



# ORIENTEERING NSW

## COMPETITORS RULES – MOUNTAIN BIKE ORIENTEERING

ONSW Manual 4.2

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These Rules apply at any mountain bike orienteering (MTBO) event conducted under the auspices of Orienteering NSW (ONSW).

## **A. GENERAL CONDUCT**

### **1. You Must Return to the Finish**

You must report to the finish following completion or abandonment of your course. If you do not report to the finish the organisers will come looking for you!

### **2. Assisting Injured or Lost Competitors**

Injured competitors who need assistance should, if possible, blow a whistle or 'cooee' three times periodically.

Competitors who are seriously lost (ie they do not know how to find the finish) can ask for assistance from another competitor or follow the safety bearing information on the map. Waiting at a control, especially if it is on your course, or staying on a drivable track or road are sensible options. Orienteers' preliminary searches, after course closure, will concentrate on these. An orienteer lost overnight should stay in one place – police searches are designed to find people who are not moving.

Orienteering Australia Rule 25.2 says: "It is the duty of all competitors to help injured competitors." If you hear three whistle blasts or 'cooees' you should investigate, if safe to do so, and report it to the event organiser.

### **3. Competitors must Obey NSW Road Rules**

Cyclists in NSW must obey the road rules. Under the Road Rules (on the NSW legislation website), a bicycle is considered a vehicle and has the same road rules as other vehicles.

The Road Rules have some additional rules for bicycle riders, in particular in relation to bicycle helmets.

See the NSW Centre for Road Safety's [website](#) for more information.

### **4. Dangers in the Competition Area**

Competitors who come across an obvious general danger (eg flooded creek, bushfire, person behaving suspiciously) should:

- cease orienteering, return to the finish and inform the organisers; and/or
- if appropriate, warn other competitors of the danger.

### **5. What to do if Challenged**

Competitors whose right to be in an area is challenged by a person must stop, explain their presence, comply with any reasonable request in respect of the area (eg leaving the area) and inform the person making the challenge of the location of the event organiser. Competitors must give an account of the occurrence to the event organiser as soon as possible.

### **6. Registration**

All competitors shall register in accordance with ONSW Event Registration templates and pay the required entry fee.

If a competitor does not provide the required safety information or "read and accept" the Risk Warnings, Waivers and Statements, the competitor must be prohibited from starting.

### **7. All orienteers must comply with ONSW's and the event's COVID-19 Safety Plan**

## B. ORIENTEERING AUSTRALIA RULES

The following have been extracted from Orienteering Australia's rules. They are the most important rules for competitors.

*Italics* and dots (...) have been used, where ONSW believes the OA Competition Rules are inappropriate or need to be clarified for the range of events held in NSW. The numbers in [square brackets] reflect OA's numbering.

### 1. COMPETITION RULES FOR MTBO ORIENTEERING EVENTS

#### a. General Provisions

These rules shall be binding for all competitors, team officials and other persons connected with the organisation or in contact with the competitors. Any additional regulations shall be published in the final event bulletin. The organiser has the discretion to disqualify any competitor who contravenes the rules laid out in this text. [2.5 & 23.11]

Sporting fairness will be the guiding principle in the interpretation of these rules by competitors, event organisers and the jury. [2.7]

#### b. Participation

Competitors participate at their own risk. Insurance against accidents shall be their responsibility. [6.1]

The organisers are entitled to refuse entries from persons whom they consider to be competing beyond their capabilities. A person whose entry has been refused shall be notified immediately and offered an alternative course, or refunded the entry fee. [6.2]

#### c. Restricted areas and routes

Rules set by Orienteering Australia or the organising Association to protect the environment and any related instructions from the organiser shall be strictly observed by all persons connected with the event (see below – 3. The MTBO Competitors' Code and 5. Environmental Code). [16.1]

Riding off the track or trail (except across open areas mapped as item 839 (open land permitted to ride – orange colour) is disallowed. ... *the event organiser may specifically inform competitors of variations to this rule.* ... The penalty for breaking this rule is disqualification from the event. [16.2]

