



Newsletter to IOF MTBO Event Advisers

No. 4, March 2015

Dear IOF MTBO Event Advisers,

You may notice that this newsletter comes directly from the MTBO Commission and hasn't been sent out by the IOF Office as before. One of the reasons for this change is that the IOF contact for Event Advisers is no longer the IOF Office but the IOF MTBO Commission. In this newsletter you will get all the necessary information.

### **Composition of the MTBO Commission (MTBOC) for 2015-2016**

With André Hermet (FRA) and Ludomir Parfianowicz (POL) two new members joined the MTBOC. We are very happy that Sándor Talás (HUN) continues as our chairman. Jiri Vraný (CZE), Magnus Wallenborg (SWE), Thomas Wieser (AUT) and Ursula Häusermann (SUI) are the existing commission members so that there now seven people in the MTBOC.

### **The MTBO Commission – the new IOF contact for Event Advisers**

As the full responsibility for an event lies with the discipline commissions, i.e. for MTBO events with the MTBOC, it is absolutely necessary that the commission is informed first-hand about all event-related matters and that EAs (especially SEAs) and organisers keep in close contact with the commission. In the remits 2015-16 for the MTBOC this is described as follows:

- The MTBOC supports the Event Adviser and finds solutions when problems occur.
- Appointed SEAs report back to the commission.
- If issues are unable to be resolved, they are forwarded by the MTBOC to the IOF Council.
- Rules deviations are to be handled by the MTBOC and sent to the IOF Council for approval.

In practice, for you as an EA this means:

- Please send your reports primarily to the MTBOC with a copy to the IOF Office.
- If there are any requests for rule deviations, questions or problems, please inform the MTBOC.

For your correspondence with the MTBOC please use the email address [mtbo.commission@gmail.com](mailto:mtbo.commission@gmail.com). Thank you!

Your contact person in the MTBOC is Ursula Häusermann, who has already worked in the field of event quality over the past years. She will deal with emails to [mtbo.commission@gmail.com](mailto:mtbo.commission@gmail.com). Of course you may also contact other commission members, their email addresses can be found on the IOF website at <http://orienteering.org/mtb-orienteeing/mtb-orienteeing-commission> or on the MTBOC's website at <http://www.mtbo-commission.com/members-of-the-mtbo.html>.

## **Website of the MTBO Commission: [www.mtbo-commission.com](http://www.mtbo-commission.com)**

The MTBOC has now its own website! We would like to tell about our work first hand, and to provide information on the specifics of mountainbike orienteering and on organising MTBO events. There is a special subsite <http://mtbo-commission.com/event-advising.html> with information for EAs where you will find the recently updated version of the handbook for EAs for example. Please note that this website is unofficial, official information is on the website of the IOF.

## **Event Plan and Event Agreement**

In your work as an EA the event plan (see 4.1 in the EA's handbook) is an important and helpful document. As it is subordinate to the event agreement signed by the IOF and the organising federation, it can be useful for the EA to know about the event agreement. The MTBOC received assurances that SEAs will get to see the event agreement in the future.

## **Rule changes**

There are few changes to the rules of 2014. They are valid from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 and are as follows:

- Introduction of 5-year age classes for Masters from D/H40 – D/H75 (rule 5.7)
- A fee of € 50 for protests was introduced for the World Championships, Junior World Championships, World Cup events, Regional Championships and World Masters Championships in all IOF disciplines (rule 28.4). The fee must be paid to the SEA in cash when making a protest. It will be returned if the protest is accepted by the Jury.
- New competition format Mass Start (appendix 7), but it is not a medal event on the WMTBOC.

## **Documents for MTBO Event Advisers**

In addition to the Competition Rules we recommend you to use the following documents in your work as an event adviser:

- *Handbook for IOF Event Advisers of MTBO Events* (with an index to the MTBO Competition Rules). The 2015 update is available at <http://mtbo-commission.com/event-advising.html>. On the IOF website there is still only the first version of 2012 published.
- *IOF Guidelines for Organisers of MTBO Events* (including the MTBO Competition Rules)

## **Event advisers – clinics and appointments**

In 2014 two clinics were successfully held in the MTBO Camp on Bornholm DEN in April with 6 participants and in Prague CZE in October with 10 participants.

Two clinics are planned for 2015: one in Portugal in conjunction with the EMTBOC/ Masters and another one in autumn in Eastern Europe – both subject to at least 6 applicants.

