COMPETITION RULES MOUNTAIN BIKE ORIENTEERING

Valid from 16 September 2024

ORIENTEERING
AUSTRALIA

Table of Contents

Preamble

These rules are for ~~the~~ Australian National and State Association Mountain Bike Orienteering (MTBO) Championships.

Valid from 16 September 2024

Note that events conducted in Australia under the auspices of the International Orienteering Federation (e.g., World Ranking Events) are covered by the *Competition Rules for International Orienteering Federation (IOF) Mountain Bike Orienteering (MTBO) Events*.

The Australian rules are binding on event organisers of and competitors in MTBO National and State Championship events held in Australia and are used as a model for MTBO events of lower status.

* Indicates a change of clause compared to the previous edition of the rules.

1 Definitions

1.1 **Mountain Bike Orienteering (MTBO)** is a sport in which the competitors, using cycles, navigate independently through the terrain. Competitors must visit a number of control points marked on the ground in the shortest possible time aided only by map and compass. The course, defined by the location of the controls, is not revealed to competitors until they start. Mountain biking and navigational skills must be tested in such a way that navigational skill is the decisive element. The course must be completed by the cyclist riding, carrying, or pushing their mountain bike. Riding off the track or trails is allowed only in areas shown on the map by the appropriate symbols.

1.2 In **individual interval start races** the competitors navigate and cycle through the terrain independently.

1.3 In **mass start and chasing start races** competitors may often be cycling in close proximity to each other, but the formats still demand independent navigation.

1.4 The term **competitor** means an individual of either gender or a group of individuals, as appropriate.

1.5 Types of MTBO competition may be distinguished by:

*
- The nature of the competition:
  - *Individual* - the competitors navigate and cycle through the terrain independently
  - *Relay* - two or more team members complete consecutive individual races
  - *Team* - two or more individuals collaborate.
- The way of determining the competition result:
  - *Single race competition -t*he result of one single race is the final result
  - *Multi-race competition* - the combined results of two or more races, held during one day or several days, form the final result.
  - *Qualification race competition* - the competitors qualify for a final race through one or more qualification races in which they may be allocated to different heats. The competition's result is that of the final only. There may be A and B finals and

so on, with the placed competitors of the B final placed after the placed competitors of the A final and so on.

- The order in which the controls are to be visited:
  - *In a specific order* - the sequence is prescribed (traditionally 1 then 2 then 3, etc).
  - *Free Order* - all controls must be visited but in no specific order (the competitor is free to choose the order).
  - *Score:* controls are allocated values (the competitor is free to choose the order, and which controls they visit, within a specified time limit).
- The length of the race:
  - long distance
  - middle distance
  - sprint distance
  - other distances as approved by OA MTBO Commission
- The starting method for the race
  - An **interval start** (the race is a time trial; the competitor with the fastest time is the winner).
  - A **mass start** (the competitors start together; the first across the finish line is the winner).

  A **chasing start** (the competitors start at intervals depending on results from previous race(s): the first across the finish line is the winner).

✱ 1.6 The term **State Association** means a full Member/Territory Association of Orienteering Australia. The term State refers to both a 'State' and a 'Territory' of the Commonwealth of Australia.

1.7 The term **event** embraces all aspects of an orienteering meeting including organisational matters such as start draws, meetings and ceremonies. An event, e.g., the Australian Championships, may include more than one competition.

2 General Provisions

2.1 These rules, together with the Appendices, are binding at all Australian National and State Championship events and at such other events as determined by the MTBO Commission, subject to the provisions of rule 2.10.

2.2 These rules are recommended as a basis for State Association rules.

2.3 Additional regulations which do not conflict with these rules may be determined by the event organiser. They need the approval of the OA Controller.

2.4 If not otherwise mentioned, these rules are valid for individual day orienteering competitions on any pedal-powered cycle. Any bike type can be used, provided it's suitable for the conditions, surfaces and terrain of the event area, subject to rule 21.2.

2.5 These rules are binding for all competitors, team officials and other persons connected with the organisation or in contact with the competitors. Any additional regulations must be published in the final event bulletin.

2.6 The conduct of IOF events – the Senior and Junior World Championships in MTBO, the World Cup in MTBO, or the World Masters Orienteering Championships (WMOC) and IOF World Ranking Events (WRE) in MTBO– will be in accordance with the *Competition Rules for IOF Mountain Bike Orienteering Events*. Where WRE races are held in conjunction with, or as part of, another Australian event, the *IOF Competition Rules* shall take precedence where any contradiction with these rules occurs.

2.7 Sporting fairness will be the guiding principle in the interpretation of these rules by competitors, event organisers and the jury.

2.8 In relays the rules for individual competitions are valid, unless otherwise stated.

✱ 2.9 The Orienteering Australia Board may decide special rules or norms which must be followed e.g., *Orienteering Australia Anti-Doping Rules, International Specifications for MTB Orienteering Maps, and Australian mapping protocols*.

2.10 Deviations from these rules and guidelines may be allowed. Requests for permission to deviate from them for Australian Championship events and State Championship events must be made in writing at least 4 months prior to the event where practical to the Orienteering Australia MTBO Commission chair.

Any deviations from the published map specifications need approval as set out in rule 15.1.

For other events such deviations should be approved by the relevant Technical Officer of the State Association.

Any variation to the regulations must be advertised in advance of the event.

2.11 Orienteering Australia may amend these rules from time to time in accordance with its constitutional procedures. Such amendment will normally be made on the recommendation of the OA Technical Committee in conjunction with the MTBO Commission.

3 Event Program

3.1 Australian Championships will be conducted annually with Long Distance, Middle Distance and Sprint Distance competitions. A Mass Start competition and/or Relay may be added.

3.2 Responsibility for the conduct of each of the Australian Championships will be allocated to State Associations by the Orienteering Australia MTBO Commission events coordinator then ratified by OA Events Committee. Dates for State Championships should be agreed in conjunction with the OA MTBO Commission to avoid clashes and maximise the possibility of interstate attendance.

✱ 3.3 A National MTBO Series will be conducted each year comprising the Australian Championships event and any State Championships event with 3 2 or more races (sprint distance, middle distance, and long distance, with optional mass start and relay). The OA MTBO Commission will decide the events to be included. The Individual age-group competition will take place in M/W14, M/W16, M/W20, M/W21, M/W40, M/W50, M/W60, M/W70 and M/W80, and additional age groups at the discretion of the MTBO

Commission. For each age division, the number of results to count in the individual age-group competition will be determined by the MTBO commission 1 month before the first event, but will usually be in the range 5-7. There is no limit to the number of state competitors who may enter and score points. State teams of at least one rider in any division score points in a team national competition.

4   Event Applications

∗   4.1   The event dates and program for the Australian Championships are proposed by the event organiser and approved by the Orienteering Australia Board.

4.2   Orienteering Australia may impose a levy on any Orienteering Australia event in accordance with its constitution.

4.3   Orienteering Australia can void the sanctioning of an event if the organiser fails to comply with the rules, the norms, or the Orienteering Australia Event Controller's directions. The organiser cannot claim damages in this case.

5   Classes

5.1   Competitors are divided into classes according to sex, age, course length and degree of difficulty. Women may compete in men's classes.

5.2   Competitors aged 20 or younger belong to each class up to the end of the calendar year in which they reach the given age. They are entitled to compete in older classes up to and including 21.

∗   5.3   Competitors aged 21 or older belong to each class from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the given age. They are entitled to compete in younger classes down to and including 21.

5.4   The main competition classes are called W21 and M21, for women and men respectively. Women may enter a Men's class.

5.5   The following classes must be offered for the Australian Championships and State Championships: M/W14, M/W16, M/W20, M/W21, M/W40, M/W50, M/W60 and M/W70, The OA MTBO Commission may approve Championship status for additional 5-year age classes where demand exists.

5.6   Other classes may be offered: e.g., M80, W80, and non-championship classes as defined by the organiser e.g. M/W12.

5.7   All 'official' classes must be conducted provided there is at least one entrant. Other classes that have been offered must be conducted if there are at least 4 entries.

6   Participation

6.1   Competitors participate at their own risk. Insurance against accidents must be their responsibility.

6.2   The event organisers are entitled to refuse entries from persons whom they consider to be competing beyond their capabilities. A person whose entry has been refused must be notified immediately and offered an alternative course or refunded the entry fee.

6.3   To be eligible to compete officially for a state or club, or to be officially placed or win the National Series, a competitor must be a member of a relevant State Association or club and either:

- Australian citizen or
- Resident in, or intending to be resident in, Australia for a period of at least four months.

6.4   A competitor may represent only one State Association during any one calendar year for the purpose of the National Series.

7   Costs

7.1   The costs of organising an event are the responsibility of the organising body unless agreed otherwise by OA or the organising State Association. To cover the costs of the competition, the event organiser may charge an entry fee. This fee must be kept as low as possible and must be approved by the event Controller. Competitors in junior classes should be charged a reduced entry fee.

