

## **GUIDELINE 2: IRISH MIDDLE DISTANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

(Introduced February 2013, Amended July 2013, July 2015, and January 2017)

### **G2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Middle Distance orienteering requires fast, accurate orienteering for a moderately long period of time.

### **G2.2 THE PROFILE**

The attributes of Middle Distance orienteering are that it takes place on forested or open land, with the terrain of the highest technical standard. The aim of the Planner should be to test the ability of competitors to read and interpret the map, to evaluate and make efficient route choices, and to navigate whilst undertaking physically demanding exercise.

The events are held in daylight. Competitors take part in age classes that have designated recommended winning times; Course Length Ratios that are used to determine course lengths; and technical and physical standards.

It is an Open competition of C2 status where an individual, family, or group member on an IOA or NIOA affiliated club, or a member of a club affiliated to another IOF member Federation, may take part.

### **G2.3 RESPONSIBILITY**

In the case of the Irish Middle Distance Championships, the event is rotated through the four regional Councils or Associations, who will select or invite clubs to tender for staging the event in their region. The organising club shall take financial responsibility for the event unless prior agreement has been reached with the Irish Orienteering Association, or their regional Association.

The organizing club of a competition shall appoint an Organiser who shall be responsible for all aspects of the competition up to the start line and from the finish line and a Planner who shall be responsible for all aspects of the competition from the start line to the finish line. (Rule R5.1.1)

It shall be held under the Rules, Appendices, and Guidelines of the Irish Orienteering Association.

## G2.4 OFFICIALS

Given the importance of these events, the Organiser and Planner should have considerable experience in these roles ideally with previous C2 events, or with larger C3 events.

The Controller shall be an IOA Senior Certified Event Controller, or BOF Grade A, or B, Controller who is a member of an NIOA affiliated club. They shall be appointed by the IOA Executive Committee and shall belong to a different club from the organising club. Any variation in this shall be agreed by the Controller of Technical Standards.

The Controller shall:-

1. Approve the maps, confirming that they meet the IOF ISOM standards, and are of the pre-determined scales as detailed in paragraph G2.8 of this Guideline.
2. Approve the planned courses, ensuring that they are fair, and adhere to the standards as detailed in this Guideline.
3. Approve every control site and each control description by visiting each in the terrain.
4. Approve the placement of control flags at each control site.
5. Approve the printing and production of the competitors' maps and the control description sheets.
6. Ensure that the organisation of the event is appropriate for its status.
7. Review the Risk Assessment carried out by the Organiser and Planner, the safety measures, and the contingency plans.
8. Be present throughout the event.
9. Ensure that the event is held in accordance with the IOA Rules and Guidelines.

No more than 3 weeks after the event the Controller shall send a report to the Controller of Technical Standards. It should include any significant features of the event, and details of any voided courses, complaints or protests.

## G2.5 ORGANISATION

The organisation should be sufficient to cope with the number of competitors expected to attend the event. Particular care is needed in finding a suitable car park and assembly area. The event organisers should normally provide:-

1. An event website for information, start lists, results, copies of previous maps, and on-line entry and payment.
2. The entry closing date as close as possible to the date of the competition but allowing sufficient time for map printing and the preparation of start lists. Rule 10.1.7 states that the final closing date for C2 competitions shall be no earlier than 21 days before the day of the competition, or the first day of a multi-day event.

3. The start list shall be published at least three days before the competition and be on display at the assembly area and at the start.
4. The issue of control description sheets in the start lanes.
5. Where an area has been used for a previous event, unmarked copies of the map should be on display in the assembly area.
6. The same control site format at each control, with a sample on display at the pre-start.
7. A frequently updated results display.
8. A dignified and prestigious prize giving ceremony.

## **G2 6 RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Organiser and Planner should conduct a risk assessment exercise to identify any potential risks, and to consider and implement any mitigating actions that may be required. This should include contingency plans to deal with injured or missing competitors or officials. The [Risk Assessment form](#) on the IOA website should be used for this purpose. It should be completed by the competition Organiser and Planner, and be checked and signed off by the Controller.

## **G2.7 TERRAIN**

The terrain should be generally runnable, of a consistently good technical standard, and of sufficient size to accommodate the M21E course with a winning time in the range of 30 to 35 minutes without undue repetition. The area should not be so steep that the total climb on any course should normally exceed 4% of the shortest sensible route.

