



The Rambler Sept /Oct - 2006

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the second edition of the Rambler since Nijmegen 2006.

1. BDWF In House

Later in the Rambler you'll note the outcome of the various committee's that have looked into the apparent failings of the 2006 Vierdaagse which identified the key component of the 4 Days Walk - the participant.

Within the BDWF we have dedicated people that do the training, talk the talk & then walk the walk. This we have always been impressed with as well as the support from fellow BDWF walkers if ever one of the other members needs it. This will always be stressed to our members on training walks and through the Rambler because we invariably all need support at some time.

Membership application forms will be issued in November.

As instructed by the KNBLO, we have applied for reimbursement of the payments made for Nijmegen 2006 walking certificates but have not received any response as yet.

In accordance with our Constitution & Rules the committee posts are elected for a maximum of three years. As such, the posts of Group Secretary, Youth Secretary and Events Coordinator will be up for election at Nijmegen 2007. Current members may seek re-election.

Additionally, the 'Nijmegen Events Manager' function has been devolved from the Group Secretary's post to a separate role for the duration of that specific responsibility. This means that this non-walker role can now be filled by anyone seconded into the role for the event itself. It also follows that the Group Secretary may now compete in the Vierdaagse.

Details regarding the responsibilities and application process for all these posts/role will follow in the next issue of the Rambler.

We'll be updating the web site over the next few weeks, so the committee and Marcus will be pleased to receive any constructive comments/suggestions.

Whilst talking about web sites, the KNBLO web site has been the major source of feedback of the Vierdaagse cancellation and the proposed action for the 2007 event (see later).



The Airborne March in Holland was undertaken by several members. Any reports or photographs would be gratefully received to go into the next Rambler or onto our group web site.

We want to encourage, but not enforce, the charitable side of the event like we used to. We are more than aware of increased personal costs etc since the sponsorship support was removed so there's no way anything would be mandated. However, we'll be more than happy to deal with this aspect by way of putting together sponsorship forms etc All we would ask in return for any assistance given is that you let us know the amount raised and the charity supported.

2. KNBLO Feedback

Nijmegen 2006

The Investigating Committee agreed the initial investigation report which made interesting reading (88 pages). It also identified that the responsibility of the individual is the ultimate decision and has always been seen so.

At the same time, the Four Days Marches Board also had its own investigation and arrived at measures in line with the recommendations of the Investigating Committee:

To work towards a safer organisation of the International Four Days Marches in Nijmegen, the organisation has already taken some measures which coincide with the recommendations of the investigation committee that was led by Mr Loek Hermans.

The report, written by the independent and external Hermans Committee upon the request of the Board of the Four Days Marches, shows that the Four Days Marches Board cannot be held responsible for the incidents on the first day of the 90th Four Days Marches in July of this year. On that day, which was very hot, a significant number of walkers got into trouble due to a combination of factors, and needed medical help. The Four Days Marches were cancelled.

In a first reaction to the publication of the report of the Hermans Committee, General Manager Wim Jansen of Stichting DE 4DAAGSE announced six measures that will help to prevent repetition of the incidents of July 18th.

These measures are based upon the evaluation held by the organisation itself, and coincide with the 12 recommendations for safer organisation formulated by Committee Hermans.



Measure 1. Professional meteorologist

In the future the Four Days Marches will cooperate with a professional meteorological institute, for which contacts have already been established. Next to that, a professional meteorologist will become part of the Executive Committee of the Four Days Marches.

Measure 2. Wider Representative Team

A broad team will be formed that will advise the Four Days Marches Board on a daily basis during and before the event about possible extra measures. It is still to be determined which disciplines will be represented on this team.

Measure 3. Change of routes

For difficult parts in the routes of the Four Days Marches, alternatives will be sought e.g. the Oosterhoutsedijk". According to the General Manager - "We have looked at this part of the route before, but until now there were no suitable alternatives. However, with the further development of the 'Waalprong' there might be other possibilities in the near future."

Measure 4. Refreshment points

More refreshment points will be arranged, next to the official rest areas and other facilities. The refreshment points, where walkers can get tap water for example, will be situated on vulnerable parts of the routes and will, next to the other rest areas, be indicated on the route maps.

Measure 5. Route stewards

Starting in 2007, route stewards will be positioned on vulnerable parts of the routes. These teams that can be brought into action quickly and flexibly, will have a key role in providing information to the walker on difficult parts of the route. "Also we will start to make use of screens or illuminated signs to be better able to reach walkers during the walking day", announced general manager Wim Jansen.

Measure 6. Shorten the 30km distance

The possibilities of shortening the distances when facing extreme weather circumstances will be expanded. While shortening was previously only possible for the 40km and 50km distances (50 becomes 40, 40 becomes 30), for the 30km distance a shorter version will be developed as well. Whilst it is technically impossible to find a 20km alternative for each day, the alternative for the 30km distance will consist of a combination between shortening the distance and starting earlier.



3. Members Feedback

As a matter of interest, since leaving Nijmegen Ron Richardson has covered some 7856 miles and many countries to both enjoy a holiday and participate in many long distance walks - you'd think he'd be fit by now !!

4. Miscellaneous

DON THOMPSON R.I.P. 1933-2006

The death is reported of Don Thompson MBE, at the age of 73, in Frimley Park Hospital after suffering an aneurysm while out training.

He will be forever remembered for winning the Gold Medal at the 1960 50km, Rome Olympic Games - and of course for his unique training methods prior to this race! He was Centurion No.631. His record set for the London to Brighton walk of 52 miles in 7hrs 35 min 29 sec will remain in history.

Look out for the next copy of the Rambler.

Bob Gutteridge. Events Co-ordinator. BDWF