7.2   Each individual competitor is responsible for paying the entry fee as specified in the invitation. The time limit for paying the entry fee must not be earlier than 6 weeks prior to the event.

7.3   Late entries can be charged an additional fee. The amount of the additional fee must be approved by the event Controller.

7.4   All reasonable costs of the event Controller must be paid by the event organiser.

7.5   If the event (or part of the event) has to be cancelled, the organiser may retain a minimum proportion of the entry fee in order to cover committed costs.

8   Information about the Event

*

8.1   Event information (Bulletin 1) must be sent to all State Associations and be available via Australian Eventor, with a link to the organiser's website if applicable, three months prior to the event, and ideally linked to the MTBO Australia and the Orienteering Australia Facebook sites or other official social media. The invitation must include:

- The name of the Event organiser and the names of the event director and event Controller.
- Address, telephone number and email address for enquiries.
- Website address.

- Sponsors.
- Approximate venue.
- Dates.
- Classes offered.
- Punching system to be used.
- Entry procedure and fees.
- Latest date and address for entries.
- Suggestions for accommodation.
- Approximate course lengths and winning times.
- Description of terrain, climate, and any hazards.
- Embargoed areas (See rules 14.3 and 15.5).
- Information about how to obtain copies of any previous orienteering maps of the embargoed area(s).
- Opportunities for training.
- Other information of interest.

8.2 Event organisers must make available a program (Bulletin 2) to all entrants at least two weeks prior to the event.

The program must include:

- All information included in the invitation.
- Full details of venues and travel directions.
- Scale, contour interval of maps and any other relevant mapping information.
- Method of marking out of bounds areas and forbidden or marked routes.
- Start and finish procedures.
- Distances from parking to finish and start.
- Registration times, venue, and procedure.
- Facilities available (toilets, refreshments etc).
- Full start list for all classes (or as soon as possible after the closing date if "2 weeks prior" is not feasible).
- Any permitted deviations from the usual rules.
- The length, total climb, number of controls on each individual course and, for relays, on each leg.
- Jury members' names.
- Information of interest.

8.3 The information package received by competitors upon registering for an event shall include:

- The event program if they have not received it electronically.
- Any changes or amendments to information given in the invitation and/or the program.

9   Entries

9.1   Entries must be submitted according to the instructions given in the invitation. At least the following details must be supplied for each competitor: family name and first given name, SI card number if applicable, sex, year of birth, club, State Association, Federation (for international entrants only).

9.2   A competitor may only enter one class in any one competition.

9.3   Late entries may be refused.

9.4   The organiser may exclude competitors or teams from starting if their entry fee is not paid and no agreement has been reached about payment.

10   Travel and Transport

10.1   Each competitor is responsible for organising their own travel except where mandatory transport arrangements apply.

10.2   The use of official transport to a competition site may be declared mandatory by the organiser.

11   Training and Model Event

11.1   Training opportunities may be offered before the competition.

11.2   On the day prior to the first competition of an event, the organiser may arrange a model event to demonstrate the terrain type, map quality, control features and the set-up of the controls, refreshment points and marked routes.

11.3   If deemed appropriate by the Event Controller, the model event may be organised on the day of the competition prior to the first start.

12   Starting Order

12.1   In an interval start, the competitors on the same course start singly at equal start intervals except for spaces that may be left to accommodate late entries. (For courses with larger entries, it is desirable for all riders in the same class to start in the same block to maximise fairness to have similar conditions):

In a mass start competition, all competitors in a class start simultaneously.

In relays this applies only to the team members cycling the first leg.

In a chasing start, the competitors start singly at start times and intervals determined by their previous results.

12.2   The start draw must be approved by the event Controller. The start list must be published before the day of the competition. If a qualification race is organised on the same day as the finals, the start list of the finals must be published at least one hour before the first start.

12.3 For an interval start other than finals of qualification race competitions, the starting order must be drawn at random, except that:

- Competitors may be seeded on the basis of prior performance.
- Consideration may be given to requests from competitors for late or early start for child-minding purposes.
- • Unseeded competitors from the organising group may be allotted early start times outside the sequence, provided that the start time is within 90 minutes of the first normal start at the event. Such competitors must be timed with the same equipment as for the normal time starters.

12.4 For an interval start, the normal start interval is 2 minutes. 3 minutes may be used for long distance races and 1 minute may be used for sprint races. Refer to individual discipline guidelines.

✱ 12.5 If qualification races are to be held, refer to Section 12 in 2.1 Orienteering Competition Rules within the Orienteering Australia Operations Guide.

13 Reserved

This section is reserved to maintain rules section alignment with IOF rules.

14 Terrain

14.1 The terrain must be suitable for setting competitive MTBO courses. The area should contain a comprehensive network of roads and tracks of differing qualities. The objectives of the Leibnitz Convention (Appendix 5) must be considered when choosing the terrain and event arena and in designing the courses.

14.2 The competition terrain must not have been used for either foot orienteering or MTBO for as long as possible (with a 2 year minimum desirable for an Australian Championships) prior to the competition, so that no competitor has an unfair advantage.

14.3 The competition area for an Australian Championships (or higher-level event) must be embargoed as soon as it is decided. If that is not possible, then arrangements for access to the terrain must be published as soon as possible. For State Championship or equivalent events, the embargo should be in place at least three months prior to the event. Refer to Appendix 9.

14.4 Permission for access into embargoed terrain must be obtained from the event organiser if needed.

14.5 Any rights of nature conservation, forestry, native title, etc in the area should be respected.

15 Map

* 15.1 Maps, course markings and additional overprinting must be drawn and printed according to the current approved IOF International Specification for MTB Orienteering Maps 2022 Revision 3 April 2024 and apply the current IOF printing and colour Definitions.

Deviations from these standards need the approval of OA MTBO Commission.

15.2 Maps should be drawn specifically for MTBO at an appropriate scale, as detailed in Appendix 2 Competition Formats and Course setting.

15.3 Errors on the map and changes which have occurred in the terrain since the map was printed must be overprinted on the map or otherwise corrected if they have a bearing on the event.

15.4 Maps should be printed on water-resistant paper, or, at the Start, event organisers should offer plastic bags to competitors to enable them to protect their maps against moisture and damage.

15.5 If previous foot or MTBO orienteering maps of the competition area exists, high-resolution colour copies of the most recent editions must be made available for all competitors prior to the competition and may be displayed for all competitors at the competition venue. Competitors downloading maps must not use these for training if embargoes have been declared, and if training is permitted, they must comply with access restrictions.

15.6 On the day of the competition, the use of any map of the competition area by competitors or team officials is prohibited until permitted by the event organiser.

15.7 The competition map should be no larger than required by a competitor to complete the course. Maximum sizes are detailed in Appendix 2 Competition Formats and Course Setting.

15.8 On smaller event areas, second or third maps may be used to complete the course.

16 Courses

16.1 At least four courses will be set to cater for competitors in the Open Men (M21) and Open Women's (W21) classes, and for the range of age groups for junior and veteran competitors.

16.2   Courses should be planned for winning times (minutes) in the following ranges for the various age groups. Note, according to IOF practice, the times are the same for all age groups within 'Masters'.

	Long	Middle	Sprint	Mass Start	Relay (per leg)
M/W16 and under	70-75	32-37	15-20	60-68	30-35
M/W20	84-92	40-44	16-20	60-68	30-35
M/W21- Open	105-115	50-55	20-25	75-85	40-45
M/W35 and over	105-115	50-55	20-25	75-85	40-45

16.3   The standard of the courses must be worthy of a championship orienteering event. The navigational skill, concentration and cycling ability of the competitors must be tested. Courses must call upon a range of different MTBO techniques. Courses must require a high level of concentration throughout the competition, involving detailed map reading and frequent decision making. All legs must be designed to attempt to maximise competitor safety. Refer to Appendix 2 for advice on course setting.

16.4   Length of courses must be given as following the shortest sensible route choice from the start via the controls to the finish following permissible routes.

16.5   The total climb must be given as the climb in metres along the shortest sensible route choice.

16.6   In relay competitions, the controls must be combined differently for the teams, but all teams must cycle the same overall course. If the terrain and the concept of the courses permit it, the length of the legs may be significantly different, but the sum of the winning times of the legs must be kept as prescribed. All teams must cycle the different leg lengths in the same sequence. Within each leg, all parallel forks should require approximately the same riding time.

16.7   In individual competitions, the controls may be combined differently for the competitors, but all competitors must cycle the same overall course.

16.8   Controls must all be visited in a specific order, i.e. no parts with free order are allowed.

16.9   Courses must be pre-marked on the competitor's map.

16.10   For events in very hot or very cold conditions, anticipated winning times may be reduced with the approval of the Event Controller.

