

Appendix L: Selection, Seeding and Start Lists

1. Selection

1.1 Definition

1.1.1 Selection is the process of choosing which entrants are to run in a particular class.

1.2 Selection for Elite Classes at British Championships and JK

1.2.1 The qualification criteria for entry to elite classes at the British and JK are determined annually by the Elite Competitions Steering Group (ECSG). The criteria are published on the British Orienteering website at www.britishorienteering.org.uk

1.3 Selection in General

1.3.1 The number of places available in a class should be as large as possible, subject to the spread of start times and the nature of the terrain. However, cases will arise where the number of entrants to a particular class is larger than the number of places available: this is when selection must occur.

1.3.2 Only the premier class in an age category should be subject to selection.

1.3.3 When demand is such that all entrants cannot be accommodated in the premier class, then two equivalent courses should be provided. For example if M45L is oversubscribed at the British Championships, then two M45L courses (M45L1 and M45L2) of similar length and technical difficulty would be provided. The selection criteria of 1.3.5 below would be applied to choose the runners for M45L1, and the British Champion would be the winner of that class. In other cases where demand is such that all entrants cannot be accommodated on one course, then two equivalent courses should be provided with entrants allocated to the classes at random, e.g. the provision of M21L1 and M21L2 (in addition to M21E) at the JK.

1.3.4 In some cases, the need for selection may be avoided by:

- using a longer start list
- planning separate courses for over-subscribed classes.

1.3.5 Selection should be based on the British Orienteering Ranking Lists, using the most recently published edition at the closing date for entries. This can be obtained from the Rankings pages on the British Orienteering website. Select the following entrants:

- the highest-ranked entrants in the appropriate class;
- those entrants who would be ranked highly (based on their average score to date), but have not completed a full set of events ;
- where the lowest-ranked of the competitors so chosen has p points (or a

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scaled-up equivalent), then also include those wishing to 'enter up' a class provided that they have $p \times 1.1$ points in their own class;

- deal with cases of 'special pleading' on their merits, on the basis of such information as is provided by the entrant.

2. Seeding

2.1 General Principles

2.1.1 Seeding is the process whereby the likely leading competitors in a class are spread through a start list, so as to avoid their starting too close together.

2.1.2 The purpose of seeding is to ensure as fair a competition as possible for the better competitors in a class. This is achieved by avoiding the starting of good competitors on the same course too close together. Note that these competitors may be in different classes when more than one class uses the same course.

2.1.3 A minimum separation of four minutes is appropriate for seeded competitors. Consequently, where the minimum start interval on a course is four minutes or greater, no seeding is necessary.

2.1.4 It may be possible to avoid seeding for a particular course by:

- extending the start list, so that the start interval is at least four minutes;
- planning separate courses for separate classes.

2.1.5 The following competitors should be seeded:

(i) Any entrant who is in the top 20 on the most recent ranking list for that class

(ii) In the case of an entrant who changed class at the beginning of the year, any entrant ranked in the top 20 in any class in the final list for the previous year

(iii) Anyone clearly recognised as 'top ten' material but not qualifying under (i) or (ii) above. This would include someone who has scored sufficient ranking points at a small number of events to show they are capable of reaching the top 20, but does not have sufficient counting events to be ranked there yet.

2.1.6 It is possible that only inspection of the start list by a tutored eye will detect runners within this last category. It is recommended that an experienced orienteer who has not been involved with the production of the start list is asked to review it for obvious anomalies.

2.2 Start Times

2.2.1 The allocation of start times for seeded competitors is subject to the following constraints:

- (i) competitors identified under 2.1.5 are to be kept at least four minutes apart in the start list;

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(ii) they should also be allocated to their preference of early/middle/late start bands, as with all other competitors (see 2.4.1)

2.2.2 Subject to the constraints above, seeded competitors should be allocated start times at random.

2.3 The 'Seeded Block'

2.3.1 Under the 'seeded block' system, nominated competitors are allocated start times within one part of the start list. No other competitors start within that period.

2.3.2 In order to better simulate the conditions to be met in international competitions, the International Selectors may ask that this system be used for some, or all, of M/W18, 20, and 21 in National Events nominated as selection races. Note that the seeded block system will not be used at the British Championships nor at the JK.

2.3.3 The list of those competitors to be allocated to the seeded block will be provided by the ECSG or by the International Selectors; it is envisaged that this list may contain up to fifteen competitors in each of the classes affected.

2.3.4 Competitors on this list who enter an event are to be started at times determined by the selecting body.

2.4 Preferred Start Times

2.4.1 Entrants should be allowed a choice of early/middle/late start times (for the JK this should apply to each day separately, e.g. an entrant may choose late starts on both days). Each entrant should then be allocated a start time at random within the appropriate band, except for seeded competitors who should be dealt with as under 2.2.1 above.

2.4.2 Note that the size of the bands need not be equal. If, for example, 75% of the entrants choose the late band of a four hour start list, then the late band can occupy the last three hours.

2.4.3 For large events it is sensible to spread start times over at least four hours, as this:

- reduces the number of competitors on the area at any one time;
- reduces the number of courses for which seeding is required;
- reduces the peak flow rate of competitors through the finish;
- makes it easier to use a shift system for helpers.

2.4.4 Consider not using the last half hour or hour of the start list for the youngest competitors (up to M/W12A and M/W14B), to avoid the slower of them getting lost in an emptying forest.

2.4.5 Also, not using the first half hour for them can avoid the earliest youngsters not having a flow of competitors to follow through the finish itself.

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- 2.4.6 It is advisable to try to give competitors in the smaller classes a reasonably even spread through the start list. Situations to avoid include:
- starting all ten entrants at two minute intervals in one block (making it difficult for them to get away from each other)
 - starting most of the entrants at five minute intervals at one end of the start list, a few others (who requested split starts) at the other end, with a couple of hours unused between the two sets.
- 2.4.7 When two different map scales are being used, beware the problem of two classes actually running the same course but at different scales - they need to be treated as one when allocating start times.
- 2.4.8 When two (or more) courses share the same first leg, consider allocating them to different minutes in the start list. This applies particularly when the leg is a relatively short one, and the competitors are of similar speeds. e.g. if course 8 (with M55L) and course 9 (with M60L) share the same first leg or two, course 8 could use the odd-numbered minutes and course 9 the even ones (provided, of course, the entry is small enough for this to be done).
- 2.4.9 When seeding is used for a particular course, note that it is only the seeded competitors who need to be at least four minutes apart; the three minutes between seeds can still be used for unseeded competitors. [This does not apply when a seeded block is in use: see section 2.3.]

3. Other Considerations

3.1 The Controller's Role

- 3.1.1 The Controller should review the systems used for selection, seeding, and start time allocation, and be satisfied that the guidelines set out above have been fully and consistently followed. Once this has been done, the Organiser's decision is final.

3.2 Final Comments

- 3.2.1 It is to be appreciated that no single source of information can provide a comprehensive and up-to-date summary of competitors' abilities. Whilst the British Orienteering Ranking Lists are the best resource currently available, some competitors may have been unable, for legitimate reasons, to take part in the qualifying events, and so the ranking lists cannot be taken as definitive.
- 3.2.2 Competitors may find perceived problems with the start lists. In these circumstances a polite enquiry to the Organiser may allow an alteration to be made. However, Competitors should always accept that Organisers are doing their best in these matters, and there may be other considerations that make any changes impossible.