

2025 MRA RACE DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

BRETT LAMOUREUX

Brett Lamoureux began volunteering with the Íslendingadagurinn - Icelandic Festival of Manitoba running races in 2018 and became the Race Director the following year.

Faced with declining participation and an unsustainable financial situation in the 50-year-old 10-mile race, Brett brought forth a new vision centering around incentives for participants with the addition of a 5K race, finisher medals and offering a shuttle for 10-mile runners.

Invaluable connections were made with dedicated local race committee members, community sponsors, a real Interlake pancake breakfast, and additional elements of Icelandic heritage were integrated. Efforts to make the race more accessible and engaging sparked renewed interest during the virtual running years of the Covid-19 pandemic and set conditions for incremental growth in future years.

Over the last two years Brett was one of co-creators of the Interlake Run Series, a 4-race points series that encourages participants to run the province's lesser travelled lake district.

Inspired by a pragmatic Icelandic mindset of seeking out and adopting best practices, Brett and the Icelandic Festival Running Race Committee execute race day logistics as a form of customer service. The Running Race Committee delivers a smooth experience that prioritizes clear safety protocols and timely communication, even while enduring flash flooding, extreme heat, forest fire smoke, and a recent influx of new runners. Many positive, sensible changes have been adopted from feedback and suggestions from participants and volunteers.

With gratitude to his maternal grandparents, Brett attributes his success to the running race committee; Michelle, Armand, Shawn, the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba staff and board of directors and especially his wife Meghan. Dwayne Olson's mentorship and coordination played a key role in the renewed interest in the races.

The success and longevity of the Iceland Festival Running Races speak to the determination, perseverance and dedication of many volunteers and runners as well as the powerful human need of connecting to community.