Out of bounds or dangerous areas, forbidden routes etc shall be described in the pre-event information and marked on the map. If necessary, they shall also be marked in the terrain. Competitors shall not enter, follow or cross such areas, routes or features. [16.3]

Note the ISOM for MTBO symbols: 707 Uncrossable boundary; 709 Out of bounds area; 711 Forbidden route; 844 Uncrossable barrier/forbidden to cross. [16.4]

ISMTBOM 707 Uncrossable boundary	
ISMTBOM 709 Out-of-bounds area	
ISMTBOM 711 Forbidden route	
ISMTBOM .844 Uncrossable barrier/forbidden to cross	

Compulsory routes, crossing points and passages shall be marked clearly on the map and on the ground. Competitors shall follow the entire length of any marked section of their course. [16.5]

Where tracks occur on both sides of a fence, it is forbidden to cross fences except where legal crossings may be made. Unless the map clearly shows the track crosses a fence, riders should not cross it unless explicit permission is given by the event organiser. [16.7]

Riding outside the mapped area is not allowed. [16.8]

*The following two paragraphs apply at events after 30 September 2021.*

*ONSW allows organisers to disqualify orienteers who breach the rules on restricted areas and routes after the results of an event are finalised. Such disqualifications may be based on evidence such as split times, GPS routes, complaints from other persons. Before this provision is used, the organiser must give the orienteer right of reply (eg by email).*

*ONSW (President and Technical Director) may disqualify repeat out-of-bounds offenders for a period of time or from all events in a series. Before this provision is used, ONSW must give the orienteer a warning and right of reply.*

#### **d. Punching**

Competitors shall be responsible for marking their own ... card, *electronic or otherwise*, at each control using the marking device provided. Competitors are responsible for correct marking, even if at some controls the marking is facilitated by the event organiser. [19.2]

A competitor with a control mark missing or unidentifiable shall not be placed, unless it can be established with certainty that the punch missing or unidentifiable is not the competitor's fault, and that the competitor visited the control. In this exceptional circumstance, other evidence may be used to prove that the competitor visited the control, such as evidence from control officials or cameras or read-out from the control unit. In all other circumstances, such evidence is not acceptable and the competitor must be disqualified. In the case of SportIdent, this rule means that:

- If one unit is not working, a competitor must use the back up provided (eg slips of waterproof paper must be attached to the bicycle to punch in case of failure of the SI unit) and will be disqualified if no punch is recorded.
- If a competitor punches too fast and fails to receive the feedback signals, the card will not contain the punch and the competitor must be disqualified (even though the control unit may have recorded the competitor's card number). [19.4]

Competitors who lose their control card, *and in an event where controls must be visited in a specified order* omit a control or visit controls in the wrong order shall be disqualified. [19.7]

#### **e. Equipment**

Protective headgear conforming to the recognised Australian standard shall be worn at all times when competing and training. [20.1]

The bicycle shall be designed to be propelled solely through a chain set, by the legs moving in a circular movement, without electric or other assistance. Alternatively, a recumbent bicycle propelled through the chain set by arm (rather than leg) movement is permitted. The organisers may permit recreational (ie non-championship) classes to use e-bikes which are pedal-assist bikes designed for rougher tracks, with a limit of 250 watts. [20.2]

Each competitor shall ensure that their equipment (bicycle with accessories and other devices fitted, headgear, clothing etc) does not, by virtue of its quality, materials or design, constitute any danger to themselves or to others. It is the responsibility of the competitors and team managers to ensure that cycles are roadworthy. [20.3]

If start numbers or bibs are prescribed by the event organiser they shall be fixed to the cycle or worn as prescribed. [20.4]

During the competition the only navigational equipment that competitors may use are the map provided by the event organiser, and a compass – see *also* 20.6. [20.5]

*Competitors may carry phones and/or GPS devices. The phone or GPS device must not be used for navigational purposes, unless it is an emergency or if navigational use is allowed by the organiser. An emergency includes an injured person who needs assistance and a competitor who does not know how to find the finish. ONSW recommends all orienteers download the COVIDsafe and Emergency+ apps. [20.6]*

