INTERNATIONAL ORIENTEERING FEDERATION

PreO

sprint specifications

Version 1.0

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Rationale for new format

TOC has worked on the development of a potential new format that is equivalent to a "middle distance" event in TrailO. The PreO Sprint will be a fast format with a focus on accurate decisions. Course length and decision times are much shorter than a classic PreO, but the number of correct decisions is still the primary classifier. Making fast decisions is also rewarded as the tiebreaker. The format removes time and personnel-intensive timed control stations and is thus comparably easy to organise and compatible with large competitor fields. Decisions are whether a flag is at the correct place or not, allowing for the development of simple electronic devices to record binary answers from competitors. For those reasons, we anticipate that this format might quickly become the most attractive and frequently organised TrailO competition format and also a potential addition to the major event calendar as a third individual discipline.

Steps to implementation

We invite organisers of national and international competitions to test out the new format according to the specifications below in the coming season and provide an event report to the IOF TrailO commission (TOC) via Anne Straube (anne@trail-o.de).

Please indicate:

- any difficulties with implementing an event based on the specifications.
- any deviations from the specifications made and their reasons.
- feedback from competitors and officials.
- supply a detailed ranking of competitors with and without applying the proposed handicap system.

Based on the feedback, TOC will either: after any necessary revisions, recommend to the IOF Council approval as an official new format; modify the specification for further testing; or discontinue the work.

PreO Sprint Specifications

1.1. The profile

PreO Sprint combines precision with high-speed decision making. It tests the athletes' ability to read and interpret the map in complex terrain and make accurate decisions quickly. The total distance of the PreO Sprint course is to be kept as short as possible and it should only be possible for the best competitors to solve all problems correctly within the maximal allowed time. A terrain that cannot provide this challenge is not appropriate for the PreO Sprint. Therefore, urban areas and parks that are suitable for TempO competitions might not be appropriate to use for a PreO Sprint.

1.2. The course

Courses shall have a minimum of 20 controls. There should be only A/Z tasks that can be solved in free order. Exactly one flag is placed in the terrain for each task, either at the position at the centre of the control circle (answer A) or at least 4 m (8 m for controls on large area and long line features or more than 50 m from the viewing point) away from the correct location (answer Z) in line with IOF Guidelines for Zero tasks.

The maximal allowed time shall be 30 minutes or less; it is calculated as 1 minute per 30 m plus 1 minute per control. The total course distance (i.e. from start to finish and passing all decision points) must not

exceed 15 m per control. Therefore, a typical PreO course would have 20 controls along a trail of 300 m length. However, if required, the course can be split into two or three sections with a timed-out section in-between. Separate maps to be handed out at the beginning of each section. The total distance including timed-out sections should be kept below 1 km.

The course should be on a flat track or area, ideally with a hard smooth surface, with a minimal width of 2.5m to permit wheelchairs passing. Timed-out sections should be used to allow wheelchair users to navigate through non-flat sections of the course and to connect different parts of the area with interesting features with minimal competition distance.

Visibility of the area should be good to limit clustering of competitors at viewing points. While flags should be positioned so that they can be viewed from different positions along the track, viewing points should be marked in the terrain in numerical order along the path to indicate a position from where the competitor has very clear visibility of a particular control flag – additional flags can be visible from these points. Viewing points should clearly indicate the control number(s). To avoid congestion, each control should have its own viewing point and the minimum distance between viewing points should be 3 m.

1.3. The map

The ISSprOM specification must be followed. The map scale is 1:4000 or 1:3000. It is crucial that the map is accurate for the entire terrain shown on the map that is visible from the track. The map should indicate positions for start, finish and controls for the section of the course, plus maximum allowed time for the entire course. Controls should be numbered consecutively for the entire course. Controls don't need to be connected by lines. Viewing points are not indicated on the map.

1.4. Classification

Classification by total points (one point for each correctly solved control) minus a penalty of 1 point for each 1 min or fraction used past the maximum allowed time. Total time used on the course (minus timed-out sections) will be used as a tiebreaker.

A handicap system to adjust time used based on ground conditions and for manual wheelchair users who cannot use the map while moving will improve direct comparison between all competitors. As a guideline, for manual wheelchair users multiply total time by 0.7, for electric wheelchairs and other competitors with P class eligibility, multiply total time by 0.85.

1.5. Start interval

A time-trial, individual format is used. The start interval should consider terrain visibility and width of the path to limit congestion at viewing points and hindrance on the paths. Especially wheelchair users should be spread across the start list, ideally not starting within 6 min of each other. Timing is to 1 second accuracy. The competitor must have started the timer / punched the section start box before having access to the map. No further decisions can be recorded after passing the finish and in any timed-out sections.

1.6. **Timing and punching**

Each competitor should carry their own punching device, i.e. control card and puncher or an approved electronic device capable of collecting decisions for each control. This is important to avoid additional movement to and queuing at punching stations.

Timing from the start to finish of each section should use approved electronic punching systems or manual timing.