map changes, details of Out of Bounds locations and/or prohibited routes and other essential information shall be available as written handouts at least two, and not more than four, hours before the start time. Every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that any necessary last minute changes are communicated to all teams. Written copies of last minute changes must be on display to all participants.*

Rule C12 be changed to the following:

*The organisers may require teams to carry tacking devices. Beyond any data available by virtue of teams carrying tracking devices during the event, the organisers shall not release any information relating to provisional results of any team, the progress of any team, or the route chosen by any team.*