## **G2.8 THE MAP**

The map shall comply with the IOF International Specification of Orienteering Maps with a scale of 1:10,000 (enlarged from 1:15,000) and a contour interval of 5m.

In complex areas with intricate detail, larger scale maps with a smaller contour interval may be used provided the request is supported by the competition Controller, and prior permission (at least 6 months) has been given by the Controller of Technical Standards. When permission is granted it should be noted on the event website.

The normal contour interval should be 5.0m but for intricate areas 2.5m contours may be more appropriate.

Competitors' maps shall be protected against moisture and damage.

## **G2.9 EMBARGO**

The competition terrain shall be embargoed as soon as its location is published. The terrain shall not have been used for orienteering for a minimum period of 24 months before the date of the event.

## **G2.10 COURSE PLANNING**

The course standards and recommended winning times for each age class shall be the predominant influences in planning the courses.

The courses planned shall comply with the standards set down in this Guideline, and be in accordance with the principles of planning as detailed in Appendix A: Course Planning Principles.

The standard of the courses shall be worthy of a championship orienteering event and shall comply with the spirit of fairness. There shall be no doubtful controls, no elements of chance as regards route choice, and no map errors that might influence the result of the competition.

Courses shall be offered for age classes from M/W10 to M/W 85 with Elite courses offered for M/W18, M/W20, and M/W21.. Details of the class/course/combinations are contained in paragraph G2.11.

The provision of non-championship classes is at the discretion of the Organiser but the minimum recommended offering is Men Short, Women Short, M18 Short, W18 Short, M16 Short, W16 Short, and Light Green, Orange, and Yellow Colour Coded Courses.

It is also recommended that the Light Green, Orange, and Yellow Colour Coded Courses be made available for entry-on-the-day competitors.

All of the courses should be planned to be as consistently difficult as required by the technical and physical standards with an emphasis on detailed navigation where the finding of the controls should constitute a challenge. Constant concentration on map reading by competitors should be required. Very long legs should be discouraged but short and medium length legs with route choice and frequent changes of direction should be encouraged. The emphasis should be on high speed running for the complexity of the terrain. There will be a greater density of controls than for an equivalent long distance event.

## **G2.11 COURSES, CLASS COMBINATIONS, COURSE STANDARDS, RECOMMENDED WINNING TIMES, COURSE LENGTH RATIOS, AND INDICATIVE COURSE LENGTHS AND CLIMBS**

### G2.11.1 COURSES FOR CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSES

The detailed standards for all of the age classes are contained in table A below. Based on the recommended winning times for each age class the Adjusted Course Lengths (length plus climb) have been calculated using the the recent average winning running speeds of IOC competitors in the Middle Distance Championships.

Course Length Ratios have been calculated by dividing the Adjusted Course Length for each class by the base Adjusted Course Length for the M21E class. Classes with similar Adjusted Course Lengths, Course Length Ratios, and standards of technical and physical difficulty have been grouped together to consolidate a number of classes onto one course.

The Adjusted Course Length refers to the actual course length that is adjusted for height climb by adding 0.1km to the course length for every 10m of climb e.g. if the course length of the M21E course is 5.6k and the climb is 170m, the Adjusted Course Length is 7.3k.

The definitions of the grades of technical and physical difficulty are given in Appendix A Course Planning Principles.

The Course Length Ratios should be used to determine the possible course lengths and climbs for each course. A critical factor in planning the courses that meet the recommended winning times of the various age classes is the base M21E course length and climb. To meet its 32.5 minute winning target using an assumed winner's running speed of 4.45mpk indicates an Adjusted Course Length of 7.3k that could be provided by a course length of 5.6k and 170m climb. Obviously if the planned climb is less the course length should be increased accordingly.

This exercise is very sensitive to the assumed M21E winning competitor's running speed. In arriving at an assumed speed for the M21E course, previous results on the terrain, or similar, should be examined, or alternatively several legs on the prospective course should be run to establish the likely winning running speed. It is very important that the assumed M21E winning speed is correct.

Indicative course lengths, climbs, and gradients are included in the table below purely as a guide for Planners, but the actual course details may be different due to the expected and assumed running speeds.

The indicative figures for the M and W 21E classes assume a maximum permitted gradient of 3%, with a tapering off of the gradient as competitor ages increase or decrease. If the terrain for the prospective courses offers less climb and hence a lower gradient, course lengths should be increased accordingly.

