



November 2013

Dear IOF FootO Event Adviser

This is a short newsletter to all IOF FootO Event Advisers.

Rule changes

A new version of the IOF FootO rules has been published recently, valid from 1 January 2014.

As usual, the significant changes are marked with a vertical line in the left margin and are listed at the end.

The new programme for the World Championships is the reason for many of the changes. The Middle and Long Distance competitions will no longer have qualification races. They will be single race competitions and the number of competitors per Federation who may enter is limited and is based on results from the previous two World Championships. The exact qualification requirements will be published separately as Special Rules.

The other major innovation at the World Championships is the Sprint Relay competition. This is for teams of four, two of whom must be women. The new rules contain a description of this format in Appendix 6.

A further change for WOC is that there is now no limit on the overall team size.

For the Junior World Championships, the Relay winning times have been lengthened so that they are the same as for the World Championships.

Despite their short length and compact competition area, sprint races can be more challenging for the organiser than traditional forest races. One question that arises is how to measure the minimum distance between controls in urban areas (Rule 19.4 and Appendix 2 3.5.5). With a 1:5000 (or 1:4000) map, the minimum separation is 15 metres or 30 metres for controls on similar features. We have now clarified that the distance shall be measured in a straight line (“as the crow flies”); **not** around the corners of buildings or around uncrossable features.

We have discussed the problem that arises (again particularly in urban areas) when a leg is unfair, perhaps because the map does not fully reflect the situation on the ground. For example, the map might show an impassable wall, but unexpectedly a door has been left open. We have had some discussion about whether in some cases, it might be more appropriate to give a time penalty to competitors who inadvertently gain an unfair advantage in such cases, rather than disqualifying them. At the moment we have decided not to put this option into the rules but we will keep it under review.

We continue to believe that legs must not be removed from a course to try to deal with problems with a control or a leg. Removing legs can create as much unfairness as the

original problem. However, we have clarified Rule 24.15 to allow a leg to be removed where it has been specified in advance – for example a short section containing a busy road crossing.

In recent years, there have been high-profile cases in other sports of corrupt practices in relation to betting. The International Olympic Committee would like all sports to make it clear that such practices are unacceptable. Note that betting by the public on orienteering results is not banned; in fact that is one way of increasing public interest in the sport. But the new rule 26.14 makes it clear that competitors and officials in an event must not participate in betting relating to that event. Additionally, they must not participate in any corrupt practices related to betting.

Unfortunately the cost of posting new rules to IOF Event Advisers has become unaffordable. We know that some people prefer in any case to use an electronic version. The rules web page now has a version which will print out as an A5 booklet, so please do print off your own copy if you wish!

WOC 2013

Finland organised a great World Championships at Vuokatti and Henning Spjelkavik did an excellent job as SEA. There were over 9000 competitors in the associated Kainuu Orienteering Week and 6000 spectators at the Sprint Final.

The jury had only one protest to consider and that was in the Sprint Qualification race. A runner jumped over an “uncrossable” fence and then (realising his error) jumped back again. The organiser disqualified the runner. He subsequently complained and then protested on the grounds that he had not gained any advantage from his error and had done his best to reverse it. The jury agreed and upheld his protest so he was reinstated.

In both Sprint races, there were a number of fences that had been erected especially for the event in order to make the courses more interesting. Their presence turned, what was rather simple urban terrain, into much more challenging areas.

I suspect that in future we will see such artificial fences used quite frequently. But they should be high enough for the runners to recognise that they are not to be crossed!

Event Adviser Clinics

This year, successful Event Adviser clinics have been held in Cape Town in South Africa, Masterton in New Zealand, Boden in Sweden and Sestriere in Italy.

In 2014, we are planning to hold clinics in Tallin, **Estonia** on 22-23 March, in Zermatt, **Switzerland** on 23 July (the rest day of the Swiss O-Week) and in **Canada**.

On 1-2 February 2014 there will be a High Level Event Seminar (HLES) in Gothenburg, Sweden. This seminar targets appointed IOF major event organisers, potential future organisers and appointed IOF Senior Event Advisers. There will be two parallel sessions with themes “*WOC 2013 experiences, IT - a cornerstone in today's events*” and “*Organising a World Masters Orienteering Championships*”.

World Ranking Events

The IOF has recently announced some changes to the World Ranking System. From 2014 onwards there will be two separate World Ranking (WR) lists for foot orienteering. One for middle/long type events to be known as the *Orienteering World Ranking List* and a second for sprint type WR events to be known as the *Sprint Orienteering World Ranking List*.

Each member Federation may conduct up to 3 middle/long style World Ranking Events and 3 sprint World Ranking Events over a calendar year in addition to the hosting of any high level IOF Events. Of course that will almost double the opportunity for IOF Event Adviser work.

Electronic Punching Systems

Two new punching systems have recently been given "Provisional Approval" which means that they may now be used at World Ranking Events. Provisional approval will last for two years and can be converted to permanent approval when the system has been used successfully at a minimum of four World Ranking Events.

The two systems are the Emit touch-free punching system (Version 2013 onwards) and the SPORTident Air+ system.

These two systems both allow "punching" at a short distance from the control station, and are expected to be helpful for formats such as the new Sprint Relay where a large number of athletes might arrive at a control together.

Thanks for the Event Advising work you have done in the past year and good luck with your future projects.

David Rosen, Chair IOF Rules Commission