Currently the following SEAs are at work:

- World Cup 2015 in HUN: Walter Dravetz (AUT)
- EMTBOC 2015 in POR: Mark Stodgell (GBR)
- WMTBOC/JWMTBOC 2015 in CZE: Marian Kazik (SVK)
- WMTBOC/JWMTBOC 2016 in POR: Jan Eg Pedersen (DEN)

## Accreditation and reaccreditation

Please note that you do not automatically become a licensed Event Adviser after having been to an EA's clinic. You have to apply for your first Event Adviser license and you also have to renew your license every second year. The MTBO EA licensing period is 2013-15, so the reaccreditation process will take place in October 2015. You will be contacted by the IOF Office in time, possibly reaccreditation for the next period will be an on-line process through IOF Eventor by next October. The forms for the current period are at <http://orienteering.org/mtb-orienteering/event-advising/accreditation/>.

We understand that some Event Advisers missed the renewal of their licenses or for some other reasons they are not on the current IOF EA list. Please check the official list of current Event Advisers <http://orienteering.org/mtb-orienteering/event-advising/list-of-event-advisers/> and contact the IOF office and the MTBO Commission if you believe that your name is missing.

We do hope that there are many others still actively participating in MTBO, both competitively and in an advisory role, and that they may wish to continue as a licensed Event Adviser. The IOF relies on its Event Advisers to guarantee the quality of IOF events and we are grateful to all EAs for their valuable work. Hence, this newsletter is also sent to people who are no longer officially listed as EAs, hoping that they will join the EAs' "workforce" again.

## Learning from experience

From feedback on the previous newsletters we learned that you, the event advisers, find this chapter, where we describe particular incidents that happened at major MTBO events, particularly useful. Of course we're happy to hear that, but we'd like to point out that we can only inform you about such incidents if we know about them! Although there are usually some members from the MTBOC present at the events, it may be difficult for us to realise what problems there were or what critical situations occurred. Therefore we'd like to encourage you to tell us about such difficulties in your reports or to let us know in another way.

As you can read towards the end of this newsletter, the quality of the major events in 2014 was good to very good, particularly with regard to the technical side; namely the competitions themselves. Potential for improvement was noted in the following areas:

### Bulletins

Clear and correct bulletins are more important than one might think:

- In a last bulletin the text about embargoed areas was not 100 % clear. The sprint competition was no longer to take place in town as originally planned but in a terrain outside of town, and this passage in the bulletin hadn't been amended to reflect the new circumstances.
- An incorrect (old) version of Bulletin 4 was printed and distributed to the teams.
- ▶ Please check (especially last) bulletins carefully and try to make sure that the correct document is printed to avoid extra work and discussions. Part of the EA's work is checking that the unthinkable does not happen.

The MTBOC would like to support organisers and EAs in writing the bulletins, and we are therefore preparing MTBO-specific model bulletins that can be used as templates. Moreover, the IOF Office is ready to help with proof reading of bulletins with regard to language, structure and general layout. They need a word copy of the final draft and a pre-warning a couple of days in advance. Be aware that due to time constraints it is usually not possible to make use of this help for the last bulletin.

## **Getting to the finish arena / parking**

- When driving to the parking next to the finish arena, some teams passed accidentally through the competition area, because they followed their GPS directing them to the indicated coordinates. No information had been given to take a prescribed itinerary.
- ▶ It is helpful and sensible to announce the GPS coordinates of the finish arena/parking. However, teams have to be instructed to use a mandatory route if going to the finish arena directly means cutting through the competition terrain. Use signposting or provide the teams with maps/plans.

## **Quarantine**

Quite often quarantine zones give rise for complaints:

- At one competition the athletes in quarantine and all the other athletes and even members of the public shared the same toilet.
- In another case some last starters had to wait in the sun because it was noon and the walls of a building no longer provided any shade.
- Another unfortunate situation occurred when competitors who had finished their course used part of the way leading to the start to go back to their car. Thus they met the last riders going to the start because the organiser had not explicitly instructed how they should get back to the parking.
- ▶ These examples show us that setting up fair quarantine zones can be quite challenging and requires careful planning. Sufficient space, protection from rain, sun or extreme temperatures, clear instructions regarding time and areas are a must to ensure fairness.