Table A: Recommended Winning Times, Adjusted Course Lengths, Course Length Ratios, Indicative Course Lengths, and Technical and Physical Standards for the Championship Classes

Course No	Class	Recommended Winning Times (mins)	Adjusted Course Length (k)*	Course Length Ratio	Indicative Course Length (k)	Indicative Climb (m)	Indicative Gradient%	Technical Difficulty (1-5)	Physical Difficulty (1-5)
1	M21E, M18E, M20E	32.5	7.30	1.00	5.6	170	3.0	5	5
2	M35, M40, M45, M50	32.5	5.89	0.81	4.6	130	2.8	5	5
3	W21E, W18E, W20E	32.5	5.70	0.79	4.4	130	3.0	5	5
4	M16, M55, M60, W35	32.5	4.60	0.67	3.6	100	2.8	5	4
5	M65, W16, W40, W45, W50, W55, W60	32.5	4.14	0.55	3.2	90	2.8	5	3
6	M70, M14, W65, W14	25.0	4.03	0.43	2.5	60	2.4	4	3
7	M12, W12,	20.0	2.45	0.34	2.1	35	1.7	3	2
8	M75, M80, W70, W75	25.0	2.29	0.30	1.9	40	2.1	4	2
9	M10, W10	15.0	1.65	0.23	1.45	20	1.4	2	2
10	M85, W80, W85,	15.0	1.55	0.21	1.35	20	1.5	4	2

\* Course Length Ratios refer to course lengths which are corrected for height climb by adding 0.1 km for every 10m of climb to the length of the course.

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### G2.11.2 COURSES FOR NON-CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSES

No Short courses, or Long Courses where an Elite age class is available, shall be offered. Competitors requiring an easier course than that offered for their age class should enter either the Men's, Women's, M/W18 Short, M/W16 Short classes, or one of the offered colour courses.

The allocation of these non-championship classes to the courses of the main competition, and their standards should be as follows:-

Table B: Non-championship classes

Class	Course No	Indicative Course Length (k)	Indicative Course Climb (m)	Indicative Gradient %	Technical Difficulty (1-5)	Physical Difficulty (1-5)
Men Short	4	3.6	100	2.8	5	4
Women Short	5	3.2	90	2.8	5	3
M/W18 Short, Light Green	6	2.5	60	2.4	4	3
M/W16 Short, Orange	7	2.1	35	1.7	3	2
Yellow	9	1.45	20	1.4	2	2

Competitors in these non-championship classes shall be started in a separate block either before and/or after the starting block of championship competitors on their course.

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### G2.11.3 ENTRY-ON-THE-DAY COURSES

If offered, these shall be the Light Green, Orange, and Yellow Colour Coded Courses. Competitors on these courses will start in a separate block after the pre-entered competitors.

## **G2.12 ELIGIBILITY TO BE IRISH MIDDLE DISTANCE CHAMPION OR IRISH MIDDLE DISTANCE CLASS WINNER**

Rule 5.5 states that the requirements to be classed as the Irish Middle Distance Champion in the M21E and W21E classes, and the Irish Middle Distance Class Winner in all other age classes as detailed in paragraph G2.11, are:-

- (C) That they are an individual, family, or group member of an IOA or NIOA affiliated club, and
- (D) That they meet either of the following conditions:-
  - (iii) they qualify for Irish citizenship through birth, descent, naturalisation, or marriage in accordance with the Nationality and Citizenship Acts 1956 to 2004, or
  - (iv) they have been present on the island of Ireland for at least six out of the twelve months immediately preceding the Championship event.

## **G2.13 START TIME ALLOCATION**

Start time allocation is the responsibility of the Organiser.

Start time allocation shall be carried out in accordance with Rule R10.2 Start Times and Starting Order.

No entries shall be accepted after the published final closing time and date. Entries may be accepted on the day of the competition for the non-championship Light Green, Orange, and Yellow colour coded classes, if offered.

The start window should normally last for two hours with a minimum starting interval of two minutes between competitors on the same course. The starting interval for the Elite classes shall be a minimum of four minutes.

