RULE 1 – GENERAL

This section covers the general rules of foot orienteering in Ireland.

R1.1 Definitions

R1.1.1 Orienteering is a sport in which the competitors 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.

R1.1.2 This document titled 'Competition Rules, Appendices, and Guidelines for foot orienteering events' compromises the Rules, Appendices, and Guidelines and will hereafter be referred to as 'The Rules'. Where any contradiction arises between a Rule, Appendix, or a Guideline, the Rule shall take precedence. The Rules, Appendices, and Guidelines may be amended from time to time by the OI Management Group.

R1.1.3 In individual interval start races the competitors navigate and run through the terrain independently.

R1.1.4 In mass start and chasing start races, competitors may often be running in close proximity to each other, but the formats still demand independent navigation.

R1.1.5 The term competitor means an individual of either gender or a group of individuals, as appropriate. The use of the word they in this document shall refer to both male and female competitors.

R1.1.6 Types of orienteering competition may be distinguished by:

- **The time of the competition:**
  - ***Day*** (in daylight)
  - ***Night*** (in the dark)
- **The nature of the competition:**
  - ***Individual*** (the individual performs independently)
  - ***Relay*** (two or more team members run consecutive individual races)
  - ***Team*** (two or more individuals collaborate)

- **The way of determining the competition result:**
  - ***Single-Race competition*** (the 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 over 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 controls are to be visited:**
  - ***In a specific order*** (the sequence is prescribed)
  - ***In no specific order*** (the competitor is free to choose the order)

- **The control set-up:**
  - ***Traditional*** (the controls have codes and the competitor is disqualified for mispunching)
  - ***Micr-o*** (the controls have no codes, there are extra nearby dummy controls, and the competitor receives a penalty for mispunching

- **The length (or format) of the race:**
  - *Long distance*
  - *Middle distance*
  - *Sprint*
  - *Other distances*

R1.1.7 The term *Federation (*in this case Orienteering Ireland*)* means a full member Federation of the IOF.

R1.1.8 OI Guidelines for each event type should be followed. Significant deviations require the consent of the Controller of Technical Standards.

R1.2. Definition of terms

The following definitions and interpretations apply to the Rules. Any word or term defined in the OI Constitution takes the same definition in the Rules.

R1.2.1 The term ***OI*** *means* Orienteering Ireland.

R1.2.2 The term ***IOF*** means the International Orienteering Federation, of which OI is a member Federation.

R1.2.3 The term ***NIOA*** means Northern Ireland Orienteering Association that is a regional association of British Orienteering.

R1.2.4 The word ***shall****,* will be treated as a command in the Rules.

R1.2.5 The word ***should****,* implies a recommendation with which competitors and officials will endeavour to comply.

R1.2.7 *To* ***compete*** means to take part in a competition with the competitor's result being used to determine the final position of all competitors in the results. The terms '***competition'*** and '***race'*** have the same meaning in the Rules the term ***non-competitive*** refers to a competitor's result not determining the final position of competitors in the results.

R1.2.8 The ***competition area*** means the terrain on which the race takes place.

R1.2.9 The term ***event*** embraces all aspects of an orienteering meeting including organisational matters such as start draws, team officials' meetings and ceremonies. It may include more than one competition.

R1.2.10 An ***orienteering club*** is an association of persons united in their interest in orienteering and their participation in orienteering activities (although not necessarily exclusively so), for which a written constitution exists, which has been accepted as a valid orienteering club by OI, and for which the appropriate affiliation fees are paid up to date. For the purpose of this definition the activities of an orienteering club shall include the practice of orienteering, the organisation of orienteering competitions, the production of maps for orienteering, and the proper administration of the club.

R1.2.11 A ***specialist orienteering club*** is an orienteering club that confines itself mainly to the activities of orienteering.

R1.2.12 A ***non-specialist orienteering club*** is an orienteering club that mainly engages in sports and leisure activities other than the activities of orienteering.

R1.2.13 A ***closed orienteering club*** means an orienteering club which restricts membership to individuals belonging to an institution or organisation (school, college, university, firm or Defence Forces unit or formation) and which does not accept outside membership by invitation.

R1.2.14 An ***open orienteering club*** means any orienteering club other than a closed club.

R1.2.15 In the Rules any reference to an **orienteering club** includes closed and open, specialist and non-specialist orienteering clubs unless stated otherwise.

R1.2.16 ***Juniors*** are individuals who will not have reached the age of 21 on 31 December of the year in question. A ***Senior*** in a particular year is an individual who is aged 21 years or older on 31st of December.

R1.2.17 *A **club member*** is a registered member of an orienteering club. Categories of club membership include "senior", "junior", "family" and "group". Senior and Junior members of an orienteering club are individual members of the club. Valid members of a family for the purpose of defining family membership of an orienteering club are the parents or guardians of the family and children of the family who are under 21 years of age. Members of a group for the purpose of defining group membership of an orienteering club are valid members of the group according to the rules that govern membership of the group.

R1.2.18 ***Open competitions*** are competitions to which entry is not restricted to members of specific clubs or organisations. Such competitions are open to everyone.

R1.2.19 ***Closed competition events*** are competitions other than *open competition events.*

R1.2.20 A ***non-competitive event*** is an orienteering event where timing is not employed e.g. introductory or training events.

R1.2.21 ***Pre-race information*** means information communicated to competitors prior to the day of the competition.

R1.2.22 ***Registration*** means the location where competitors may make entries to the race on the day of the competition (if permitted).