17   Restricted Areas and Routes

*   17.1   Rules set by Orienteering Australia or the organising Association to protect the environment (Appendix 1 and 2.12 Environmental Code of Practice within the Orienteering Australia Operations Guide.), and any related instructions from the event organisers, must be strictly observed by all persons connected with the event.

17.2   Riding off the track or trail is disallowed, except across areas mapped as permitted to ride:

- ISMTBOM 824 Open land permitted to ride.
- ISMTBOM 825 Forested area permitted to ride.
- ISMTBOM 826 Rough open land permitted to ride.
- ISMTBOM 827-830 Narrow rides.

Any variation to this, as agreed with the event Controller, must be specifically advised by the event organiser in the final Bulletin. Planners should design courses so as to minimise any benefit gained from infringement of this rule. The penalty for breaking this rule is disqualification from the event.

17.3   Out of bounds or dangerous areas, forbidden routes etc. must be described in the pre-event information and marked on the map. If necessary, they must also be marked in the terrain. Competitors must not enter, follow, or cross such areas, routes or features drawn with the following symbols:

- ISMTBOM 520 Area that shall not be entered.
- ISMTBOM 708 Out-of-Bounds boundary.
- ISMTBOM 709 Out-of-Bounds area.
- ISMTBOM 716 Forbidden route
- ISMTBOM 718 Forbidden to pass

17.4   Compulsory routes, crossing points and passages must be marked clearly on the map and on the ground. Competitors must follow the entire length of any marked section of their course.

17.5   Any crossing point over major vehicular roads must be clearly signed to warn motorists and competitors. Courses should be set to maximise competitor safety at such crossings e.g. by placing a control at the crossing and providing a marshal if appropriate, or setting the leg so that competitors have the option of following the road for some distance before crossing.

17.6   Where tracks occur on both sides of a fence, if it is forbidden to cross the fence, it must be overprinted with ISMTBOM symbol 708 Out of bounds boundary. Legal crossings may be made where indicated with ISMTBOM symbol 710 Crossing point, or where the map clearly shows the track crosses a fence.

17.7   Riding outside the mapped area is not allowed.

18   Control Descriptions

18.1   No control descriptions are used in MTBO. Any off-track controls must be set so as not to require control descriptions. A control circle with focus point may be used to clarify the exact location of the control e.g. a control on a fence or uncrossable wall.

19 Control Set-Up and Equipment

19.1 The control point given on the map must be clearly marked in the terrain and be equipped to enable the competitors to prove their passage.

19.2 Each control must be marked by a control flag consisting of three squares 30cm x 30 cm arranged in a triangular form. Each square must be divided diagonally, one half being white and the other orange (PMS 165). They must be in such a position that they can be easily seen when approached from both directions, and easily reached by competitors to record their passage.

19.3 All controls must be situated on tracks or paths shown on the competition map unless specified otherwise in the event instructions (if controls are placed on other rideable areas as listed in rule 17.2).

19.4 Controls must not be sited within 50m of each other, measured in a straight line.

19.5 Each control must be identified with a code number, which must be fixed to the control so that a competitor using the marking device can clearly read the code. Numbers less than 31 must not be used. The figures must be black on white, 3-10 cm in height and have a line thickness of 5-10 mm. Numbers may be displayed vertically so as to be easily seen by the passing riders, or horizontally. Horizontally-displayed codes must be underlined if they could be misinterpreted by being read upside down (e.g. 161).

19.6 The code number for each control must be available to competitors as an overprint on the map adjacent to the control number (e.g. 1-49).

19.7 To prove the passage of the competitors, there must be sufficient number of marking devices in the immediate vicinity of each control marker.

19.8 All controls for which there are security concerns should be guarded or tethered to prevent tampering or theft.

19.9 If, during the race, the organiser is made aware of a problem with a control (such as a failed punching unit, incorrect positioning of the control unit or a blocked route) the organiser should make every effort to correct the problem as quickly as possible. After the race has ended, the organiser must consider the effect of the problem on the fairness of the results and then take any necessary action. Such action could include voiding the results.

20 Punching Systems

20.1 Only Orienteering Australia approved (electronic or other) punching systems may be used as detailed in Appendix 8. (The term "card" is used in this section to describe the device carried by the competitor.)

20.2 Competitors are responsible for marking their own control card at each control using the marking device provided. Competitors are responsible for correct marking, even if at some controls the marking is facilitated by the event organiser.

20.3   The control card must clearly show that all controls have been visited in the correct order.

20.4   A competitor with a control mark missing or unidentifiable must not be placed, unless it can be established with certainty that the punch missing or unidentifiable is not the competitor's fault, and that the competitor visited the control. In this exceptional circumstance, other evidence may be used to prove that the competitor visited the control, such as evidence from control officials or cameras or read-out from the control unit. In all other circumstances, such evidence is not acceptable and the competitor must not be placed.

In the case of SportIdent, this rule means that:

- If one unit is not working or appears not to be working, a competitor must use the back-up provided (e.g. slips of waterproof paper may be carried to punch in case of failure of the SI unit) and must not be placed if no punch is recorded.

- • If a competitor punches too fast and fails to receive the feedback signals, the card will not contain the punch and the competitor must not be placed (even though the control unit may have recorded the competitor's card number)

20.5   The organiser has the right to have the control card checked by officials at appointed controls and/or to mark the card.

20.6   Competitors who lose their control card, omit a control, or visit controls in the wrong order must not be placed.

20.7   Competitors are permitted to carry, activate and use a second control card as a backup recording device in case of battery failure with their primary control card.

21 Equipment

21.1   Protective headgear conforming to the recognised Australian standard must be worn at all times when competing and training.

21.2   The bicycle must be designed to be propelled solely through a chain set, by the legs moving in a circular movement, without electric or other assistance. Alternatively, a recumbent bicycle propelled through the chain set by arm (rather than leg) movement is permitted. The organisers may permit recreational (i.e. non-championship) classes to use e-bikes which are pedal-assist bikes designed for rougher tracks, with a limit of 250 watts.

21.3   Each competitor must ensure that their equipment (bicycle with accessories and other devices fitted, headgear, clothing etc) does not, by virtue of its quality, materials, or design, constitute any danger to themselves or to others. It is the responsibility of the competitors and team managers to ensure that cycles are roadworthy.

21.4   If start numbers or bibs are prescribed by the event organiser they must be fixed to the cycle or worn as prescribed.

21.5   During the competition the only navigational equipment that competitors may use are the map provided by the event organiser, and a compass.

21.6   Competitors must stay with their cycles throughout the race from start to finish, whether they ride, push, or carry their cycles.

21.7   The organiser may define a zone where teams or individuals may place equipment such as spare parts and tools before the first start or at a time specified by the organiser. No assistance (e.g. from a coach) is permitted in the equipment zone or during the competition.

21.8   Competitors may carry tools and spare parts during the competition but must not (except in a designated equipment zone) use spares or tools other than those carried by themselves or another competitor.

21.9   Competitors must finish the competition with the same cycle frame with which they started.

21.10   Competitors must not use or carry devices that can transmit or receive information, to or from a remote source, between entering the quarantine zone (or the start area if there is no quarantine zone) and reaching the finish in a race, unless the equipment is approved by the organiser. GNSS-enabled devices (watches, cycle computers etc.) can be carried provided that
- they have no map display
- they have no communication ability other than receiving GNSS data
- they are not used for navigation purposes.

However, the organiser has the right to specifically forbid the use of such equipment. The organiser may require competitors to carry a tracking device and/or a GNSS data logger.

22 Start

22.1   In individual competitions, the start is normally an interval start. In relay competitions, the start is normally a mass start.

22.2   In qualification race competitions, the first start in the finals must be at least 2.5 hours after the last start in the qualification races.

22.3   The start may be organised with a pre-start before the time start, situated at one edge of the warm-up area. If there is a pre-start, a clock showing the competition time (i.e. the next start time, not the current time) to team officials and competitors must be displayed there, and the competitors' names must be called or displayed. Beyond the pre-start, only starting competitors and media representatives guided by the organiser are allowed.

22.4   At the start, a clock showing the competition time to the competitors must be displayed. If there is no pre-start, competitors' names must be called or displayed.

22.5   The start must be organised so that later competitors and other persons cannot see the map, courses, route choices or the direction to the first control. If necessary, there must be a marked route from the time start to the point where the orienteering begins.

22.6   The competitor is responsible for taking the correct map. The competitor's start number or name or course must be indicated on the map so as to be visible to the competitors before they start.

22.7   In an individual race, competitors take their map one minute before their start time to allow time to arrange to carry their map before they start. In a chasing start race, competitors will get their map at the start time. The bike must be stationary with the whole bike behind the start line and competitors must keep at least one foot on the ground at the moment of the start signal.

22.8   The point where orienteering begins must be shown on the map with the start triangle and marked in terrain with a control marker, but no marking device. If the start triangle is some distance from the timed-start location, competitors must be advised of this. In this case, a marked route should be shown on the map from the timed-start to the start triangle.