For the Elite championship classes (M/W18, 20, & 21), the competitors' start times on each course shall be spread over the entire start window, or most of the start window, with equal starting intervals and no breaks. Their starting order shall be the reverse of the most recent ranking of Irish Elites as determined by the IOA Selection Committee, with the highest ranked competitor starting last. Overseas competitors should be slotted into the starting order based on their IOF Ranking. Un-ranked Irish and Overseas competitors shall be placed at the beginning of the starting order, with their starting order determined by a random ballot.

For Courses 1 and 3 that are shared by several Elite classes, they shall be sub-divided into a sequence of separate age class blocks. On Course 1, the starting order shall be the M18E, M20E, and M21E classes, and on Course 3 it shall be W18E, W20E, and then W21E. Competitors in each age class block shall start with equal start intervals and no breaks.

Where two Elite family members request split start times the lower ranked competitor should be placed in the early start group of un-ranked competitors and their starting time determined by the random ballot for that group. The start time for the second Elite competitor should be determined in the normal manner by the ranking process. If this is unlikely to provide enough time between the first and second competitors, the Organiser could place the first starter at the beginning of the starting order for their course. If the time interval is still judged to be insufficient, the second starter shall be started after the highest ranked Elite competitor but with a time interval double that for the course.

For the non-Elite classes, the competitors' start times on each course shall be spread evenly over the start window but with a vacant slot allocated for competitors who arrive late for their allocated start time after every five pre-entered competitors with at least one slot in every 30 minutes of the start window.

Where entry numbers are small on a particular course the competitors may be spread evenly over a shorter time period within the overall start window.

Competitors in the non-Elite classes should be able to request an early, middle or late start time. At the beginning of the allocation process, competitors who have not requested a particular start block should be allocated evenly to one of the three start blocks by way of a random ballot. Following that a random ballot should determine the starting order within each block, and by amalgamating the three blocks the overall start list for that course will be produced.

Competitors from the same club in the non-Elite classes may not start consecutively. If they are drawn to start consecutively, the next competitor drawn shall be inserted between them. If this happens at the end of the draw the competitor before them shall be inserted between them.

For the entry-on-the-day non-championship colour coded courses the competitors' start times shall be determined by the Start Officials within their allocated start block.

To avoid any interference with competitors on the championship courses, it is recommended that competitors who have entered the non-championship classes on the same course, should be started in a block in the early part of the overall start window before the block of championship competitors. Competitors who enter on the day of the competition shall start in a separate block after all pre-entered competitors have started.

The starting order shall be approved by the competition Controller before it is published, and be publically available no later than three days before the competition.

## **G2.14 LATE STARTS**

The policy for dealing with competitors who arrive late for their allocated start time should be set in advance by the Organiser, and be notified in the event details.

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### **G2.14.1 THE RECOMMENDED POLICY FOR THE ELITE CLASSES FOLLOWS THE IOF CONVENTION.**

Elite competitors who arrive late for their allocated start time through their own fault shall be timed as if they had started at their original start time. If the competitor is at the start line less than half the start interval for their course after their allocated start time, they shall be allowed to start immediately. If the competitor is at the start line later than half of the start interval, they shall be allowed to start at the next available half start interval.

In order to administer this policy, it is suggested that a separate start lane be operated for the Elite competitors who will have a 'timed' start and not a 'punching' start. Any competitor starting late will have their actual start time recorded by a SI start unit that will be retained by a Start Official specifically for use with late Elite starters, just in case a complaint is subsequently made by the competitor.

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### **G2.14. 2 THE RECOMMENDED POLICY FOR THE NON-ELITE CLASSES**

Competitors in these classes who arrive late for their allocated start time through their own fault shall be started on the next vacant start slot on their course. Their actual start time should be recorded on the start list just in case of a subsequent complaint.

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### **G2.14.3 COMPETITORS WHO ARE LATE DUE TO AN ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEM**

Competitors who are late for their allocated start time through an organisational problem, shall be timed from a new allocated start time.

## **G2.15 FINISH AND TIMEKEEPING**

Electronic punching shall be used and shall either be SPORTident or Emit, with the same system being used for race timing. A punching finish should be used where the competitor finishes by punching a SI or Emit unit on the finish line.

## **G2.16 SHADOWING**

The shadowing of any competitor in the Championships is not permitted. Competitors who are shadowed should declare themselves as non-competitive. The person doing the shadowing who is a competitor in another age class should have completed their course before shadowing a competitor. If they compete afterwards, then they should declare themselves as non-competitive.