

Event Guideline I: The Harvester Relays

1. General Information

1.1 Nature of Event

- 1.1.1 The Harvester Trophy is an overnight relay competition for teams of seven or five runners. These are referred to as the A course and B course respectively.
- 1.1.2 The Harvester was first staged by the Combined Harvesters club (hence the name) and is based on similar events in Scandinavia such as the Tio Mila and Jukola.
- 1.1.3 The Harvester Trophy should be part of the main competition season. This means it should be in May or June, ideally after the British Championships but before summer ground vegetation decreases the quality of the chosen area. It has traditionally been held as close to Midsummer as possible.
- 1.1.4 The Harvester Trophy is a Level 2 event.

1.2 Eligibility

- 1.2.1 All competitors shall be either National or Local Members of British Orienteering, or a member of another federation affiliated to the IOF.
- 1.2.2 All members of a team shall be members of the same club, which must be affiliated either to British Orienteering or to another member federation of the IOF.

1.3 Terrain

- 1.3.1 The terrain should provide good runnability at night. Areas that suffer from ground vegetation, thick forest or overly physical terrain should be avoided.
- 1.3.2 The venue and officials shall be approved by the Major Events co-ordinator.

1.4 Officials

- 1.4.1 The officials for the event shall meet the requirements set out for a Level 2 event in Appendix C (Event Officials).
- 1.4.2 The officials should have previous experience of relays and night events.

2. Organisational Requirements

2.1 Start arrangements

- 2.1.1 Each of the two Premier winning teams should be in need of a headlight for about 67% of their running times. From this the time of sunrise should dictate start times for each course.
- 2.1.2 All first lap runners should take part in a mass start. There should be separate mass starts for the A and B courses, with the B course mass start likely to be approximately one and a half hours after the A course mass start.

2.2 Changeover arrangements

- 2.2.1 Particular care needs to be taken over the layout of the changeover area to ensure that it is clear to incoming and outgoing runners what to do, even at night.

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- 2.2.2 Various methods for map exchange have been used. Recent events have made use of map trees, where the outgoing runner is responsible for collecting the map after the handover. This has worked well.
- 2.2.3 There should be light and shelter at the changeover area (e.g. a large tent or marquee) to provide shelter for outgoing runners who may have to wait some time for their incoming runner.

2.3 Mini Mass Starts

- 2.3.1 It is inevitable that in an event of this sort some teams will get a long way behind the leaders. It is therefore usual to have one or more mini mass starts.
- 2.3.2 Teams taking part in a mini mass start shall remain competitive. A team's time shall be calculated as the total time of all runners, taking account of the mini mass starts.
- 2.3.3 Teams with a chance of finishing in the top three in their class should not go out in a mini mass start. This means that the timing of a mini mass start must be carefully chosen in order not to be too early. For example, the leaders in the Handicap Class on the A course may be a long way behind the Premier teams after five or six laps, but they may still be involved in head to head relay racing.

3. Planning Requirements

3.1 Courses and Classes

- 3.1.1 Note that this is partly determined by the fact that by 1995 there were seven different permanent trophies for the Harvester. The courses and classes shall be as follows:

Course	Laps	Class	Comment
A	7	Men's Premier (Harvester Trophy)	Open.
A	7	Handicap (Handicap Trophy)	A class for teams of mixed sex and age.
A	7	Small Club (Sutton Park Trophy)	"Small" is not defined by membership size but by competitive record. Currently not finishing in the top three positions at any time in the previous five years is the criterion used.
B	5	Women's Premier (Panasonic Trophy)	Open.
B	5	Junior (Happy Harvester Trophy)	A class for teams of M/W 20 and under.
B	5	Women's Handicap (Star Posts Trophy)	A class for Women's teams of mixed age.
B	5	Handicap (Devilla Trophy)	A class for teams of mixed sex and age.

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- 3.1.2 If a team is eligible for more than one class on a particular course, and wishes to compete for more than one Trophy, then they shall declare this on the team declaration form.
- 3.1.3 In the event of a team winning more than one class for which they have declared themselves eligible then they shall only receive one Trophy according to the following order of precedence:
- Course A - Men's Premier; Handicap; Small Club
 - Course B - Women's Premier; Junior; Women's Handicap; Handicap
- with the next placed eligible team receiving the lower order Trophy.

3.2 Winning times

- 3.2.1 Men's Premier should be won in around seven hours.
- 3.2.2 Women's Premier should be won in around 5 hours, although there may be faster teams competing (in other categories) on the B Course.

3.3 Lap lengths

- 3.3.1 One does not want to be too prescriptive here in order to allow the planner free rein to create the best courses. Usually the Harvester requires very few basic course variants.
- 3.3.2 The only mandatory requirement is that there must be varied lap lengths. This tests team selection as well as allowing clubs to make up teams with weaker runners. Typically the longest lap should be around twice the shortest (perhaps slightly more on A, less on B).
- 3.3.3 Longest day laps should be around the length of the M21L course at Regional Events. The planner should also aim to maximise the racing aspect and will find this should also reduce workload in terms of numbers of controls and overprints.

3.4 Examples

- 3.4.1 For the A course, 7-5-9-7-9-5-12 seems popular and fits the above requirements (lengths should increase or decrease in proportion to this according to the speed of the area).
- 3.4.2 If using the same lengths on B, this leads to a 5-7-4-5-7 or 5-7-5-4-7 combination. An alternative of 6-4-6-4-8 is the same length and perhaps better proportioned, but leads to 8-6-8-6-8-6-12 on A, which is low on variety. The decision may come down to whether or not the 5,7,9 km laps are of better quality than the 6 and 8 km laps.

3.5 Technical Difficulty

- 3.5.1 The shortest lap on Course B should be of technical difficulty 3.
- 3.5.2 The other laps should be of technical difficulty 5 or 4, depending on the area.
- 3.5.3 Lengths and technical difficulty should be quoted in both the entry details and the final details.

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4. Other Information

4.1 Race presentation

4.1.1 The event is intended to provide a festival atmosphere, and the race site should be chosen and laid out with this in mind.

4.1.2 The following items should be provided:

- Race numbers for all competitors.
- Race commentary, or radio controls feeding back to computer displays.
- Space for club tents with a view of the run-in and changeover.
- Overnight catering.
- One or more spectator controls (if this does not compromise the course planning).
- A quiet area for competitors sleeping in tents.
- Results display.
- Prizegiving ceremony.

4.2 The Handicap System

4.2.1 Each age class is accorded a points value as follows:

Class	10	12	14	16	18	20	21	35	40	45	50	55	60	65+
Men	1	2	4	6	8	9	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Women	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

4.2.2 Each relevant class is permitted a maximum points score from the above table as follows:

Class	Handicap
A Handicap	49 points or under
B Handicap	26 points or under
B Women's Handicap	26 points or under

4.2.3 The handicap system is an excellent way of matching competitive teams where clubs have strengths in different classes. Except for those for women and juniors (two groups to be particularly encouraged) it should be the only way of classifying non-open classes – no 'veterans', no 'only one M21' and definitely no 'B Open'.

4.3 Further advice

4.3.1 Appendices B (course planning), E (event safety), and G (protests, juries and appeals). If you cannot find the answer to a question within the published Rules, Appendices and Guidelines then please contact the Chairman of Rules Group via British Orienteering National Office.