

Summary of Board Discussions and Rationale for Decisions

The Board established a working group to review the Ranking system in 2008 and agreed the terms of reference for the working group in July 2008. The reasons for the review were two-fold: the system was due for a review and the review of the event structure that was taking place at that time might (and did) lead to changes that would cause problems with the then current ranking system.

A Chairman, Martyn Broadest (AIRE), was appointed by the Board although he made it clear that he would be unable to start the work of the working group until late 2008.

The February 2009 Board meeting discussed an interim report from the working group and endorsed the idea of a single ranking list. The meeting agreed in principle the algorithm being put forward by working group members. After this meeting the implementation of an outline single scale ranking system was commenced in the interests of speedier development, although it was recognised that subsequent recommendations might require changes.

In the September 2009 Board meeting there was detailed discussion of an update report from the Ranking Working Group. The algorithm was in place and had been tested to a degree, although it was noted that testing was difficult due to the complexity of the algorithm and the factors affecting its application.

There was concern expressed regarding the effort and cost being invested in the development of the system when there was limited evidence of the use/value of the system. There must be a cost/benefit balance and this point had been stressed for example at a recent association meeting. General discussion indicated that the development should be basic but practical, and that the cost should be kept to a minimum, in other words do what was needed to get the system in place but accept that the cost of the first phase could limit the implementation. The system was also to be as automated as possible and consequently the manual adding of overseas events for our international athletes would not be desirable.

The Board recognised that if the system was to be established for January 2010 serious development work had to commence and that this was difficult prior to the final recommendations being formalised.

The final recommendations of the working group were presented to the December 2009 Board meeting. These recommendations are published as one of the documents available at the launch of the new ranking. The recommendations were adopted by the Board with the following exceptions:

Recommendation 5: All competitors who are members of British Orienteering running TD4 and TD5 courses (or the highest technical level of course available at sprint/urban races) at Ranking events should score Ranking points. There should be no exclusions based on age or any other factors.

Response: TD4 and 5 are not referenced within the results software that clubs use and therefore any colour code or authorised course will be included. The initial implementation is that competitors aged 18 and above in the year of the event will be included. There should be a further debate with Coaching Committee and Junior Competitions Group about the inclusion of younger competitors. This recommendation regarding the inclusion of younger competitors may be implemented in due course.

Recommendation 10: The Ranking Scheme should be presented on the British Orienteering website in two main ways. Firstly, a default view which allows viewers to quickly look at overall rankings and rankings by Age Class. Secondly, a self-selection filter view which allows the viewer to filter the overall ranking list by any combination of age, gender, club, association or event type. Multiple selections or ranges should

be enabled (eg. All those in Club A, Club B and Club C; all male competitors between the age groups of 21 and 45; all urban sprint races [as opposed to the longer urban format]). Other filters may be developed in due course, but these are considered to be the most relevant for the time being. It should be possible to download the data from the website for offline analysis, should the viewer so wish. This function will be useful for club leagues, etc. particularly if it is possible for clubs to “subscribe” to a customised filtered view a link to which could then be embedded within their own website.

Response: The views offered to users of the ranking system will be filtered by gender and/or club; there will not be the ability to filter the list by multiple clubs or by associations on the initial roll out. It will, of course be feasible to add further filtering methods in future. In the initial version neither will there be the ability to download any data set nor the ability to embed filtered links into club web sites. The display filters available at the initial roll out of the system have been influenced by a mixture of technical issues and cost and time limitations.

Recommendations 11: The Ranking Scheme should be used to bridge the gap between the proposed Challenge Awards for new-comers to Orienteering, and the Championship Badge awards available at National Events. Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards could be available each year to those competitors scoring in excess of predetermined benchmark points totals for their age class over a given 12 month period (suggest 1st June through to 31st May as this roughly equates to the domestic O’ “season”). Awards should be administered by National Office, and comprise a token certificate or badge, initially to be sent automatically to all members with their membership renewal as a means to raise the profile of the new scheme. Once established, awards could be claimed rather than sent automatically.

Response: As detailed in the Terms of Reference of the Working Group this recommendation will be moved forward for further discussion by other groups that have an interest in the wider competition framework and any incentive schemes.

Recommendation 12: A National League should be created, as a subset of the overall Ranking Scheme, based on Ranking Points scored at Level 1 events during the predetermined 12 month period (1st June – 31st May suggested). Trophies to be awarded to the winners in each age class (which could be Open, Veteran, Super Vet, etc. rather than M21, W45). The aim would be to create some additional prestige for taking part in the Level 1 events.

Response: As detailed in the Terms of Reference of the Working Group this recommendation will be moved forward for further discussion by other groups that have an interest in the wider competition framework and any incentive schemes.

Recommendation 13: British Orienteering should give priority to publicising the Ranking Scheme on an ongoing basis on its website home page and in each edition of Focus. In terms of the latter, it is recommended that class leaders be published in each edition, and League winners (if recommendation 12 is accepted) be celebrated at the appropriate point in the year.

Response: It is agreed that the ranking scheme should be marketed strongly as confidence in the system grows however the actual mechanisms for marketing the scheme are operational in nature and the publicising of the Single Scale Ranking List lies within the remit of the Marketing Manager who will consider this recommendation.

On the above basis the roll out of the system during January was agreed.

In summary the Board is supportive of the recommendations of the working group and has thanked group members for the work they have completed. Board members have been concerned that the system should deliver a basic single scale ranking list but at a cost that is commensurate with the usage of the system. However the Board does recognise that once the review of the Competition Structure has clarified the future shape of competitive orienteering, the ranking list may play an increased or decreased part in that structure.