

TrailO Steering Group

Saturday 8 February 2014, 10:45-15:15

Held at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham



Attendees: Richard Keighley (RK), Chair & SWOA; Anne Braggins (AB), EAOA; Anne Hickling (AH), SOA; John Kewley (JK), NWOA; Christine Roberts (CR), YHOA; Scott Collier (SC), Board representative

Apologies: Ian Ditchfield (ID), SEOA

1. Chairman's introduction and opening remarks

RK welcomed SC to the meeting.

2. Attendance and apologies

ID was unable to attend due to his involvement in the 2014 British Night Championships.

AH was not yet present due to the difficulty of her travel arrangements but was expected to join the meeting shortly.

Christine Vince has decided to stand down from her involvement as an active member of the Group.

3. Conflicts of interest declarations

SC confirmed that the 2014 conflict of interest declaration form would be circulated by the National Office shortly.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held at Brodie Castle, Forres on Friday 2 August 2014 were approved subject to an amendment concerning a club PreO event that AB had organised at Brandon in November 2013.

5. Matters arising (not on agenda)

None.

6. IOF news & developments

The IOF have introduced new rules and technical guidelines for TrailO with effect from 1 January 2014. Major changes include removing the timed controls from the overall event score and only using them to separate competitors on equal points, a change to a maximum time of 30sec plus a possible 60sec penalty per timed control, and the formal adoption of rules for TempO.

The Group agreed that these rules and guidelines should apply to all TrailO events in the UK.

Action 1: RK to communicate with organisers and planners of 2014 TrailO events to ensure they are aware of the new IOF rules and guidelines, and that reference to these rules is included in the pre-event details.

AH joined the meeting at this point.

JK explained that the new technical guidelines had clarified some previous ambiguities around control descriptions, but that the degree of tolerance permitted for zero controls had still not been specified.

The new rules also introduced the possibility of a relay at WTOC, which will be demonstrated in 2014 with the aim of formal introduction in 2016.

The IOF had confirmed that WTOC will be hosted by Croatia in 2015 and by Sweden (in combination with WOC) in 2016; and that the Czech Republic will host ETOC in 2016. It was uncertain whether WTOC 2017 would be hosted by Estonia.

7. UK events 2014-15

a. JK 2014

Due to a lack of local manpower and expertise in TrailO in WOA, RK and AB had taken the lead on TrailO at JK2014. EAOA had been approached to see whether they could provide manpower.

PreO will take place on Day One and Day Three, with the Day Three event using part of the Day Two FootO area. Preliminary planning was complete and new maps had been produced by Dave Peel specifically to TrailO standards, with the Day Three PreO map being produced from LIDAR data using two-metre contours. Potential issues remained with excavations in the competition area on Day One and with nesting birds on Day Three, and AB noted concerns over the exposure of the terrain on the event of bad weather on Day Three.

RK noted that British Orienteering taking a closer oversight of JK2014 meant that TrailO had been properly incorporated into the event budget with realistic figures.

Entry-on-the-day will be possible on both Elite and Novice courses. The Group agreed that Day One will not be a ranking event but that Day Three will be.

b. British TrailO Championships 2014

It had not been possible to organise BTOC 2014 in combination with the British Long Distance/Relay Championships weekend. Initial enquiries with POTO had also indicated that land access issues mean that it will not be possible to hold BTOC in combination with the British Sprint Championships. However, WCH are due to organise the British Middle Distance Championship on Sunday 7 September, and have several areas which might be appropriate for TrailO. Anne Straube had also mentioned an OD area which may be suitable.

Action 2: RK to explore with WCH whether it might be possible to combine BTOC 2014 with the British Middle Distance Championships 2014.

AB suggested an individual who might be willing to lead on the organisation of BTOC 2014.

Action 3: AB to approach a potential organiser for BTOC 2014.

c. other major 2014 events

JK suggested that, given the number of active Trail orienteers among their membership and the areas available to them, SLOW might be willing to host a TrailO.

Action 4: JK to explore whether members of SLOW might be prepared to host a TrailO event.

TrailO was expected to feature in the event programme at the 2014 White Rose; it was hoped to put on an event, possibly a TempO, at the Edinburgh 'Race the Castles' sprint in early October; and AB indicated that she would look to organise a TrailO event featuring a TempO section at Twywell on the last weekend in September. AH also indicated that a Scottish TrailO Championships might take place at Perth. No TrailO was currently planned for the Lakes 5 Day. It was unclear what the plans were for the 2014 Irish TrailO Championships.

d. JK 2015

Pete Owens has agreed to act as TrailO Coordinator for JK2015. The JK2015 Sprint (Day One) will take place at Lancaster University, and potential Day One TempO areas include Williamson Park. JK would looking to plan a PreO event on Day Two, with Pete Owens planning a ranking PreO event on Day Three.

e. BTOC 2015

The 2015 British Long Distance/Relay Championships weekend will be in the Forest of Dean, with the event centre at Speech House. RK had been approached by the organiser with an offer to coordinate efforts for BTOC 2015. The areas immediately adjacent to the event centre are unlikely to be suitable for TrailO, but it might be possible to use the area previously used for TrailO at JK2007.

