



2018 Australasian Rogaining Championships 'The SunSEQer'

*RQA with Julie Quinn &
David Baldwin*

1. What is your occupation?

JQ: I'm a public servant in the Federal Department of the Environment. It's a handy job in that I generally have flexible hours so can get out and train, and being a desk job provides good recovery time!

DB: I'm an IT guy at Australian Sports Commission. Similar flexibility, and Australian Institute of Sport pool, gym and recovery available to staff free!

2. What age were you and why did you start competing in Rogaining events at that time?

JQ: I started rogaining after a housemate took me out on an event in 1999 after I moved to Canberra from New Zealand. I was hooked immediately! Growing up in New Zealand I had been taken tramping from a very early age (probably carried on my first "walks") and I recall my first map reading lesson in the bush about the age of 5 so I already had many of the skills to enjoy rogaining.

DB: I started rogaining in 1996 when I was 30. I started doing triathlons earlier that year as a rehab goal when I broke my leg, and with background in orienteering as a junior and lots of bushwalking it was a natural progression. My first Australian Champs was in 1997, a very memorable event near Wilpena Pound in SA, and I haven't missed one since!

3. Best Rogaining tip ever received?

JQ: Oh, golly, that's a hard question. Most tips are those that I've got sharing stories sitting around after an event or when I've looked at GPS trails of circle work around a control afterwards and piecing together the mistake we'd made. I guess trusting the compass at night is pretty critical and the general tip in the dark that you probably haven't gone as far as you think or hope you have (ie. in the dark, pace count all the time!)

DB: So many over the years, and some hard lessons learned. For me realizing that if you're finding it tough going, probably everybody else is too, so just stick with it and you may be surprised at the finish!

4. How has Rogaining changed since you started competing?

JQ: The coming of electronic timing, the broader availability of GPS devices, specially made maps, waterproof maps and lights. With the exception of the better quality lights, all of these things have changed stuff around the event – like it is very, very nice not having to try to add up your score at the end of a 24-hr event – but the fundamentals of getting out into the bush haven't changed at all.

DB: The biggest difference is the fantastic lights now available. Last century's torches were primitive. You were lucky if you could see 5m, you had to change the batteries every hour or two and they weren't bright enough to be able to run at night without falling on your face within 5 minutes! Revolutionary to be able to see 50m at all times, run through the bush and have a light that lasts most of the night on a single battery! The fundamentals of a well-set course, good terrain and great hash house haven't changed which is why I keep coming back.

5. What sports did you participate in as a kid?

JQ: As mentioned earlier, I have bushwalked (tramped) all my life. As a teenager I was super keen on downhill skiing and sailing – both good sports when you live in New Zealand. I gave up both after I moved to Australia. Now I mainly run and cycle, with a little bit of kayaking and swimming. The running helps a lot with rogaining, especially trail running and I do some training with the running for rogaining. Doing lots of setting rogaines and generally getting out in the bush is the best training you can do though.

DB: Orienteering was my family's preferred sport growing up, so that gave me a good grounding in maps and navigation. Dabbled in hockey and tennis, but I'm too uncoordinated for balls sports.

After about 10 years of triathlon and adventure racing I now focus more on trail running as a complement to rogaining, with a bit of Mountain Biking and other multisport for interest.

6. What is your favourite type of geographic area to Rogaine in?

JQ: I love most places that I have rogainied in - generally they are set in really interesting places. However, I can't go past the arid ranges of central Australia or the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Spectacular.

DB: I'm with Julie! I love the Snowy Mountains and alpine areas too. Complex detail is a favourite.

7. What is it you like about the Australasian Champs event in particular?

JQ: They always showcase a super special area and there is just that wee bit more effort put into setting a challenging course. Over the years, I have made lots of friends of inter-state people so catching up with them around each Australasian Champs is always something I look forward to.

DB: Always good competition and catching up with old friends and rivals. Different terrain types in different states.

8. How do you stay focused and energized in the 24hr Championship events?

JQ: I would be lying to say I don't have moments where I lose focus and energy during a 24 hr event! They get easier after a few in the sense that you have an idea of what to expect staying up all night rogaining and that any bad patch will get better in a little while.

DB: Teamwork is key to keeping each other focused. Talking about where you're going, how you're feeling and all the interesting things going on around you.

9. What has been the hardest and or strangest moment you can recall on a Rogaine?

JQ: I remember coming up onto a broad knoll in the dark in Arizona at the World Rogaining Champs and seeing a row of eyes glowing back! Of course, I immediately thought of all of the things out there that could be dangerous (e.g. mountain lions) and got concerned, much to the amusement of my partner David. They were deer.

DB: You see some weird things in rural areas, especially in foreign countries. There were some memorable Cold War structures in the 2002 WRC in Czech where the event boundary was the "iron curtain" border with (West) Germany, but some of the things hunters and farmers build all over the world are pretty strange.

10. For those who may be considering participating in a Rogaining event, what do you believe are the merits of Rogaining?

JQ: It provides all of the qualities of a good bushwalk in an interesting area but adds the challenge of finding the checkpoints. Competing with a partner or small team adds fun.

DB: Getting outdoors for a bit of fun and adventure with friends. Choosing how hard you want to make it.

11. Not necessarily based on the win or podium result, what do you personally believe has been your greatest Rogaine?

JQ: I am very proud of the event that I helped put on in central Australia for the World Rogaine Champs in 2016. That is a truly special area and I think we managed to set a world quality course.

DB: So many to choose from over the years, both competing and organising, but WRC2016 was a highlight with so much work that went into it and seeing so many people push themselves to their limits.

