



<http://www.trail-running-association.org>

**Press release n° 2
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First conclusions from the ITRA's five working groups

After the first International Trail-running conference (September 3rd 2012 - Courmayeur - Italy) five working groups were set up to study the five key themes, with the aim of trying to determine, in the long or short term, the convergent lines of conduct between the players of trail-running. Fifty volunteers, manufacturers, race organisers, journalists, trainers, athletes, federations... from thirteen countries and five continents answered present and positioned themselves around the virtual internet table.

After working for two months, each group, uniting their cultures and their points of view to accompany this discipline in full evolution, drafted the first conclusions of their exchanges. The first fundamental points were based on an ethics of the practice of the trail-running with the objective of federating the players.

The comprehensive texts are posted on the ITRA web-site:
<http://www.trail-running-association.org/focus-groups/>

• A definition of trail-running: above all « an open country race »

At the end of long discussions where the diversity of points of view of the different countries were expressed, all the members of the working group formed a definition of trail-running and its categories. The Trail-running is defined as a running race, open to everybody, in a natural environment (mountains, desert, forest, on the plain...). Ideally but not necessarily, it takes place on a minimum of tarred roads (20% of the race) and in semi or total autonomy. It must be correctly way-marked and organised respecting the rules of sport: ethics, loyalty, solidarity and conservation of the environment.

A classification of trail-running races is given:

- Less than 42 kilometres: Trail
- Above 42 kilometres: Trail Ultra
 - Trail Ultra Medium (M): 42 km to 69 km
 - Trail Ultra Long (L): 70 km to 99 km
 - Trail Ultra XLong (XL): superior or equal to 100 km

• An ethical charter based on simple and powerful rules

This group is committed to forming the values common to all the players of a same discipline. On no account is this a call to uniformity, this charter leaves everybody the freedom to express their attachment to the spirit of trail-running in agreement with their culture and their sensibilities and it proposes:

« Surpassing oneself and investigating one's physical and mental abilities in contact with a beautiful and sometimes rough nature.

The pleasure of running, without necessarily focussing on the search for performance, even if this does not prevent one being proud of one's final position.

To share one's passion and emotions with runners and volunteers.

To experience the pride of being a finisher.

Mutual aid to finish, and to share the emotion of crossing the finish line together at the end of several hours of effort.

Sharing a great moment of conviviality with all the players of an event.

Feeling united...

To hear the great champions' testimonies of respect for the performances of the anonymous runners... »

This charter identifies five fundamental values which are authenticity, humility, fair-play, equity and respect: it specifies their sense in the context of trail-running and the rules which ensue from them for all the players.

• **A balanced relationship to be protected for the Management of the top athletes**

This group worked on the framework of the relationship between organisers, high level athletes and equipment manufacturers regarding commitment premiums, payment of expenses, podium premiums and their parity and the services offered to the runners. If trail-running attracts an increasingly important economy, it defends a spirit of humility, fraternity and equity, an ethic far from the excesses seen in certain sports, which must be maintained. So, even if the debate is still open, a number of recommendations were developed and proposed:

- The race revenue must in priority be invested in the improvement of the race organisation from the point of view of security and first-aid/rescue, the routes and way-marking, refreshments...

Additional funds have to allow for the development of other services connected to communication and possibly to assigning a budget to the reception of and rewarding the best runners.

- Commitment premiums met with opposition from the members of this group.

- The wish, was aired, to limit the podium premiums and the bearing of travel and lodging costs to 10% of the registration budget without exceeding the sum of 15 000 €. It does not however seem possible to propose such a rule because, due to its character, it is difficult to control.

- On the other hand the group is in agreement on the strict respect of parity of the amount of the premiums men/women while admitting that a different number of men and women may be rewarded according to their relative representation in the race.

- It is proposed that the agreement of a premium is correlated to performance and is given to the athletes having a difference in time less than 10 % of that of the winner.

- In the assistance zones, the conditions must be the same for all, elite and non-elite.

- As for authorisation of « pacers* », it is left to the decision of the organisers depending on their culture and particular difficulties of the terrain, notably if this helps to improve security.

* *Person who accompanies the runner on part of the race.*

• **Common interior rules for better health policy and anti-doping fight**

With the objective of proposing a «Health Policy» for the main part to guarantee the good physical health of the participants in trail-running events, the members of this group suggest to event organisers who are members of the ITRA, an interior regulation of twelve points which, in the view of transparency in the transmission of information, has the ambition of reinforcing the existent medical supervision.

This text plans, on behalf of the organisers, the commitment to inform the participants about the current national and international regulations regarding health matters and regarding the anti-doping fight, to establish a medical Counsel and to make it compulsory for the competitors to declare, to the medical Counsel, all prescriptions which are subject to a TUE* and to agree to accept to give any urinary, blood or capillary samples and associated analyses requested by the medical counsel. The latter can summon an athlete to discuss with them their ability, or not, to participate in the competition, and may after the interview, propose that the race jury exclude them from the competition.

One point suggests the creation of a personal page for runners who are referenced by the ITRA where they invited to post their TUEs and analysis results

The ITRA makes a commitment to put at organisers' disposal the technical assistance and the necessary know-how to apply this regulation, with financial coverage.

* *Therapeutic usage exemption.*

• An international ITRA ranking in trial phase

It will not be until the International Trail-Running Association and its board are formed, that a commission responsible for international ranking is created to define the precise rules. In the mean time, the working group has compiled an annual international ranking based, at present, on more than 2 500 races and around 300 000 runners world-wide. In the internal trial phase, this ranking has been established for each of the 4 categories defined (Trail, Trail Ultra M, L, XL) and is available by gender and/or country.

The principal of the ranking

A calculation of points for each race is established according to time taken compared with the distance and to the height gain, with the possibility of a coefficient for difficulty.

This calculation Time-Distance-Height gain, called Maximum Theoretic Performance (MTP), has a maximal value of 1000 points.

According to their results the runner will be attributed a proportion of the 1000. So their best results of the year are retained and added, for each of the trail categories, and give a championship style ranking.

For each runner, a performance index is also calculated from the results of their best 5 races, by category or all distances together, with the results of the current year and the two previous years. In the case where there are not a sufficient number of races, a statistical calculation is then made from the known results to estimate their value.

This performance index reflects the value of a runner over the last 36 months and it has already been published.

• The next stage: creation of the International Trail-Running Association

The International Trail-Running Association is at present pursuing the study and the establishment of its statutes and will be officially created by the end of July.

Open to all players in the field of trail-running it aims:

- to develop and promote trail-running as a complete sport, accessible to all;
- to promote its sporting ethic;
- to represent its members at an international level;
- to maintain constructive relationships and to collaborate with national trail-running associations, and national and international federations;
- to promote the organisation of continental or world trail-running championships;
- to contribute to the improvement of security and the health of the participants.

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