



## **Survey U23 World Cup and Championships for MTBO and SkiO**

### **BACKGROUND**

In November 2020 the IOF MTB Orienteering Commission (MTBOC) and Ski Orienteering Commission (SOC) made a proposal to the IOF Council to institute an Individual World Cup for athletes 23 years old and younger (U23) and also a defined U23 Championships in the disciplines MTBO and SkiO, both to be integrated into the existing Men's and Women's competitions.

A consultation with member federations and Athletes' Commissions showed that there was support from a strong majority of member federations and Athletes' Commissions for the proposal, and also for the proposal to add an additional team size quota of two U23 athletes per federation.

The Council voted upon the proposal at its meeting in January 2021, and the proposal passed. A U23 World Cup and Championships for MTBO and SkiO will therefore be introduced from the 2022 season for a trial period of four years. The MTBOC and SOC were tasked with establishing detailed rules and instructions for the introduction of the U23 class.

The proposal of rules amendments was on the agenda of the Council meeting in May 2021, but as two questions remained open the Council agreed to finalise decisions at the next meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

### **TWO QUESTIONS**

The MTBOC and SOC are now conducting a survey to get feedback from the SkiO and MTBO communities on these two points:

#### **1) U23 World Cup**

Should the U23 World Cup be a separately calculated points list or should it be only an extract of the overall World Cup list?

#### **2) Name for U23 Championships and World Cup and age group**

It is agreed that this age group comprises three years of birth, i.e. athletes up to and including age 23. Should the term 'U23' be used although it means Under-23 in English?

## DISCUSSION AND OPINION OF THE MTBOC AND SOC

### 1) U23 World Cup

It has been the intention of both commissions to have the U23 World Cup as a **separately calculated points list** (maybe only for the best 20 U23 athletes) for the following reasons:

- Only the best 35 competitors can obtain World Cup points. If the U23 athletes are in the same ranking as the older elite athletes, the U23 athletes will have to share the points with the older athletes. As it's usually only a minority of the U23 athletes who are among the best 35, the majority of the U23 athletes taking part in this competition wouldn't get any points at all. So in the overall U23 ranking there might not be a lot of athletes with a respectable number of points.
- This also means that most U23 athletes could not score points in the World Cup – but we want to have a World Cup for the U23 athletes!
- The additional quota of two U23 athletes for the World Cup is helpful to increase participation, but this alone might not be enough to make it worthwhile for a U23 athlete to take part in a World Cup competition, or for a federation to send U23 athletes to this competition. A U23 class within the elite World Cup without a scoring of its own has lower value and meaning as there is not enough status in it.
- With just an extract of the overall World Cup it might be difficult to follow the U23 World Cup during the year.

Admittedly, a U23 World Cup with a separately calculated points list will cause additional costs if done by Eventor. However, the MTBOC and SOC offer to create and update the U23 World Cup lists themselves and it would not be necessary to have these U23 lists in Eventor, at least not in the trial phase.

To sum up:

Having a separately calculated points list for the U23 World Cup would not cause any extra cost nor would it add complexity to the World Cup, but it would be beneficial to all U23 athletes. Last but not least, a real U23 World Cup with a scoring of its own will probably increase the chance to reach the goals listed in the original proposal.

### 2) Name for U23 Championships and World Cup and age group

The MTBOC and SOC would prefer to use the term **U23** for the Championships and the World Cup for the following reasons:

- U23 is an established term which is also used in other sports, and it is well-known to people outside orienteering (e.g. sponsors).
- U23 is a term like 'Juniors' or 'Masters' and goes well with *Championships* and *World Cup*.

The classes will be called Women/Men 23 (W/M23) to be consistent with the other orienteering nomenclature. So we would have U23 World Championships and a U23 World Cup with the classes W23 and M23. The MTBOC and SOC think that the following options might be confusing or not understandable, especially to non-orienteering people:

- U24 World Championships and World Cup, but classes W/M23
- W23 and M23 World Championships and World Cup

## SURVEY

The MTBOC and SOC are looking forward to getting feedback from MTBO and SkiO athletes and other interested people on the calculation of the U23 World Cup and the name for the Championships and World Cup. Please choose an answer a-d for points 1 and 2.

- 1) U23 World Cup:
  - a) I would prefer a separately calculated points list with points for the best 35 U23 athletes.
  - b) I would prefer a separately calculated points list with points for the best 20 U23 athletes.
  - c) I would prefer an extract of the overall World Cup list.
  - d) I don't have any preference.
  
- 2) The name for the Championships and the World Cup should be as follows:
  - a) U23 World Cup / U23 World Championships, classes W/M23
  - b) U24 World Cup / U24 World Championships, classes W/M23
  - c) W23 and M23 World Championships / W23 and M23 World Cup (classes W/M23)
  - d) Other (please specify in the remarks)

Link to the survey: <https://tinyurl.com/228dcpte>

Please submit your answers by **5<sup>th</sup> July 2021**.

Many thanks for your feedback!

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