

2023 was a Transformative year for the Adventure Racing World Series

The global adventure racing platform generated rapid growth, innovation and deeper engagement with the adventure racing community all over the world

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- On January 23rd 2023 it was announced the ARWS was under new ownership, with acting CEO Heidi Muller and a group of US investors buying out Geocentric Outdoors.

The move was announced as a 'New Era for the ARWS' and in the remaining

11 months of the year the global racing platform generated rapid growth, innovation and deeper engagement with the adventure racing community all over the world.

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The support of the ARWS community is most important to me. They inspire me and will ensure the ARWS can build on all we've achieved together in the past year.”

Heidi Muller. CEO ARWS

The 2023 Adventure Racing World Series comprised 64 races in 28 different countries, and of these 39 were new races to the series. Some were entirely new events, others well established, and a few were revived after years of inactivity, all motivated to join the re-energized ARWS.

All of the races were featured on the redesigned website, with extensive information on each event, Race Director profiles, regular news updates and links to live tracking for every race.

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The majority of the races added to the series were in the newly launched ARWS North America Series, which, with 23 races, became the biggest ARWS regional series in its first year. The addition of North America (Mexico, Canada and USA) completed the line up of ARWS Regional Series around the world.



International teams at the 2023 Adventure Racing World Series in South Africa

The ARWS Regions are; Europe, North America and South America, Asia, Africa and Oceania. Regional races are in the 12-36 hour range and offer the opportunity of accessible, weekend racing and a pathway towards expedition racing and competing in ARWS Qualifiers and World Championships.

Each region has its own ranking and a Championship race where the winners claim a free place at the AR World Championship as regional champions. In 2023 there were 51 ARWS regional races, with the race calendar in every region growing and the first ever Asian Adventure Racing Championship took place in the Philippines (pictured).

There were 12 ARWS Qualifiers and Demonstration races (expedition length races from 400km distance upwards and 3-10 days in duration) in 2023, and the culmination of the series was the first ever AR World Championship to be held in Africa.

ARWS expedition length races last year took place in diverse and spectacular locations in America, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, Faroe Islands, Mexico, Paraguay, Poland and South Africa. (There were 4 Demonstration Races, a category designed to assess and develop events to ARWS Qualifier standards.)

Another new initiative for 2023 was the inclusion of a stage race in the ARWS for the first time. The Raid International Temiscamingue in



ARWS CEO Heidi Muller launches the first International Adventure Racing Conference



Teams gather for the first ARWS Asia Championship in the Philippines



The flag parade at the 2023 Adventure Racing World Championship

Canada, which has stages over 3 days with overnight stops between, joined the North America Series and will lead the way to establishing a stage race category in ARWS. (There are 3 stage races in the 2024 calendar already, with more planned.)



Adventure Racing World Series Logo

The biggest race of the year was the AR World Championship, staged by Expedition Africa. 108 teams from 30 nations travelled to Cape St. Francis to race an epic course through the coastal sand dunes, desert plateau and mountain ranges of the Kouga region of the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

The new World Champions were the Swedish Armed Forces Adventure Team (SAFAT), taking the title for a second time after their win in Spain in 2021. After a thrilling and competitive race there were 8 different nationalities in the top 10 and the final teams reached the finish line after more than 9 days of non-stop racing.

The race coverage was watched by an online audience of millions around the world, on all major social media channels. It featured in many national publications and TV channels and full length documentaries in several languages are still to be screened.

In another innovation the event also hosted the first ever International Adventure Racing Conference (IARC) and speakers included the most experienced referees, racers and race directors in adventure racing. The conference was streamed live and is available on the ARWS YouTube channel, and the second IARC will take place at the 2024 AR World Championship in Ecuador. (www.internationalarconference.com)

ARWS CEO Heidi Muller was also a Race Director of the World Championship (with Stephan Muller) and the race lead by example in the service and support it provided to teams, course design and logistics, the active involvement of event sponsors such as Merrell, media support for all teams and live race coverage.

Reflecting on a whirlwind year Muller said, “2023 was a breakthrough year for the ARWS and we will continue to build on that success, strive for excellence and improve in 2024.

“Achieving our dream of bringing an AR World Championship to South Africa was a personal highlight for me and I’m grateful that as ARWS CEO I have the opportunity to promote our wonderful sport around the world.

“The strength of the ARWS isn’t just measured by the number of races; it’s the support of the community which is most important. I’m in constant touch with racers and Race Directors, referees, sponsors and partners, medics and media, and it is their passion for adventure racing which inspires me and will ensure the ARWS can build on all we’ve achieved together in the past

year. We've laid the foundation and there is much more to come. The ARWS has an exciting future ahead!"

About the Adventure Racing World Series

The Adventure Racing World Series (ARWS) is a global platform uniting professional adventure races in iconic locations to serve a worldwide community of adventurers and endurance athletes. The series included 64 events in 2023.

A different race hosts the AR World Championship each year and the series consists of Qualifier, Regional and Stage races. Qualifiers are non-stop expedition length races of 3-10 days for mixed gender teams of 4, and race winners receive a place in the World Championship.

Regional races in Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa and Oceania are in the 12-36 hour range and offer the opportunity of accessible, weekend racing and a pathway towards expedition racing and competing in ARWS Qualifiers and World Championships. Stage races are new for 2023 and are multiday day events with overnight camps.

Teams competing in Qualifiers are listed in the ARWS World Rankings and each region also has its own ranking.

The ARWS CEO is South African Businesswoman Heidi Muller, who is also Race Director of Expedition Africa. The Adventure World Series was established in 2001 and is a company registered in Bentonville, Arkansas, USA.

More information is on the ARWS website; www.arworldseries.com

Follow the ARWS on all major social media platforms @arworldseries

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