R1.3 General Provisions

R1.3.1 APPLICABILITY

R1.3.1.1 The Rules in their entirety shall apply to all *open competition events* held in Ireland or elsewhere by Orienteering Ireland and to all affiliated clubs and Regional Councils. The Rules shall be binding on all competitors, team officials and all other persons connected with the organisation of the competition or in contact with the competitors.

R1.3.1.2 The Rules and Appendices relating to 'Fairness' (para. R1.3.2), 'Respect for Property and the Public' (para. R1.3.3), 'Event Safety' (para. R1.3.4), 'Doping Control' (Appendix B), and 'Map Registration' (Appendix E) shall apply to all other orienteering competitions i.e. *non-competitive events* and *closed competition events.*

R1.3.1.3 Competitors taking part in competitions to which these Rules apply shall be deemed to have accepted them. Ignorance of the Rules, or any other instructions issued by the Organiser by way of notice (whether by pre-race information or information prominently displayed at the competition), shall not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of any infringement of the Rules.

R1.3.1.4 Rules may be waived under the following conditions provided the requested deviation from the Rules is reasonable.

(1) At all *open competitions* where circumstances indicate that it is appropriate for a specific Rule to be waived, the Controller may permit this, provided due notification is given to competitors,

(2) For all competitions of C2 status or lower, the OI Controller of Technical Standards may, upon application by a Regional Council, waive or modify any Rule,

(3) For all competitions of C1 status, the IOF appointed Controller or Technical Director may waive or modify any Rule.

R1.3.2 FAIRNESS

R1.3.2.1 All persons taking part in an orienteering competition shall behave with fairness and honesty. They shall maintain a sporting attitude and a spirit of friendship. Competitors shall show respect for each other, for officials, journalists, spectators and the inhabitants of the competition area. Competitors shall be as quiet as possible in the terrain.

R1.3.2.2 Competitors shall not seek any unfair advantage over other competitors. Specifically, competitors shall not seek unfair help or information from other competitors, team officials, event officials or spectators before or during the competition. Competitors shall not collaborate in any way. Spectators and

team officials shall not influence the competition and shall remain in the areas assigned to them. No unauthorised persons shall enter the race area.

R1.3.2.3 In competitions other than mass-start competitions, relay competitions, and races where chasing starts are employed (i.e. races in which the first competitor or team to cross the finish line wins) an individual competitor shall not intentionally run with or behind another competitor in order to profit from their skill. The term chasing start refers to competitor start time intervals determined from a previous competition(s).

R1.3.2.4 Any search for the competition course or inspection of the competition area before the race is forbidden.

R1.3.2.5 A competitor who has trained in an area either;

(1) After the area has been published in the OI Fixtures List or elsewhere as the competition area for a competition of C2 status or above, or for a selection event to the national team,

Or

(2) Knowing that it will be used for such a competition or selection event, shall notify the Organiser of the competition and shall be treated as a non-competitive entrant in the race.

R1.3.2.6 It is forbidden for a competitor to indulge in any form of doping. Appendix B (Doping Control) defines the responsibilities of competitors, officials, OI, and other organisations with respect to Doping Control in Irish orienteering.

R1.3.2.7 A competitor who is demonstrated to have broken any of the Rules relating to Fairness (para. R1.3.2) shall be disqualified unless there are sufficient reasons not to disqualify.

R1.3.3 RESPECT FOR PROPERTY AND THE PUBLIC

R1.3.3.1 Nothing shall be done to damage the goodwill of landowners, their tenants, or agents. Competitors shall comply with all requests made by such persons and notified to them by the Organiser. Respect and consideration shall be shown to all members of the public in or near the competition area.

R1.3.3.2 Competitors and officials shall ensure that every effort is made to ensure that no damage is done to the environment and shall co-operate with those responsible for environmental conservation. No litter shall be left.

R1.3.3.3 The existence of an orienteering map does not of itself give the right of access to any area.

R1.3.3.4 Prior to the date of the competition the Organiser shall obtain full permission (preferably in writing) for orienteering from the landowners and their tenants or agents, for any land likely to be used by the competition.

Any areas for which such permission is not obtained, or is refused, shall be indicated as out of bounds on the competition map. If pre-marked maps are not used competitors shall ensure that they accurately note out of bounds areas given by the Organiser as map corrections.

R1.3.3.5 Competitors shall treat as out of bounds,

(1) Yards and gardens

(2) Sown land, or land with standing crops (including hay)

(3) Railways

(4) Motorways

(5) Industrial lands/quarries unless the Organiser has given specific instructions to the contrary.

R1.3.3.6 Competitors shall not enter out of bounds areas and shall be liable to disqualification if they do so.

R1.3.3.7 Any competitor whose right to be in an area is challenged shall stop, explain their presence, comply with any reasonable request (even if this means abandoning a race) and inform the person making the challenge of the location of a responsible official. The competitor shall give an account of the occurrence to the Organiser (or, if they is not available, another responsible official) as soon as possible.

R1.3.3.8 Crossing points shall be used where indicated on the map unless the Organiser has instructed that their use is optional.

R1.3.3.9 Competitors shall take care to avoid any damage and shall report to a responsible official any damage done or seen to have been done.

R1.3.4 DISPUTES REGARDING THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES

R1.3.5.1 The OI Technical Sub-Committee shall decide any dispute regarding the interpretation of the Rules with sporting fairness being the guiding principle.

R1.3.5.2 In the absence of a specific Rule, or Rules required for other orienteering disciplines such as MTBO or Trail-O, then the appropriate Rules of the International Orienteering Federation shall apply.