22.9   Competitors who are late for their start time through their own fault must be permitted to start. Their new start time must be recorded.
- In a mass or chasing start, the competitor must be started as soon as possible.
- In an interval start, if the competitor is at the start line less than half the start interval after their start time, they must start immediately.
- In an interval start, if the competitor is at the start line more than half the start interval after their start time, they must start at the next available half start interval.

22.10   Competitors who are late for their start time through their own fault must be timed as if they had started at their original start time. Competitors who are late for their start time through the fault of the event organiser must be timed from their new start time

22.11   The changeover between the members of each relay team normally takes place by touch.

22.12   Correct and timely relay changeover is the responsibility of the competitors, even when the event organiser arranges an advanced warning of incoming teams.

22.13   With the approval of the event Controller the event organiser may arrange mass starts for the later legs for relay teams that have not changed over.

22.14   In a mass start race, the start area must be sufficiently wide and long to provide a fair and safe start for riders. Competitors at the mass start will line up standing over their bikes in rows of 4 to 10 as allowed by the start area. They receive their maps at their bikes 15 seconds before the start. The bike must be stationary and competitors must keep at least one foot on the ground until the start signal.

22.15   The organiser may define one or more quarantine zones in order to prevent those who have not started gaining information about the courses. The organiser defines times when competitors and team officials must be inside the quarantine zone. The organiser must provide adequate facilities (toilets, refreshment, shelter etc) for those waiting in the quarantine zone. If a competitor or team official attempts to enter the

quarantine zone after the deadline, they may be refused entry. Competitors and team officials are not allowed to use telecommunication devices within the quarantine zone.

23 Finish and Time-Keeping

23.1 The competition ends for a competitor when crossing the finishing line.

23.2 At least the last 50m of the course before the finish, and before the exchange zones in relays, should be as straight as possible, at least 5m wide and be bounded by tape or rope.

23.3 The finish line must be at right angles to the direction of the finish lanes. The exact position of the finish lines must be obvious to approaching competitors

23.4 When a competitor has crossed the finish line, the competitor must punch the finish control if required, and hand in the control card or download data. If required by the organiser they must also hand in their competition map.

23.5 The finishing time must be measured at one of the following times:
- When the competitor's front tyre crosses the finish line
- When the competitor punches at the finish line
- If a light beam is used for timing, when the competitor breaks the beam which must be mounted at a height of 30cm above the ground
- • When a transponder, carried by the competitor, crosses the finish line.

23.6 Times are rounded down to whole seconds. So, 89 minutes 13.98 seconds becomes 89 minutes 13 seconds. Times must be given in hours, minutes and seconds, or in minutes and seconds only.

23.7 In competitions with mass or chasing starts, a finish judge must rule on the final placing.

23.8 The event organiser, with Event Controller approval, may set maximum times for each class, and set a general course closure time for all classes.

23.9 There must be first aid facilities and personnel at the finish, who are also equipped to work in the competition terrain. (See Appendix 3).

23.10 The organisers must ensure that at the end of the competitions all competitors have been accounted for using the start list that has been compiled. A search party must be available at the end of the competitions should a competitor be missing. (See Appendix 3)

23.11 There must be finish units that allow for the 'dipping' of a competitors Sportident AIR chip, in-case its battery fails during the event.

23.12 Competitors may carry a second Sportident AIR chip, for duplicate timing, in case of battery failure.

24 Results

24.1   Provisional results must be announced and displayed in the finish or arena during the competition.

24.2   The results must be based on competitors' times for the whole course. It is forbidden to eliminate sections of the course on the basis of split times unless the section has been specified in advance (e.g. a short section containing a busy road crossing).

24.3   The official results must be confirmed no more than 4 hours after the latest allowable finishing time.

24.4   If the finals of a qualification race competition take place on the same day as the qualification races, the results of the qualification races must be published no more than 30 minutes after the latest allowable finishing time of the last starter.

24.5   The official results must include the following information:
- Class and course.
- Length of course.
- Number of controls.
- The names of all participating competitors.
- Each competitor's club, team or Association as appropriate.
- Each competitor's time.
- In relays, the results must include the competitors' names in running order and times for their legs as well as the course combinations that each competitor rode.

24.6   If an interval start is used, two or more competitors having the same time must be given the same placing in the results list. The position(s) following the tie must remain vacant.

24.7   If a mass start or chasing start is used, the placing is determined by the order in which the competitors finish. In relays this will be the team member cycling the last relay leg.

24.8   In relays where there are mass starts for later legs, the sum of the individual times of the team members must determine the placing of the teams that have taken part in such mass starts. A team having started in the subsequent mass start may be permitted to have an official result ahead of a team that did not start in that mass start.

24.9   Competitors or teams who exceed the maximum time (closure of the course) must not be placed.

24.10   Competitors who correctly complete the course are placed in order in the results. Those who fail to correctly complete the course are shown at the end of the results with no placing and with a reason (e.g. mis-punched, retired, mechanical failure, disqualified).

24.11   The results of unofficial competitors or teams are not considered in determining placings and must be listed as 'unofficial' in the results after all official competitors or teams.

24.12   The organiser has the discretion to disqualify any competitor who contravenes the rules laid out in this text.

24.13   The organiser must arrange for publication of all event results on Australian Eventor on the day of the event.

25 Awards and Prizes

25.1   Awards (or prizes) for men and women must be equivalent.

25.2   If two or more competitors have the same placing, they must each receive the appropriate award and/or its equivalent.

26 Fair Play

26.1   All persons taking part in an MTBO event must behave with fairness and honesty. They must have a sporting attitude and a spirit of friendship. Competitors must show respect for each other, for officials, journalists, spectators and the inhabitants of the competition area. The competitors must be as quiet as possible in the terrain. Competitors and spectators must not interfere with control equipment.

26.2   Except in the case of an accident or mechanical failure, seeking to obtain or obtaining navigational or other assistance from other riders or providing assistance to other competitors during a competition is forbidden. It is the duty of all competitors to help injured competitors.

26.3   The provision of mechanical (spares or repairs) assistance between competitors during a competition is permitted but is not compulsory. No outside mechanical assistance is permitted.

26.4   Doping is forbidden. *The Improper Use of Drugs and Medicines Policy* applies to all Orienteering Australia events and Orienteering Australia may require doping control procedures to be conducted

26.5   The event organiser, with the consent of the event Controller, may decide to publish the venue of the competition in advance. If the venue is not made public, all officials must maintain strict secrecy about the competition area and the terrain. In any case strict secrecy about the courses must be kept.

26.6   Any attempt to survey or train in the competition terrain is forbidden unless expressly permitted by the organiser. Attempts to gain any information related to the courses, beyond that provided by the event organiser, is forbidden before and during the competition.

26.7   The event organiser must bar from the competition any competitor who is so well acquainted with the terrain or the map, that the competitor would have a substantial

advantage over other competitors. In case of doubt, the matter must be decided by the event Controller.

26.8 Team officials, competitors, media representatives and spectators must remain in the areas assigned to them.

26.9 Control officials must neither disturb nor detain any competitor, nor supply any information whatsoever. They must remain quiet, wear inconspicuous clothing, and must not help competitors approaching controls. This also applies to all other persons in the terrain, e.g. media representatives.

26.10 Having crossed the finish line, a competitor may not re-enter the competition terrain without the permission of the event organiser. A competitor who retires must announce this at the finish immediately and hand in the map and control card. That competitor must in no way influence the competition nor help other competitors.

26.11 A competitor who breaks any rule, or who benefits from the breaking of any rule, may be disqualified.

26.12 Non-competitors who break any rule are liable to disciplinary action.

26.13 The organiser must stop, postpone or cancel a race if at any point it becomes clear that circumstances have arisen which make the race dangerous for the competitor, officials or spectators.

26.14 The organiser must void a race if circumstances have arisen which make the race significantly unfair. (Refer Appendix 6).

26.15 Participation in betting related to an orienteering event is prohibited for competitors in the event, the team officials, and the event officials. They are also prohibited from supporting or promoting betting related to the event. Additionally, they must not participate in any corrupt practices related to betting. Such practices include fixing the result, manipulating any aspect of the results, failing to perform in order to benefit, accepting or offering bribes and passing on inside information.

27 Complaints

27.1 A complaint may be made about infringements of these rules or the event organiser's directions.

27.2 Complaints may be made by event or team officials, competitors or anybody else connected with the event.

27.3 Any complaint must be made in writing to a representative of the event organiser as soon as possible. A complaint is adjudicated by the event organiser. The complainant must be informed about the decision immediately.

27.4 There is no fee for a complaint.

27.5 The organiser may set a time limit for complaints. Complaints received after this time limit will only be considered if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained in the complaint.

27.6   The organiser's decision in relation to any complaint must be advised to all competitors affected by the decision.