It may be helpful to make a time schedule to fix the times for quarantine. In the updated version of the EA's handbook there is now an example of such a time schedule.

## **Near catastrophes**

Misunderstandings, unclear instructions, lack of staff, unfortunate coincidences – there are various reasons why something can go wrong. Fortunately disastrous outcomes were prevented in 2014, but sometimes only at the last minute:

- By a mistake of one single person the maps were about to be published online before the competition had even started. Luckily a competitor realised what was going to happen and informed the EA.
- Five minutes before the first competitor was expected at the spectator control, which was also the last control, the EA found out that the SI-unit was missing and that the obligatory route hadn't been marked yet in the terrain.
- ▶ You know yourself that checking and double-checking everything is vital to prevent a competition from being voided. Careful planning, a last meeting with the organisers on the day before the competition, discussing typical issues that may cause problems, and enough people for the various tasks may help reduce the risk of failure.

## **Event Quality**

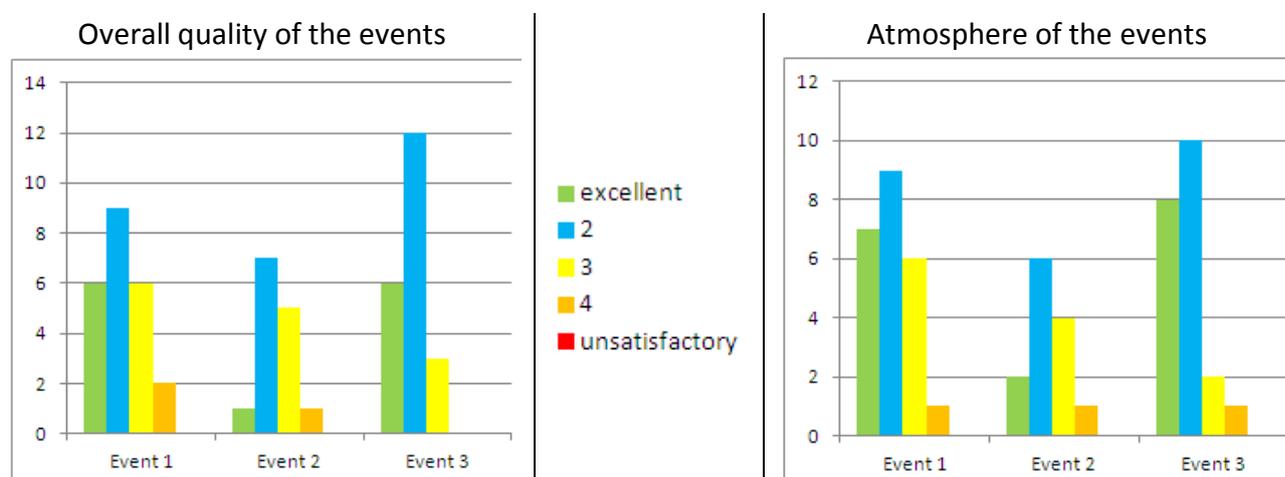
Event quality has always been one of the major tasks of our commission and you will know that we have been trying hard to support you in your work to ensure and improve event quality. Please be assured that we will continue with our efforts and that the whole MTBO community is very grateful to you for your work!

## Evaluation of World Cup events in 2014

Although the quality of the competitions of the World Cups in Denmark and Sweden was good, there was potential for improvement regarding out-of-forest matters (marketing, visibility, arena, prize giving ceremonies etc.). Sufficient manpower is a key issue to make an event overall a success. The WMTBOC in Poland turned out to be a well-organized event, thanks to the joint efforts of a renewed organising team, the SEA, the national controller, additional mapmakers and the support of the MTBOC.

As in previous years the competitors had the opportunity to give feedback on the World Cup events by completing an online questionnaire. There were fewer responses than in past years, but this can be considered as a good sign: The less there is to complain, the fewer people give feedback 😊.

Overall ratings:



Event 1: WCup DEN

Event 2: WCup SWE

Event 3: WMTBOC/JWMTBOC/WMMTBOC POL

Detailed graphs and remarks on this event evaluation 2014, based on the competitors' feedback, can be found at <http://mtbo-commission.com/event-evaluation.html>. On the IOF website only the graphs are published.

Thanks for any event advising work you have done in the past year and good luck with your future projects!

Best wishes,

IOF MTBO Commission  
Ursula Häusermann