



Press release
June, 19th 2015

Electing ITRA's steering committee Panel discussion with trail-running actors

Recently, there have been important news in the world of trail-running; notably the IAU World Championships, in Annecy at the end of May, it is more than ever important to debate and exchange. ITRA continues going forward with the constant goal of bringing together all those that wish to participate in trail-running's development.

◇ Electing ITRA's new steering committee

The election took place from the 5th to the 10th of June 2015.

For the next two years, the members of the steering committee are:

- **President:** Michel Poletti (FR)
- **Vice-Presidents:**
 - José Santos (POR)
 - Enrico Polini (IT)
 - Nic Bornman (ZAF)
 - Pierre Sallet (FR)
- **Secretary :** Paco Rico (ES)
- **Treasurer :** Janet NG (HKG)

◇ French panel discussion on the 11th of June

Following the joint initiative of ITRA and athletes François D'Haene, Thomas Lorblanchet and Nathalie Mauclair (whom represents runners in ITRA) a meeting was convened on the 11th of June. It aimed to discuss French and international debates in the field of trail-running.

Were present elite and amateur athletes (17), organizers of big and small events (25), brands (3), the French Federation of Athletics, the French Association of Skyrunning and representatives from several media outlets. A total of 25 individuals participated in this meeting in Lyon.

The objective was to **identify the issues** specific to each group involved in this sport. Then, **work groups** will be organized at the French level. The groups will be tasked with presenting **proposals to ITRA's steering committee**.

Discussed themes:

- Defining trail-running

Practiced by millions worldwide, trail-running still does not have any official recognition. Since its creation, ITRA is collaborating towards solving this issue. It will be accomplished during the IAAF's upcoming congress in August 2015 in Beijing. Trail-running will become an official athletics discipline. Following the IAAF's request, ITRA has drafted article 252 of the IAAF's competition rules that will define trail-running.

This definition is the result of a collaborative effort between ITRA and a group of athletes. It presents this sport's keystones and will foster its visibility.

All expressed the will to respect and represent trail-running in all its diversity, in France and worldwide. In the USA, for example, the sport has existed for over thirty years and this country boasts the greatest number of runners; most races are either the repetition of a same loop or of a fixed distances (50 miles, 100 miles...). This may seem foreign in Europe but is common on the other side of the Atlantic...

The difficulty is to define trail-running precisely so that every actor may feel involved. All this will foster a better recognition of our sport.

- The role of athletics federations in the development of our sport

Race taxation and federal licenses

Recent discussions between representatives from the French Athletics Federation (FFA), race organizers and runners have raised issues. Will athletes have to register for a federal licence from the FFA? Will the race organizers have to register with the FFA? Will trail running events be taxed?

Michel Huertas, the FFA's vice-president for out of stadium races, declared that it is **inconceivable** to tax races. It is also inconceivable to oblige a runner to register for a federal licence or for a race organizer to be necessarily affiliated to the FFA.

What can the FFA bring to this booming discipline? The main issue is to understand the FFA's project for trail-running in terms of supervising the practice of children and the training of educators. Currently, trail-running is recognized by the federal technical director. Clubs are being creating in most leagues. An important effort is needed to understand the specificities of this sport; especially the injuries particular to this sport. The federal commission for out of stadium races is working on it.

Review of the World Championships. What next?

Several world champions, including Thomas Lorblanchet (2009), Nathalie Mauclair (2013 et 2015) and Fabien Antolinos, participated as well as the organizers of the Tecnica MaXi-Race, home of the recent World Championships.

The main conclusion is that well organized World Championships that respect the values of this sport can bring important spotlight to it. Nevertheless they cannot impinge upon existing circuits. Biannual World Championships would allow other events to develop themselves during off years.

The last World Championships have demonstrated an important step forward.

- Remaining discussions

Many themes included in the agenda have not been discussed due to a lack of time: race prizes, management of elite athletes, the role of club teams and brands, compulsory equipment, doping, self-sufficiency, trail-running ethics, race evaluation, race bib costs.

Work groups will be created. They will reflect and discuss on these topics and present propositions. These will be upheld at an international level by ITRA.

All those involved in trail-running and interested in participating in these discussions can contact ITRA.

More information: <http://i-tra.org>

CONTACTS

International Trail-Running-Association — Michel Poletti

+33 6 08 02 94 68 — contact@i-tra.org

RELATIONS PRESSE

INFOCÎMES — Anne Gery

+33 (0) 4 50 47 24 61 ou +33 (0) 6 12 03 68 95

annegery@infocimes.com