28   Protests

28.1   A protest may be made against the event organiser's decision about a complaint.

28.2   Protests may be made by team officials, competitors or event officials.

28.3   Any protest must be made in writing to a representative of the organiser no later than 15 minutes after the organiser has informed the complainant of the decision about the complaint. Protests received after this time limit may be considered at the discretion of the jury if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained in the protest.

28.4   There is no fee for a protest.

28.5   The result of any protest must be advised to all competitors affected by the decision.

29   Jury

29.1   A jury must be appointed to rule on protests. (Refer to Appendix 6).

29.2   Jury members are appointed by the event organiser and approved by the event Controller.

29.3   The jury must consist of 3 members plus the event Controller who must lead the jury but has no vote. For Australian Championships, only one member must come from the State Association of the event organiser. For other events, it is desirable that at least one member must be from another State Association.

29.4   A representative of the event organiser has the right to participate in the jury meetings but has no vote.

29.5   The event organiser must act according to the jury's decision, e.g. to reinstate a competitor disqualified by the event organiser, to disqualify a competitor approved by the event organiser, to void the results in a class approved by the event organiser, or to approve results declared invalid by the event organiser.

29.6   The jury is competent to rule only if all members are present. In urgent cases preliminary decisions may be taken if a majority of the jury members agree on the decision.

29.7   If a jury member declares him or herself prejudiced or if a jury member is unable to fulfil his or her task, the event Controller must nominate a substitute.

29.8   Arising from its ruling on a protest, the jury - in addition to instructing the event organiser – may recommend that Orienteering Australia takes further disciplinary action against a person in accordance with its Constitution, in the case of a major violation of the rules.

29.9   Decisions of the jury are final.

30   Appeals

30.1   An appeal may be made against infringements of these rules, if a jury is not yet set up, or if the event is over and the jury has dispersed. An appeal may only be made against a jury decision if there has been a serious procedural error in the operation of the jury.

30.2   An appeal may be made by team officials, competitors, event officials or State Associations.

30.3   Any appeal must be made in writing to Orienteering Australia as soon as possible. Its outcome will then be determined by the Orienteering Australia Board.

30.4   There is no fee for an appeal.

30.5   Decisions about an appeal are final.

31   Event Control

31.1   An event Controller must be appointed to oversee the organisation of the event. The event Controller must ensure that rules are followed, mistakes are avoided, and that fairness is paramount. The event Controller has the authority to require adjustments to be made if he or she deems them necessary to satisfy the requirements of the event.

31.2   All events for which these rules are binding (National and State Championships), must be controlled by an Orienteering Australia MTBO Level 2 Event Controller.

31.3   An event Controller should be appointed as soon as practicable after the event is allocated.

31.4   The event Controller must work in close collaboration with the event organiser and must be given all relevant information. All official information such as entry forms and programs, must be approved by the event Controller.

31.5   As a minimum, the following tasks must be carried out under the authority of the event Controller:

- To approve the venue and the terrain for the event.
- To look into the event organisation and assess the suitability of the proposed accommodation.
- Food, transport, program, budget, and training possibilities.
- To check that land access has been provided.
- To check that the map conforms with the IOF standards.
- To approve the courses after assessing their quality, including degree of difficulty, control sites and equipment, chance factors and map correctness.
- To check any course splitting method and course combinations.
- To approve the organisation and layout of start, finish and changeover areas.

- To assess the reliability and accuracy of the time-keeping and results producing systems.
- To ensure that control markers, equipment and officials are suitably positioned.
- To assess any planned ceremonies.
- To be present during the event.
- To ensure that results and reports are distributed promptly.

31.6 The event Controller must make as many controlling visits as deemed necessary. The visits must be planned in agreement with the organiser. The Orienteering Australia Event Controller must where necessary, or as required, make written reports to the appointing body with copies sent to the organiser.

31.7 One or more assistants may be appointed to assist the event Controller, particularly in the fields of mapping, courses, financing, sponsoring and media.

32 Event Reports

32.1 The event organiser and event Controller must submit a report to the Orienteering Australia Board within 6 weeks of the event, including details of complaints and protests; details of issues that impacted the event; deviations from the rules that applied to the event. (Refer to Rule 23.12 regarding reporting of results.)

33 Advertising and Sponsorship

33.1 Orienteering Australia may issue specific rules for advertising and sponsorship.

34 Media Service

34.1 The event organiser must make every effort to maximise media coverage as long as this does not jeopardise the fairness of the event.

35 Environmental Mandate

35.1 MTBO events take place using tracks and trails. Riding off the track or trail will normally be disallowed unless specifically agreed by the organiser and event Controller. (Refer Rule 16.2)

35.2 Event organisers will
- Strive to apply the principles of sustainable use, to meet the needs of the present, without compromising the needs of future generations
- Aim to achieve the highest environment standards in the organisation of events, through informing and educating both organisers and competitors
- Aim to minimise both the use and the waste of materials, using renewable or recycled materials when appropriate
- Be committed to consulting with, and respect the wishes of the rural community in whose areas we hold events

- Take into account public transport links when locating event centres, and encourage car sharing by competitors
- Assess on a continuous basis, the environmental impact of MTBO activities on the countryside, and adopt systems and techniques which will minimise or eliminate any unacceptable adverse impacts
- Identify and avoid if possible sensitive habitats through discussion with landowners, indigenous landowners and environmental agencies.

Appendix 1   The MTBO Competitor's Code

1   Slow right down when passing members of the public who are on foot or on horseback.

2   Avoid damaging the track through aggressive riding such as skidding.

3   When two riders converge:

    i.   Riders should normally pass with their right shoulders.

    ii.   Any rider travelling uphill must be given priority.

    iii.   At an intersection, the rider on the smaller track should give way to any rider on the larger track/road. If on equivalent tracks, give way to riders on your right.

4   Riders should overtake on the right.

5   Slower riders should give way to overtaking riders.

6   When riding on public roads the traffic rules must be observed.

7   Competitors must stay on permissible roads, tracks paths, and narrow rides (827-830) marked on the competition map, or on areas mapped as item 839 'Open Land Permitted to Ride', 825 Forested area permitted to ride, 826 Rough open land permitted to ride. This applies even if the terrain or road conditions force riders to dismount and push or carry their bikes. No off-track short cuts through the bush are permitted. If competitors inadvertently take an indistinct track which is not marked on the competition map, they should retrace their route to the previously known allowed point, and not continue cross county to the nearest marked track.

8   Competitors must not intentionally become separated from their bike during the competition and should ride or push the bike to all controls.

9   The Event Controller may approve additions or changes to the above code to improve safety.

Appendix 2   Competition Formats and Course Setting

General Principles

These Guidelines will inform the selection of areas for various competitions but the actual course setting and parts of the overall map to be used for non-elite age classes will be guided by the physical abilities and experience of the competitors.

So, for older competitors, excessively steep or particularly technical terrain should be avoided or avoidable in route choice, and the number/length of long legs will be influenced by course length to meet desirable winning times. For young/inexperienced competitors, route choice options should be simplified. It is not desirable to combine older and inexperienced competitors on courses with simplified route choice options for championship events.

Use evidence from previous events in similar terrain to calculate likely winning times (and hence course distances) for junior and various veteran age groups.

Note relevant rules and guidelines:

* 2.7 Sporting fairness – should apply to course setting as well as the interpretation of the rules!
* 15.4 Measurement of course length
* 15.5 Measurement of climb on the course
* Section 16 Restricted Areas and routes
* 18.3 Location of controls
* 18.4 Controls not within 50m of each other.
* 21.5 Location of start triangle
* 30.1 Role of the Event Controller
* 2.12 Environmental Code of Practice in the Orienteering Australia Operations Guide.

*

1   Sprint Distance

1.1   The Profile

The Sprint profile is **high speed**. It tests the athletes' ability to read and translate the map in complex environments, and to plan and carry out route choices riding at high speed. At best it takes place in a mixed urban and forested area. The course must be planned so that the element of speed is maintained throughout the race. Finding the controls should not be the challenge; rather the ability to choose and complete the best route to them. For example, the most obvious way out from a control should not necessarily be the most favourable one. The course should be set to require the athletes' full concentration throughout the race. The course should avoid steep areas that would require competitors to walk.

1.2   Course planning considerations

In Sprint Distance, spectators are allowed along the course. The course planning must consider this, and all controls must be easy to find (not hidden). It may also be necessary to have guards at critical passages alerting spectators of approaching competitors and making sure that competitors are not hindered. The start should be at the Arena and spectator sites may be arranged along the course. The spectator value could be enhanced by having an oncourse

announcer. Both spectator sites and sites for media/photographers must be announced at the Arena.

Special elements of the sprint distance are short legs between control points. But the course should also include some long legs between control points to give some route choice legs. These longer legs (on elite courses) may be from 0.8 km to 2.0 km depending on the terrain type. A maximum of two long legs should form part of the course. If courses are planned across urban areas, the local population and local government need to be informed of the dates and times when the competitions will be organised.