Action 5: RK to continue to talk to the 2015 British Long Distance/Relay Championships organisers to identify and secure an appropriate area for BTOC 2015.

f. Other ranking events

Clive Allen is organising the TrailO at the Nordic Orienteering Championships in Denmark in late September 2014 and has invited British Orienteering to send team(s). The Group discussed whether overseas events should be used as part of the UK ranking list, and whether a minimum number of eligible competitors should be required for an event to be ranked. JK indicated that too great an increase in the number of ranked events might be incompatible with the current ranking system.

The Group agreed, given the low number of domestic ranking events, to designate the Nordic Championships as a ranking event in 2014. In future years the Group will consider designating one or two additional overseas events as ranking events, depending on the domestic calendar. JK noted that it was important that all interested parties were aware which events would be used for rankings in each year.

The Group agreed in principle that a minimum number of eligible competitors should be required for an event to be ranked, but that further consultation would be required to determine what that number should be.

Action 6: RK to ask the National Office to post a list of 2014 TrailO ranking events on the British Orienteering website.

CR raised the question of whether the ranking list should be changed retrospectively to exclude points scored from timed controls, given the changes to the IOF rules. It was agreed that the new rules should apply for rankings from 2014, and the JK would provide the selectors for 2015 international events with two versions of the rankings, one including and one excluding points scored at timed controls at events in 2013.

Action 7: JK to produce two versions of the selection rankings for 2015, with and without the points from timed controls at 2013 events.

8. Funding/Selection Procedures/Ranking List/ETOC & WTOC 2014

The Group congratulated those selected to represent Great Britain in 2014, and wished them well for the forthcoming competitions.

SC stated that the proposed British Orienteering budget for TrailO international competitions in 2014 was £2000, but that this was subject to ratification at the Board conference call on 10 February 2014. JK indicated that this budget would be used to cover entry fees, with the exception of those competitors who had been selected on a self-funding basis.

The selectors this year had been RK and AB, and selections had been made early to allow competitors to book affordable travel and accommodation. The Group agreed that future selections should be made as soon as possible after the last relevant ranking event, and at the latest by the Christmas of the year preceding the year of the competition.

RK noted that JK had taken over the administration of the ranking list from Neil Cameron, and that SC had double-checked the calculations.

The invitation to the 2014 Nordic Championships in Denmark had no restriction on the number of individual competitors, although teams of five are required for the team competition. The Group agreed that expressions of interest from potential competitors interested in attending the Championships on a self-funding basis should be invited at JK2014 and (at the same time) on the British Orienteering website.

Action 8: RK to invite expressions of interest for the 2014 Nordic Championships at JK2014 and to arrange for the National Office to post an invitation on the website around the same time.

The Group agreed that the selectors would group those attending the Nordic Championships into teams of five for the purposes of the team competition.

9. Rules and guidelines

a. Request from Events & Competitions Committee for specification of requirements for TrailO at Major Events – discussion document

RK had previously circulated a draft of a document specifying requirements for TrailO at Major Events. The Group agreed the document, subject to an amendment to clarify that TrailO is a requirement at the JK and that BTOC should be combined with another British Championships weekend when possible, and to other minor amendments.

Action 9: RK to send the amended specification for TrailO at Major Events to the Chair of Events & Competitions Committee.

b. New BOF rules, TrailO at BOC & JK

There are currently no British Orienteering rules for TrailO. At the moment, the IOF Rules are used, and the Group agreed that this approach is adequate for current purposes. It was agreed that eligibility for the British TrailO Championships should continue to follow the eligibility for the other British Orienteering Championships.

c. Guidelines for IntrO at events

Brian Parker has produced a set of guidelines for the provision of IntrO at FootO events.

10. Board

a. Terms of Reference & Committee name change

The Group agreed to recommend to the Board that the Terms of Reference be changed so that the name of the Group should be “TrailO Steering Group”.

Action 10: SC to seek Board approval for the revised Terms of Reference at the Board conference call on 10 February 2014.

b. Development

The Board had previously agreed to allocate a proportion of the surplus from WTOC 2012 to TrailO development. New kit had been purchased for the international team, a set of TrailO equipment had been purchased for use in Scotland, and grants had been made available for the development of IntraO at events in Scotland, EAOA and NWOA. Brian Parker had developed guidelines for IntraO, and Christine Vince was working on activities for inclusion in the Development Programme's "Year in a Box" and would welcome contributions of further material.

AH produced statistics from IntraO events in Scotland in 2012/13. The figures were generally very impressive, with some variation depending on the weather, the convenience of the IntraO for the FootO competitors, and the level of promotion of the IntraO at the event. It was noted that planners with limited TrailO experience needed guidance on what made a good TrailO problem.

