

An SIA Group team joined 500 other runners from 30 airlines in the 27th World Airline Road Race (WARR) in Ottawa, Canada on Sep 6. First-time WARRior, Karen Loh from International Relations shares the experience.

It was a 33-hour journey from Singapore to Ottawa in flight and transit. If only aviation technology could make the world even smaller than it already has become.

Still, the journey was well worth it. As team captain, I was leading a highly spirited contingent of 12 runners to the Canadian capital from Sep 3-6 to participate in what is undoubtedly the largest international athletic event in the travel industry.

Our high-power cast would again take up the challenge to do SIA proud, with I being the only first-timer among the seasoned lot.

In the various networking opportunities, I came across airline athletes from all over the globe.

What made this gathering extraordinary was not only the shared professional dedication to make the

WORLD AIRLINE ROAD RACE

Memories of a one-year-old



and shoes. As shorts and shoes, inconveniently below eye level, are not very entertaining, shirts tend to take on the greatest significance.

T-shirt swap party

So came along one of WARR's most memorable events, the T-shirt swap party. The gathering was remi-

this year that she followed our team around despite not having something we wanted in return.

Race day saw strong winds and clammily cold and persistent rain, but these were hardly enough to dampen our fiery spirits.

Everyone started out huddling for shelter and warmth under the



Ghana receiving the International Trophy — Pacific Rim on behalf of the SIA Group team. He also received an award for supporting WARR over 25 years.

Karen (squatting, right) and other team members taking shelter under the Laurier Bridge from strong winds and rain.

puddles on the ground to whip up clouds of steam. Soon enough, the cold had become energising, the rain, hydrating.

Remarkable timings

Our overall results were stellar. We charged like true WARRiors through to the finish line of the

place in the Men's Masters category (40 years or above). As if that were not enough, SIA also took home the International Trophy — Pacific Rim, which considers distance travelled by the teams to the race city and the number of team members.

To top it all, at the closing ceremony, Ghana was awarded for his support for WARR in all the 25 years SIA has participated in the event since 1984.

No doubt, WARR has remained true to its original goals, one of which is to foster new friendships and networking among the world's airlines.

Competitors by day become friends by night, with the cross-cultural friendships transcending time and distance in ways inconceivable years ago — such as through social networking websites or plain "old" email.

As a first-timer on the WARR time scale, I may have existed just for a brief moment, but the event has opened up to me some substantial opportunities and experiences that others may not have had before.