✻ During Sprint Distance course planning in urban areas or educational campuses, consideration should be given to assessing the risks and implementing effective controls with regard to site hazards such as stairs, narrow corridors, changes of levels and blind corners.

1.3 **The map**

✻ The current ISMTBOM specifications must be followed. The map scale should normally be 1:5000, 1:7500 or 1:10000. In non-urban terrain map generalisation is to 1:15000 scale, and in urban terrain map generalisation may be to 1:5000 scale as per ISMTBOM. Alternatively in exceptionally complex urban terrain, such as an education campus, a map made to current IOF ISSprOM standards (map generalisation to 1:4000 scale, printed at an appropriate scale) may be used with the approval of the OA MTBO commission. The map size should not exceed 25 x 30 cm.

1.4 **Winning time, start interval and timing**

Refer to Rule 16.2 for recommended winning times. The preferred start interval is 2 minutes; however the interval can be 1 minute subject to the approval of the event Controller. Timing is normally to an accuracy of 1 second, preferably using electronic timing with a beam finish line. The competitors are given the map one minute before their start time.

2 **Middle Distance**

2.1 **The profile**

✻ The Middle Distance profile is **technical** with an emphasis on navigation. It takes place in a non-urban (mostly forested) environment with a dense track network and tracks of different categories. It requires constant concentration on map reading with occasional changes in riding direction out from controls. The element of route choice is essential but should not be at the expense of technically demanding orienteering. The route in itself must involve demanding navigation. The course must require speed-shifts e.g. with legs through different types of tracks.

2.2 **Course planning considerations**

The course should be set to allow competitors to be seen by spectators during the course of the race as well as when finishing. The start should be at the Arena and the course should preferably make riders pass the Arena during the competition. The demand on the selection of the Arena is consequently high, providing both suitable terrain and good possibilities to make riders visible to spectators. Spectators are not allowed along the course except for parts passing the Arena (including controls at the Arena).

Special elements of the middle distance are short legs between control points. But the course should also include some long legs between control points to give some route choice legs.

These longer legs (for elite classes) may be from 1 km to 3 km depending on the terrain type. Two, or a maximum of four, long legs should form part of the course. Another important element of the middle distance is to use course planning techniques which break up the grouping of riders (e.g. butterflies).

2.3 **The Map**

The current ISMTBOM specification must be followed. The map scale must be 1:7500, 1:10000 or 1:15000. The map size should not exceed 30 x 42 cm.

2.4 **Winning time, start interval and timing**

Refer to Rule 16.2 for recommended winning times. The preferred start interval is 2 minutes. Timing is normally to an accuracy of 1 second. The competitors are given the map one minute before their start time.

3 Long Distance

3.1 **The profile**

* The Long Distance profile is **physical endurance**. It takes place in a non-urban (mostly forested) environment, and aims at testing the athletes' ability to make efficient route choices, to read and interpret the map and plan the race for endurance during a long and physically demanding exercise. The format emphasises route choices and navigation in rough, demanding terrain, preferably hilly. The control is the end-point of a long leg with demanding route choices and is not necessarily in itself difficult to find. The Long distance may in parts include elements characteristic of the middle distance with the course suddenly breaking the pattern of route choice orienteering to introduce a section with more technically demanding legs.

3.2 **Course planning considerations**

If possible, the course should be set to allow competitors to be seen by spectators during the course of the race as well as when finishing. Special elements of the long distance are long legs, considerably longer than the average leg length. These longer legs (for elite classes) may be from 3.5 to 6.5 km depending on the terrain type. Two or more such long legs should form part of the course (still requiring full concentration on map reading along the route chosen). Another important element of the Long distance is to use course setting techniques, which break up the grouping of riders, (e.g. 'one _person relay' for mass starts, butterflies). Spectators are not allowed along the course except for parts passing the Arena (including controls at the Arena).

3.3 **The map**

The current ISMTBOM specification must be followed. The map scale must be 1:15000 or 1:20000. ?1;10 000, 1:12 500, or 1:15 000 The map size should not exceed 35 x 42 cm.

3.4 **Winning time, start interval and timing**

Refer to Rule 16.2 for recommended winning times. The preferred start interval is 3 minutes. Timing is normally to an accuracy of 1 second. The competitors are given the map one minute before their start time.

4	Relay

4.1 The profile

✱ The Relay profile is a **team competition**. It takes place in a non-urban (mostly forested) environment. The format is built on a technically demanding concept, more similar to that of the Middle than the Long distance. Some elements characteristic of the Long distance, such as longer route-choice legs, should occur allowing competitors to pass each other without having visual contact. Good Relay terrain has the characteristics that make riders lose eye contact with each other, (e.g. a dense track network with tracks of different categories).

4.2 Course planning considerations

The Relay is a spectator-friendly event in offering a competition between teams, head-to-head, and with the first to finish being the winner. The Arena layout and the course setting must consider this (e.g. when forking is used, the time difference between alternatives should be small). The competitors should, on each leg, pass the Arena, and if possible riders should be visible from the Arena while approaching the last control. The mass start format requires a course planning technique separating riders from each other (e.g. forking). The best teams should be carefully allocated to different forking combinations. For fairness reasons the very last part of the last leg must be the same for all riders. Spectators are not allowed along the course except for parts passing the Arena (including controls at the Arena).

4.3 The map

The current ISMTBOM specification must be followed. The map scale must be 1:7500, 1:10000 or 1:15000. The map size should not exceed 30 x 30 cm.

4.4 Winning time, start interval and timing

Refer to Rule 16.2 for recommended winning times. The Relay is a mass start format and consists of three legs. Judges will be at the finish line to judge the correct placings. It is desirable to have photo-finish equipment on the finish line to assist in judging the correct placings.

5	Mass Start

5.1 The profile

✱ The Mass Start profile is a **head-to-head competition**. The course is expected to be physically and technically challenging. It takes place in a non-urban (mostly forested) environment with a relatively dense track network and tracks of different categories to allow for multiple route choices. The format is built on a technically demanding concept, more similar to that of the Middle than the Long Distance. Some elements characteristic of the Long Distance, such as longer route-choice legs, should occur allowing competitors to pass each other without having visual contact. Good Mass Start terrain has the characteristics that make riders lose eye contact with each other (e.g. a dense track network with tracks of different categories). The element of route choice is essential, though the route in itself must not necessarily involve demanding navigation.

5.2   Course planning considerations

The Mass Start is a spectator-friendly event in offering a competition between riders, head-to-head, and with the first to finish being the winner. A special element of the Mass Start is a long leg to the first control(s) to allow rider separation before the control. The arena layout and the course setting must consider this (e.g. when forking is used, the time difference between alternatives should be small). The competitors should pass the arena and, if possible, riders should be visible from the arena while approaching the last control. An appropriate number of intermediate times (possibly with in-forest commentators) should be provided. The Mass Start format requires a course planning technique separating riders from each other (e.g. forking). The best riders should be carefully allocated to different forking combinations. For fairness reasons, the very last part of the course must be the same for all riders. Spectators are not allowed along the course except for parts passing the arena (including the controls at the arena).

5.3   **The map**

The current ISMTBOM specification must be followed. The map scale must be 1:7500, 1:10000 or 1:15000. The map size should not exceed 30 x 42 cm.

5.4   **Winning time, start interval and timing**

Refer to Rule 16.2 for recommended winning times. The start is a mass start for all competitors in the same class. Timing is normally to an accuracy of 1 second. There must be mechanisms at the finish to assist in judging the correct placings or riders over the finish line.

SUMMARY TABLE	Sprint Distance	Middle Distance	Long Distance	Relay	Mass Start
Legs. (All legs should have 2 or more options on the tracks.)	1-2 long legs (e.g. 0.8-2 km for open class). Majority of legs short.	2-4 long legs (1-3 km for open class). Majority of legs short.	Majority of long legs (1-4 km for open class). 3-5 short legs.	All legs between sprint and middle format.	4-6 long legs (1-3 km for open classes). Majority of leg short.
Profile	High speed, requires athletes' full concentration	Technically demanding	Physical endurance. Tests athletes' ability to make and plan efficient route choices.	Team competition. Format more similar to middle than long distance. Spectator friendly	Physically and technically demanding. Head-to-head competition.
Terrain	Very dense track network. Forested area and/or urban area/parks.	Dense track network. Non-urban (mostly forested) area.	Non-urban (mostly forested) area. Rough, demanding. Preferably hilly.	Dense track network with different track categories.	Dense track network. Non-urban (mostly forested) area.
Route choice difficulty	Low-medium	Medium-high	High	High and medium	Medium-high
Navigation difficulty (map reading)	High (constant contact with map is required).	Medium-high. Technically demanding orienteering.	Low-medium.	Medium-high.	Medium-high. Technically demanding orienteering
Map scale/size	1:5000, 1:7500 or 1:10000. Max 25x30 cm size.	1:10000 or 1:15000. Max 30x42 cm size	1:15000 or 1:20000. Max 35x42 cm size	1:10000 or 1:15000. Max 30x30 size.	1:10000 or 1:15000. Max 30x30 size.
Start intervals	2 minutes. (could be reduced to 1 min with event Controller approval).	2 minutes.	3 minutes (or mass start for one-man relay).	Mass start.	Mass start.
Winning Times	See Rule 16.2.	See Rule 16.2.	See Rule 16.2.	See Rule 16.2.	See Rule 16.2.

