

## **The Calabash 6/12 hour Rogaine – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

Paul Frylink and Tim McIntyre

Well, the “Calabash” Rogaine has come and gone, but the positive experience of the event still lingers on in my mind 2 weeks after the event.

When Tim first emailed me in November 2009 with a proposal from Richard Robinson that we organise another Rogaine, I agreed as the last event we had organised was Nukinenda in 2006.

So, with the area already secured by Richard Robinson - Tim & I set off in late January for a reconnaissance mission. We met the two land owners (Rossiters in the north and Grieves for the remainder) and got a good feel for the area as Andrew Grieve volunteered his time to drive us around his property. We were buoyed by this first visit as not only did the countryside look great, the cooperation of the landowners was encouraging. We were particularly pleased with the support the Grieves showed towards the event – they were adamant that we use their “front paddock” as the camping area and Sheree would do all the catering from her front verandah!

Now armed with some photos of the area, the map limits, out of bounds areas, the Hash House site and a GPS track log of our journey around the countryside, I cobbled together a preliminary map and set about some armchair course setting.

The course setting goals I had in mind were – make it near impossible for a single team to collect all controls, yet have every control visited at least once without having any obvious loops while at the same time include some easy controls and high pointers near the Hash House. In addition, acknowledging that the area was a bit hilly, try to make use of the main creek valleys and provide some flatter route options. Ultimately, I believe we managed to achieve these goals.

Spread over a couple of weekends in May and June, Tim and I spent a total of 3 full days in the field hanging the flags and Navlights – adjusting the course and control placement on the go as conditions dictated. We elect to travel together, effectively setting and vetting simultaneously. This system saves time and works very well for us as we both have to agree on our location and suitability of control site before the control gets hung. Our location is also confirmed by GPS (which has topographic mapping installed).

While out in the field, we recorded the location of notable features such as dams and deer fencing etc – additionally, the GPS recorded a log of any tracks we found. This information was then passed on to Andy Stewart who produced the great looking map for the event – thanks Andy, excellent map.

With the course set, the map under control and the catering organised, we just had to sit back and wait for the entries to flood in! Well, not quite - there are numerous documents to produce, printing to be done, mailouts, sponsorship to organise, trophies, gear to organise etc etc.

In the end, we attracted 151 participants for the event – split into 42 teams for the 6 hour and 21 teams for the 12 hour. This was a pleasing response easily justifying the effort put in to organising the event.

Congratulations to outright winners of the 12 hour championships - Tamsin Barnes and Richard Robinson who put in a solid performance visiting 33 out of the 42 controls to accumulate 1780 points – a healthy 140 points clear of Paul Guard and Kevin Koopman in 2<sup>nd</sup> place (30 controls visited). Third place overall with 1350 points went to Paul Elby and Neets Plushke (24 controls visited).

The 6 hour event was a closely fought contest with just 20 points separating the first four teams! The outright winners were Jaysen Searle and Gary Sutherland with 1050 points from 21 controls. Second place getters Ray Deetlefs and Brett Stevens were just 10 points behind on 1040 after visiting 22 controls - unfortunately losing 120 points due to arriving back 12 minutes late.

For full results, refer to QRA website ([www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)) – included on the website is lots of useful information such as course maps and analysis of all team routes and control statistics. In addition, there are lots of photos.

Studying the statistics, I find a number of things interesting – firstly, from a course setting perspective, it is pleasing that every control was visited, however I am surprised that the least visited controls with just 3 teams visiting were 23 and 32 to the east of the HH – just a 25 minute amble down the road. Perhaps in hindsight we should have increased their value.

The most visited control with 54 teams visiting it was 61 at the top of the hill SE of the HH - I find it curious that control 22 just a flat 400m amble from the HH had only 52 teams visit it (from the total of 63 teams).

I was impressed that 16 teams made the trek up to the Calabash (103) – a not insignificant climb of around 280m from the Emu creek valley – challenging enough in my vehicle! Due to the climb and steepness of the southern part of the map, Tim and I decided to bump up the value of 103 to 120 points and place some other high value controls nearby. This clearly gave teams something to ponder while planning.

The Calabash event would have to be one of the most memorable Rogaines I have been involved with. Many factors contributed to the success of this event - thanks to all the following :-

- First and foremost, we need to thank the landowners. We say it every time, but without the cooperation of landowners, we can't have Rogaines. For the Calabash event, we used two private properties and some state forest:-
  - Alan and Birgitte Rossiter (Kokopelli) In the north
  - A narrow band of state forest to the west and
  - Andrew and Sheree Grieve's land for the remainder

The area in my view was delightful to walk through. The pleasant open country and picturesque countryside – particularly the Emu creek valley in the south - easily outweighing the troublesome grass seeds.

- The Hash house. Not only did they set up tarps, tables and chairs on their front verandah, but Sheree and her team worked incredibly hard to produce some of the best quality, quantity and variety of HH food I have seen. We cannot thank them enough.

- The great map produced by Andy Stewart. I believe it is the first time he has produced a map for a Rogaine.
- Fiona McIntyre for looking after entries and admin – also, her effort in chasing people to help with control collection was appreciated. As a result, we were all packed up and on our way by lunchtime on the Sunday.
- Andrew Grieve - who can forget “that” fire – Andrew excelled himself... When Tim and I had finished course setting several weeks before the event, we popped in on the Grieves to confirm final arrangements. We checked with them about having a fire – I fully expected that we would gather a few logs or perhaps purchase some firewood and create a campfire ourselves. When we turned up on the Friday before the event to set up, we were greeted with his creation. Andrew is a very generous and easy going chap, providing what we needed to make the event run smoothly.
- Trev of Paddy Palin (Fortitude Valley). I approached Trevor only about 2 weeks prior to the event looking for some bags for registration handout. Even though he had sponsored a 3 hour event recently, he was quite willing to provide me with 70 paper bags – additionally, he threw in 10% discount vouchers. Go and say G’day to Trevor when looking for some gear.
- Paul Mellow – Paul couldn’t find a team mate, so was happy to come out to the event site to help us out with whatever needed doing. His timing was brilliant – turned up on Friday afternoon just as we were digging the toilets 😊. Paul’s help over the weekend was appreciated – the weekend following the event, he ran the gold coast marathon!
- Paul Guard – Another Paul – bit of a theme going here. Paul provided the prompt results on the QRA web site along with all of the course statistics and links to photos etc. Check out [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)
- Everybody who helped collect controls on Sunday morning. Your volunteered time was very much appreciated – as I mentioned earlier, it meant we were all packed up and on the road by lunchtime Sunday.

Over and above all the contributors above, a number of other factors added to the day making it a very memorable event for me. We were fortunate with mild weather (A little warm in the afternoon if anything), a spectacular sun set and moon rise. In addition, we were treated to a partial lunar eclipse during the evening.

So all in all, I hope everyone enjoyed the event as much as we did and found the course challenging but enjoyable.

Thanks to all who came along.

Paul Frylink