

# Obstacle racing losing its electrified challenges

By Erin Beresini, Outside

Swedish obstacle series Tough Viking is doing away with electrified obstacles in 2016, OCR Europe reports. The move puts it among a handful of events axing electricity as the industry chucks its original selling points of shock value and mental games in a sad but necessary drive for longevity.

Savage Race did away with its electric obstacle Tazed N Blazed in 2014. Tough Mudder, whose brand was arguably built on YouTube videos and articles about Electroshock Therapy, a giant trellis of dangling wires juiced with “10,000 volts of electricity,” (runners have to run through or under this to pass) announced in November 2015 that its new event, the Tough Mudder Half, won’t have any electric obstacles. In the meantime, the original Tough Mudder has also phased out Electric Eel, a stomach crawl under live wires.

Part of the issue with electricity is legal, to be sure. A 2013 study highlighted one Tough Mudder participant who received 13 shocks running through Electroshock Therapy. Also, “Electroshock Therapy’s had a lot of bad press,” says Margaret Schlachter, editor in chief of OCR news site Mud Run Guide. Not just for Tough Mudder, but for the industry in general, whose diverse events often get lumped together as crazy obstacle races who electrocute people.

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