Appendix 3   Health and Safety Guidelines

1	**General Hygiene**

1.1   It is the responsibility of all orienteers and event officials to maintain strict personal hygiene, as this is the best method of controlling the spread of infectious diseases.

1.2   All orienteers with prior evidence of infectious diseases are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation.

1.3   It is the responsibility of the organisers of an event to ensure that toilets and hand washing facilities, if supplied at events, should be kept clean and tidy and that adequate supplies of toilet paper, fresh water for washing, soap, paper hand towels, refuse disposal bins and disinfectants should be available at all times.

1.4   All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood may be treated as potentially infectious. Disposable surgical rubber or plastic gloves must be provided by the event organiser for use by anyone required to handle equipment which has also become contaminated with blood (e.g. control cards or maps).

2	**Drinking Water**

2.1   Competitors are expected to carry their own water.

2.2   For long events where the expected temperature is expected to exceed 25°C, organisers may provide refreshments at appropriate locations.

3	**First Aid**

3.1   Competition Rule 23.9 states that: 'There must be medical facilities and personnel at the finish, who are also equipped to work in the forest'.

3.2   Organisers must ensure that adequate first-aid equipment is available at events and that any person who, on behalf of the organisers, treats an orienteer with open cuts and abrasions should wear disposable rubber or plastic gloves.

3.3   Qualified personnel should be available for the duration of the competition and until all competitors have finished.

3.4   Suitable transport (e.g. 4WD vehicle) should be available in case of an emergency in the terrain.

3.5   The organisers should have the telephone number of an available local doctor or hospital.

4	**Search and Rescue**

4.1   Competition Rule 23.10 states that: 'The organisers must ensure that at the end of the competition all competitors have been accounted for using the start list that has been compiled. A search party must be available at the end of the competition should a competitor be missing.'

4.2   Where possible the search party should include people with local knowledge (e.g. course setter, event Controller).

4.3   Suitable transport (e.g. 4WD vehicle) should be available for use by the search party.

4.4   The organisers should ensure that local authorities responsible for search and rescue have been notified about the event and have an emergency telephone contact number.

Appendix 4   The Leibnitz Convention

"We, the Members of the IOF, attending the 20th IOF General Assembly in Leibnitz, Austria, on the 4 August 2000, hereby declare that

"It is of decisive importance to raise the profile of the sport to further the spread of orienteering to more people and new areas, and to get orienteering into the Olympic Games.

"The main vehicles to achieve this are:

- to organise attractive and exciting orienteering events which are of high quality for competitors, officials, media, spectators, sponsors, and external partners;
- to make IOF events attractive for TV and Internet.

"We shall aim to:

- increase the visibility of our sport by organising our events closer to where people are;
- make our event centres more attractive by giving increased attention to the design and quality of installations;
- improve the event centre atmosphere, and the excitement, by having both start and finish at the centre;
- increase television and other media coverage by ensuring that our events provide more and better opportunities for producing thrilling sports programmes;
- improve media service by better catering for the needs of media representatives (in terms of communication facilities, access to runners at start/finish and in the forest, continuous intermediate time information, food and beverages, etc);
- pay more attention to promoting our sponsors and external partners in connection with our IOF events.

"We, the Members of the IOF, expect that these measures shall be considered by all future organisers of IOF events."

Appendix 5   Guidelines for Responding to Problems, Complaints, Protests and Cancelling Courses

These guidelines are intended for competitors (and team officials), organisers and juries.

| 1 | **Competitors and team officials** |

Rules 27.1 and 27.2 allow complaints to be made about infringements of the competition rules or the organiser's directions. According to rule 27.3 the complaint should be made in writing. The reason for this is that it encourages the complainant to explicitly identify the rule or rules that they consider to have been infringed. They should be encouraged to indicate what redress should be made.

| 2 | **Organisers** |

Organisers should be conversant with the competition rules and have a copy of the rules readily available, and be ready and willing to discuss any relevant rules with a complainant. In fairness to complainants who may not be familiar with the rules, organisers should advise them of their right to protest the ruling of the organiser, and offer advice concerning the formalities for lodging protests. It is important that organisers should not intimidate a complainant by overemphasising the formal requirements of a protest; however, in fairness to the complainant, they should be made aware that the protest jury can only assess the protest within the framework of the rules.

| 3 | **Protest juries** |

Protest juries should not be overly legalistic in their consideration of the protest. Rule 28.3 requires that a protest be in writing, but as the rules are not prescriptive as to the format a written protest should take, juries should not dismiss a protest on the basis of a poorly written protest without giving the protestor the courtesy of addressing their protest.

If a potentially general problem is represented by a single protest, then the jury should consider that all the affected competitors had protested. If the protest pertains to a problem which may have affected more than one competitor, then the jury has three options:

- The jury may dismiss the protest if there are no grounds for a protest;
- The jury may agree that a problem exists, but find that it is not sufficient to warrant voiding courses, and therefore that no action be taken;
- The jury may elect to void the course.

If there has been a problem that has affected an individual, then the only options available are to reinstate or disqualify.

Protest decisions should be based on the merits of the evidence before the jury and the competition rules. Previous decisions made by any jury should not be considered as precedents for the protest being considered.

| 4 | **Voiding and Cancelling Courses** |

The following guidelines are based on the IOF document "Cancelling a Competition" (available on the IOF web site at www.orienteering.org).

4.1 Competitor Safety

The safety of competitors, organisers and spectators is paramount. The image of the sport would suffer irreparable damage if organisers gambled with people's safety, even if the threat did not eventually materialise. Hence the organiser has the responsibility under Rule 26.13 to Cancel a Course where they consider it is dangerous for competitors, officials or spectators.

Voiding a course is required where the organiser considers the course is significantly unfair. The following additional guidance is provided. Reason to void a competition.

4.1.1 Reason to void a competition

There can be no hard and fast rule determining when a course should be voided and when the results should be left to stand with those adversely affected by a problem regarded as unfortunate. However the key considerations should be:

- Has the problem affected the results so badly that the race is no longer perceived by the competitors, the public and the media as reasonably fair with credible results?
- Is it probable that the results will be challenged and the challenge upheld?
- • Does the perceived unfairness outweigh the requirement to declare a result and celebrate the winners?

4.1.2 Who can void a race?

The organiser should declare a course void if circumstances have arisen which make the course significantly unfair. If the organiser does not void the course but a competitor feels it should be voided then a complaint can be made to that effect. If the complaint is rejected but the competitor still feels that the course should be voided, then a protest can be made. The jury considers the protest and (if the protest is upheld) may instruct the organiser to void the course.

4.1.3 Factors when considering whether to void a competition

There are a number of factors which the organiser (and if necessary the jury) must consider.

- How many and what proportion of competitors were affected? A problem that adversely affected 10% or more of the field could be taken as an indication that the course may no longer be fair.
- Were the affected competitors potential medallists?
- Is it likely that the problem has seriously affected the placings of the leading competitors?
- How large and serious was the effect of the problem? A few seconds are more significant in a sprint than in a long distance race.
- What is the status of the competition (e.g. a WRE, Australian Championship)?
- What type of course is it (qualification, final, interval start, mass start, sprint, relay etc)?
- Is it fair to competitors not affected by the problem to void the course?

- Which outcome would do least harm to the image of the sport? How do the negative consequences of voiding the course compare to the negative consequences of not doing so?
- Could the competition be rescheduled at a time fair to the competitors, organizers?
- Was the problem an organiser error or was it something outside of the organiser's control? There may be a greater willingness to allow the results to stand if the problem could not easily have been prevented.

The above factors must be considered together. Often more than one is relevant, and a balanced judgment has to be made.

Sometimes the relevant factors will be very finely balanced and there is likely to be criticism whatever decision is made.

4.1.4 Anticipating the worst

Competitions can be structured in manners that provide safeguards in cases where serious disruptions to competitions might arise. For example, with multi-race competitions, if one of the courses is cancelled the rules should allow for the competition to be decided on the basis of the other courses.

4.1.5 Unacceptable alternatives to voiding.

It is important that measures (tempting though they may be) are not taken which may simply aggravate the unfairness.

