# RULE 8 – COURSES

## R8.1 Courses

R8.1.1 The OI Principles for Course Planning (see Appendix A) shall be followed.

R8.1.2 The standard of courses shall be worthy of the grade of competition as detailed in the Guidelines. They shall test the navigational skill, concentration, and running ability of the competitors and shall call upon a range of orienteering techniques. Courses for classic distance competitions shall require route choice.

R8.1.3 Courses shall be appropriate to the age, gender, and orienteering ability of the expected competitors and should, be planned in accordance with the competition Guidelines for the different age and gender classes.

R8.1.4 The course length for cross-country competitions shall be given as the length of the straight line from the start via the controls to the finish deviating for, and only for, physically impassable obstructions (fences marked not to be crossed, lakes, impassable cliffs etc., prohibited areas and marked routes).

R8.1.5 For Urban competitions, the course length shall be given as the straight line via the controls to the finish as shown by the line on the map apart from any deviation to pass through a compulsory crossing point.

R8.1.5A For Sprint competitions, the course length shall be given as the straight line via the controls along the shortest permitted route to the finish as shown by the line on the map, apart from any deviation to pass through compulsory crossing points or around buildings etc.

R8.1.6 The total climb shall be given as the climb in metres along the shortest sensible route. The total climb of a course should normally not exceed 4% of the length of the shortest sensible route, which might not be the same as the route on which the distance is measured.

R8.1.7 In individual competitions, the controls may be combined differently for the competitors such as with butterfly loops, but all competitors shall run in the same direction all legs of the overall course.

R8.1.8 In relay competitions, the controls shall be combined differently for the teams, but all teams shall run in the same direction all of the legs of the overall course.

R8.1.9 Where the terrain only allows courses of Technical Difficulty 1, 2, 3, and 4 to be planned, the Planner should plan to the correct level for those courses and accept that courses requiring Technical Difficulty 5 will be at TD 4 – the highest the terrain allows.

R8.1.10 The physical difficulty of courses should progressively decrease as the age of competitors increases especially in the oldest age classes.

R8.1.11 Course drawing for level C1, C2, and C3 competitions shall be in accordance with the current version of the IOF International Specification for Orienteering Maps (ISOM) or the IOF International Specification for Sprint Maps (ISSOM). The general requirements are detailed in Appendix AE.2.1. Any variation from these shall be advised to competitors in the competition details.

## R8.2 Out of Bounds, Crossing Points and Compulsory routes

R8.2.1 Out-of-bounds or dangerous areas, forbidden routes, line features that shall not be crossed, etc. shall be marked on the map as 'forbidden to cross'. If necessary, they shall be marked on the ground. Competitors shall not enter out-of-bounds or dangerous areas; follow forbidden routes; or cross forbidden to cross features.

R8.2.2 Compulsory routes, crossing points, and passages shall be marked clearly on the map and on the ground. Competitors shall follow the entire length of any marked section of their course. Tape other than yellow or yellow/black shall be used to identify these routes and features in the terrain.

R8.2.3 Sensitive environmental areas such as those with rare wildlife, vegetation, or flowers shall be marked out-of-bounds on the maps and shall be strictly observed by all persons connected with the competition.

R8.2.4 Course lines on competitors' maps at all competitions other than sprint and urban events shall not cross un-crossable features, and they should be diverted around the feature or to a compulsory crossing point when used.

## R8.3. Control Set-up and Equipment

R8.3.1 The control point given on the map shall be clearly marked on the ground and be equipped to enable the competitors to prove their passage.

R8.3.2 Each control point shall be marked by a control flag consisting of three squares, about 30 cm x 30 cm, arranged in a triangular form. Each square shall be divided diagonally, one half being white and the other orange (PMS 165). Other types of marker may be used at level C4 (club) competitions. Any variation of this for C1 or C2 status competitions should be agreed by the Controller of Technical Standards.

R8.3.4 The flag shall be hung at the feature indicated on the map in accordance with the control description. The flag shall be visible to competitors when they can see the described position.

R8.3.5 Controls on different features shall not be sited within 30 metres of each other. The distance between controls is measured in a straight line. Sprint and Urban are covered in R.8.3.6A.

R8.3.6 Controls on the same or similar features shall not be sited within 60 metres of each other. The distance between controls is measured in a straight line. Sprint and Urban are covered in R.8.3.6A.

R8.3.6A For Sprint and Urban map scales 1:5000 or larger, the minimum running distance between controls is 25m and the minimum straight-line distance is 15m and there is no requirement for adjacent controls to be on distinctly different features.

R8.3.7 A control shall be sited so that the presence of a person punching does not significantly help nearby competitors to find the control.

R8.3.8 Each control shall be identified with a code number, which shall be fixed to the control so that a competitor using the marking device can clearly read the code. Numbers less than 31 may not be used. Numbers easily confused (e.g. 66, 68, 86, 89, 98, 99) should not be used. The figures shall be black on white, between 5 and 10 cm in height and have a line thickness of 5 to 10 mm. Horizontally displayed codes shall be underlined if they could be misinterpreted by being read upside down.

R8.3.9 To improve the passage of the competitors, there shall be a sufficient number of punching devices in the immediate vicinity of the control flag.

R8.3.10 In competitions of C1 and C2 status all controls where there is a risk of tampering by the public shall be secured or locked to the location.

R8.3.11 At competitions of C1 and C2 status the layout of the control marker, code and marking devices should be the same for all controls. A model control should be displayed at the pre-start.

## R8.4 Punching Systems

R8.4.1 Only IOF approved punching systems shall be used for level C1, C2, and C3 competitions.

R8.4.2 Competitors shall be responsible for punching their control card at each control using the punching devise provided.

R8.4.3 The competitor's control card must clearly show that all controls have been visited in the correct order.

R8.4.4 A competitor with a missing record of punching a control station, or an unidentifiable record. shall not be placed in the results unless it can be established with certainty that the punch missing or unidentifiable is not the competitor's fault. It is recommended for level C1 and C2 competitions that a back-up needle punch be provided at the control.

R8.4.5 Competitors who lose their control card, omit a control, or visit controls in the wrong order shall be disqualified.

## R8.5 Control Descriptions

R8.5.1 The precise location of the controls shall be defined by control descriptions.

R8.5.2 The control descriptions for level C1, C2, and C3 competitions shall be in the form of symbols and in accordance with the current version of the IOF International Specification for Control Descriptions. This is available on the OI website. Control descriptions for junior classes (ages 10, 12, and 14) and beginners' classes should be in English.

R8.5.3 For competitions of C1 or C2 status, the control descriptions shall be fixed to or printed to the front or back side of the competition map.

R8.5.4 For interval start competitions of C1 and C2 status, separate control description lists for each competitor on each course shall be available at the pre-start or in the start lanes but shall not be available before that point.

## R8.6 Water Stations

R.8.6.1 Any course with a winning time over 75 minutes must have water provision at least once (ideally between 50-70% of the course distance).