The Board had also indicated that TrailO should have a presence on British Orienteering website, and Clive Allen has offered to work on the content for this.

Action 11: RK to speak to Clive Allen about providing content for the British TrailO website.

SC updated the Group on the current staffing situation, with the appointment process for a new Development Manager currently ongoing.

11. Publicity/Focus

SC stated that he was uncertain when the copy deadline was for the Spring issue of *Focus*, and advised Group members to contact Caroline Povey as soon as possible if they had an item they wished to include.

AH noted that TrailO had been receiving a good level of coverage in *CompassSport*.

JK highlighted the current difficulties in identifying TrailO events in the fixtures list on the British Orienteering website. There was no longer a separate category for TrailO events, and the proliferation of the phrase "Trail Challenge" to describe certain FootO events made it difficult to search for TrailO events by name.

Action 12: SC to raise with the Board the issue of identifying TrailO events in the British Orienteering website fixtures list.

12. Coaching & training resources

JK had recently qualified as an IOF TrailO Event Advisor, and is investigating the possibility of organising a workshop for TrailO planners and controllers in late 2014/early 2015.

All other coaching and training issues had been covered under previous agenda items.

13. Any other business

JK raised the issue of Forestry Commission fees for the British Trail Orienteering Championships. Under the current agreement, fees are related to the level of the event, making it unviable to register BTOC at an appropriate level when it was not using the same area as a FootO Championships. JK suggested that the impact of TrailO on Forestry Commission land may be more comparable to MTBO than to FootO.

Action 13: JK to investigate the BMBO-Forestry Commission agreement.

A letter had been received from Peter Roberts raising the issue of holding TrailO ranking events simultaneously with events aimed at novices, with novices entering the terrain or talking on the

course, potentially distracting or unintentionally helping more experienced competitors. It was agreed that competitors should be reminded at the start of appropriate behaviour on the course when events were also being used for rankings or selections. The letter also requested that, for the benefit of wheelchair users, the Group consider restricting ranking events to those months of the year when the weather is less likely to be bad.

A letter had been received from Clive Allen suggesting that the Group could investigate purchasing an annual licence for software for the scoring of TrailO events. The Group agreed that there was no money in the budget for this at present. Clive Allen also suggested setting up an equivalent to the FootO Navigation Challenge Awards to encourage new competitors, and proposed setting up an electronic UK TrailO newsletter. JK expressed a willingness to help with content for a newsletter.

Action 14: RK to write to Clive Allen, thanking him and encouraging him in setting up an electronic TrailO newsletter in collaboration with JK.

JK proposed an amendment to the ranking system, so that an individual who has acted as an event official at a TrailO ranking event should be allowed to “double-up” the score from their third-best event, regardless of whether they had otherwise done the maximum number of counting events. The Group agreed to consider this again at their next meeting, and to seek opinions from the top twenty individuals currently in the ranking list.

Action 15: RK to email the top twenty competitors in the ranking list to seek opinions on allowing event officials to “double-up” the score from their third-best event, regardless of whether they have otherwise done the maximum number of counting events.

JK raised the issue of how complaints and protests about controls at ranking events should be handled. The Group agreed to consider this again at a future meeting.

14. Dates and venues of future meetings

July or August 2014, precise date and venue to be determined at a later date.

Action List

1	RK to communicate with organisers and planners of 2014 TrailO events to ensure they are aware of the new IOF rules and guidelines, and that reference to these guidelines is included in the pre-event details.	RK
2	RK to explore with WCH whether it might be possible to combine BTOC 2014 with the British Middle Distance Championships 2014.	RK
3	AB to approach a potential organiser for BTOC 2014.	AB
4	JK to explore whether members of SLOW might be prepared to host a TrailO event.	JK
5	RK to continue to talk to the 2015 British Long Distance/Relay Championships organisers to identify and secure an appropriate area for BTOC 2015.	RK
6	RK to ask the National Office to post a list of 2014 TrailO ranking events on the British Orienteering website.	RK
7	JK to produce two versions of the selection rankings for 2015, with and without the points from timed controls at 2013 events.	JK

8	RK to invite expressions of interest for the 2014 Nordic Championships at JK2014 and to arrange for the National Office to post an invitation on the website around the same time.	RK
9	RK to send the amended specification for TrailO at Major Events to the Chair of Events & Competitions Committee.	RK
10	SC to seek Board approval for the revised Terms of Reference at the Board conference call on 10 February.	SC
11	RK to speak to Clive Allen about providing content for the British TrailO website.	RK
12	SC to raise with the Board the issue of identifying TrailO events in the British Orienteering website fixtures list.	SC
13	JK to investigate the BMBO-Forestry Commission agreement.	JK
14	RK to write to Clive Allen, encouraging him in setting up an electronic TrailO newsletter in collaboration with JK.	RK/JK
15	RK to email the top twenty competitors in the ranking list to seek opinions on allowing event officials to “double-up” the score from their third-best event, regardless of whether they had otherwise done the maximum number of counting events.	RK