Many, probably the majority, of hypothetical situations involve problems with a single control or course leg. Rule 24.2 ("The results must be based on competitors' times for the whole course. No changes may be made to these times on the basis of split times.") prohibits a result being declared on the basis of part of a course only. This rule has been introduced because analysis of what happens when you remove one or more legs from the times shows that it usually introduces as much unfairness as it solves.

4.1.6 Implementing the decision

It is important that decisions made by the organiser or jury are clearly explained to the competitors and the public. If it is recognised that there was a problem, even though it may have been deemed not to have affected the outcome of a course significantly enough to warrant any action, the problem should still be acknowledged.

In some cases, the course may be part of a league or ranking scheme. The organiser or jury should consider this and may make appropriate recommendations. For example, if a World Ranking course has to be voided, but the times of those runners who completed the course are valid, then it may be that it is still reasonable to calculate and issue World Ranking points.

4.1.7 Conclusions

Voiding a course is an option that should be avoided if at all possible. Organisers should be very careful to avoid mistakes. They must try to prevent problems arising, check everything thoroughly (for example using pre-runners) and anticipate and plan contingencies for unusual circumstances.

However, an organiser must be aware if the course is obviously unfair or unsafe and the results are not credible, then it must be voided or postponed.

Appendix 6   Suggested Course/Class Combinations

1   Section 16 of the Rules specifies the desired winning times for the various age groups in each race format. Organisers should use their knowledge of past performances in the competition terrain to set courses and combine age classes to best meet these rules.

2   As a guideline, the following combinations are suggested to assist with event planning – but these suggestions should not over-ride local knowledge and conditions.

	Long Distance	Middle Distance	Sprint Distance
Course 1	Open Men	Open Men	Open Men, M40
Course 2	M17-20, M40	Open Women, M17-20, M40, M50	Open Women, M17-20, M50
Course 3	Open Women, M50	W17-20, W40, M16, M60	W17-20, W40, M16, M60
Course 4	W17-20, W40, W50, M16, M60, M70	W50, M70	W50, M70
Course 5	W14, W16, W60, M14	W14, W16, W60, M14	W12, W14, W16, W60, W70, W80, M12, M14, M80
Course 6	W12, W70, W80, M12, M80	W12, W70, W80, M12, M80	

3   In addition to these championship classes, most events might also offer 'Open' classes on each course to allow non-championship options for those who wish to select a course outside their designated age category.

4   Note that the intention of Course 6 is to provide a course for older/younger competitors which is shorter and less physically-demanding according to the local terrain and conditions. However, note the recommendation in Appendix 2:

For older competitors, excessively steep or particularly technical terrain should be avoided or avoidable in route choice, and the number/length of long legs will be influenced by course length to meet desirable winning times. For young/inexperienced competitors, route choice options should be simplified. It is not desirable to combine older and inexperienced competitors on courses with simplified route choice options for championship events.

5   Organisers may offer more than six courses to better cater for the range of competitors.

Appendix 7 MTBO Embargo Guidelines

1   As soon as possible after allocation of the event, all possible competition terrains must be embargoed. (Refer Rules 14.2 and 14.3). The area(s) should be drawn onto an interactive internet document such as Google Maps, which will then be freely available.

2   As possible terrains are added or removed, the interactive document must be updated immediately

3   The embargo rules must specify what is permitted or forbidden e.g. travel on public roads by private or public transport, including by foot or by bike; use of public transport. While forest terrains may be entirely forbidden, urban areas may be partially open. This can be shown in the interactive document e.g. with different colours: red= forbidden; blue= open to travel through/along; green= open without restrictions.

4   The use of drones to film in or above an embargoed area is strictly forbidden. No map survey in the terrain may be carried out except by the event mapper and/or organising team.

5   Once a terrain is embargoed, no potential competitor, team, coach, or anyone associated with the team/individual may enter.

6   If a major domestic event is scheduled to be held in the terrain by another discipline, this must be publicised to the MTBO community to give them the opportunity to participate. Maps and results of such events must be published and easily available as soon as possible.

7   Events such as mtb races which do not require the use of a map, may be part of an embargo exception providing the person remains solely on the race track and event arena and only enters the embargo area on race day. These events shall also be publicised to the MTBO community to give them the opportunity to participate.

8   If the embargo needs to broken by a competitor/team/coach etc, prior permission must be sought from the organiser detailing the reason for the proposed infraction. If a competitor lives locally, the organiser and event Controller should evaluate their eligibility to participate in the upcoming event. Details of those who have sought prior permission to enter an embargoed area must be provided and accessibly publicly.

9   Athletes/coaches who will not compete in a race due to prior knowledge should respect the embargo and not train there without prior permission. This is in the interest of fairness and reducing information transfer.

10   Any competitor caught breaking the embargo without permission must be disqualified or barred from competing. Their team may also be disqualified.

Appendix 8   Approved OA Punching Systems

1	**Electronic Punching**

The only automatically approved electronic registering systems within Australia for MTBO are:

* the Sportident system,
✱ * SPORTident Air+ control units with a 30cm field range
* SPORTident Air+ control units with a 150cm field range (preferred)

1.2   Sportident and SPORTident Air+ system

(see Appendix 9 of the Orienteering Rules for OA Position statement on use of SIAC)

* A back-up unit must be present at each control – either a second electronic unit or a needle punch. If an SI unit is not working, a competitor must use the backup punching method/s provided and will be disqualified if no punch is recorded.
* It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure that the electronic punch is in the SI - card by not removing the SI-card until the feedback signal has been received.
* If a competitor punches too fast and fails to receive the feedback signals, the card will not contain the punch and the competitor must be disqualified (even though the control unit may have recorded the competitor's card number).
* With SI Air, the control unit may not record the competitor's punch at all, so the onus is on the competitor to come close enough to record the punch on their card.
* Note that some models of SI card, depending on their feedback mode, cannot record a punch for a leg which is shorter than 6 seconds' running time.
* • In the case of SIAC battery failure, the SIAC can be used in manual punching mode.

2	**Punching Evidence**

The control card, electronic or otherwise, must clearly show that all controls have been visited.

✱ A competitor with a control punch missing or unidentifiable or recorded using a backup needle punch shall not be placed unless it can be established with certainty that the punch missing or unidentifiable is not the competitor's fault and that the competitor visited the controls in the correct order.

If a competitor has failed to clear their electronic card in advance of the event or has lost their card on course and been obliged to punch multiple controls on the map, this is considered to be the competitor's fault as they did not take care of their equipment.

Appendix 9 Event Report Form

SIMPLIFIED OA EVENT CONTROLLERS' REPORT FOR EVENTS COVERED BY THESE RULES

Date of event: Race format:

Venue: Level:

Controller: Organiser:

Course planner:

IN THE LEAD-UP TO THE EVENT

Controllers should be satisfied that all of the following are carried out:

1   Initial event information distributed in a timely fashion

2   Organiser and course planner are familiarised with OA Rules and Guidelines

3   Course planner familiar with the required course requirement for the event format

4   Were Course/Class combinations clearly defined prior to course planning?

5   Event permissions and assembly area

6   Draft courses supplied in an adequate time frame

7   Control site identification in field adequate for the controller

8   Communication with course planner and organiser

9   Event organising team in place

10   Map corrections done as required

11   Map preparation – scale, legend etc

12   Course and event information detailed enough and available in enough time to participants

13   Did event information include notification of any rule deviations?

14   Supervising start draw; was enough lead time allowed?

15   Supervising map printing and course overprinting

16   Control placement and placement of SI units

17   Supervising numbering of controls in OCAD (or equivalent software) and OE/MT/OS

18   Start process planned

19   Finish process planned

20   Plan/Responsibilities for publishing results and news reports to Internet in place

Please comment on any issues with the above.

AFTER THE EVENT

1   Did courses meet winning times and was water on course adequate?   Y/N

2   Was map quality and course overprinting satisfactory?   Y/N

3   Any start issues, including maps & control descriptions?   Y/N

4   Any finish/timing issues?   Y/N

5   Any access/landowner/environmental issues?   Y/N

6   Complaints - if any occurred, document the nature of the complaint, how it was dealt with, and the outcome, i.e. resolution or progression to protest.

7   Protests – as above.

8   Document deviations from the rules which occurred; and the reasons why.

9   What went well and is worth trying again.

10   What didn't go according to plan, and is a lesson learned!

11   Please comment on any other event issues that may be useful other controllers and event organisers.

Please comment on the above as required

Summary of Significant Rule Updates September 2024

Rule/Item	Change
3.3	**Change from 3 races to 2 races for a State Championships event to be included in the National MTBO Series.**
Appendix 2 Clause 1.2	**Additional paragraph to clarify risk management for Sprint Distance course planning in urban areas or educational campuses.**
Appendix 2 Clause 1.3	**New wording to clarify map specification and use in Sprint Distance course planning.**
Appendix 8 Clause 2	New paragraph to clarify what constitutes punching evidence in a competition.

Changes expected to lead to substantive changes in the running of events (beyond existing practice) are shown in bold.