*Competitors may not carry telecommunications equipment at International or National (Group A) events or NSW Championships, unless the organiser allows it, ie. OA Rule [20.6] applies.*

Competitors must stay with their cycles throughout the race from start to finish, whether they ride, push or carry their cycles. [20.7]

The organiser may define a zone where teams or individuals may place equipment such as spare parts and tools before the first start or at a time specified by the organiser. No assistance (eg from a coach) is permitted in the equipment zone or during the competition. [20.8]

Competitors may carry tools and spare parts during the competition, but shall not (except in a designated equipment zone) use spares or tools other than those carried by themselves or another competitor. [20.9]

Competitors must finish the competition with the same cycle frame with which they started. [20.10]

#### **f. Start**

The competitor is responsible for taking the correct map. [21.6]

In an individual race, competitors will have one minute to arrange to carry their map before they start. In a chasing start race, competitors will get their map at the start time. The bike must be stationary with the whole bike behind the start line and competitors shall keep at least one foot on the ground at the moment of the start signal. [21.7]

Competitors who are late for their start time shall be permitted to start. Their new start time must be recorded.

- In a mass or chasing start, the competitor shall be started as soon as possible.
- In an interval start, if the competitor is at the start line less than half the start interval after their start time, they shall start immediately.
- In an interval start, if the competitor is at the start line more than half the start interval after their start time, they shall start at the next available half start interval.

*Note: at ONSW events this Rule only applies at International or National events or NSW Championships. [21.9]*

Competitors who are late for their start time through their own fault shall be timed as if they had started at their original start time. Competitors who are late for their start time through the fault of the event organiser shall be given a new start time. [21.10]

Correct and timely relay changeover is the responsibility of the competitors, even when the organiser arranges an advanced warning of incoming teams. [21.12]

#### **g. Fair Play**

All persons taking part in an MTBO event shall behave with fairness and honesty. They shall have a sporting attitude and a spirit of friendship. Competitors shall show respect for each other, for officials, journalists, spectators and inhabitants of the competition area. The competitors shall be as quiet as possible in the terrain. [25.1]

Except in the case of an accident or mechanical failure, seeking to obtain or obtaining navigational assistance from other riders or providing assistance to other competitors during a competition is forbidden. It is the duty of all competitors to help injured competitors. [25.2]

The provision of mechanical (spares or repairs) assistance between competitors during a competition is permitted but is not compulsory. No outside mechanical assistance is permitted. [25.3]

Doping is forbidden. The Orienteering Australia Anti-Doping Rules apply to all Orienteering Australia events and Orienteering Australia may require doping control procedures to be conducted. [25.4]

Any attempt to survey or train in the competition terrain is forbidden. Attempts to gain any information related to the courses, beyond that provided by the event organiser, is forbidden before and during the competition. *Note: this Rule does not apply at ONSW Minor events.* [25.6]

Having crossed the finish line, a competitor may not re-enter the competition terrain without the permission of the event organiser. A competitor who retires shall announce this at the finish immediately and hand in the map and control card. That competitor shall in no way influence the competition nor help other competitors. [25.10]

A competitor who breaks any rule, or who benefits from the breaking of any rule, may be disqualified. [25.11]

Non-competitors who break any rule are liable to disciplinary action. [25.12]

## **h. Complaints**

A complaint can be made about infringements of these rules or the organiser's directions. ***ONSW strongly encourages*** complaints about other competitors' infringements where the infringement is dangerous or could adversely affect orienteering's reputation. For example: *riding recklessly, crossing out of bounds or entering dangerous areas.* [26.1]

Complaints can be made by event or team officials, competitors or anybody else connected with the event. [26.2]

Any complaint shall be made in writing to a representative of the event organiser as soon as possible. A complaint is adjudicated by the event organiser. The complainant shall be informed about the decision immediately. [26.3]

There is no fee for a complaint. [26.4]

The organiser may set a time limit for complaints. Complaints received after this time limit will only be considered if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained by the complainant. [26.5]

## **i. Protests**

*Note: this Section does not apply at ONSW Minor events.*

A protest can be made against the organiser's decision about a complaint. [27.1]

Protests can be made by team officials, competitors or event officials. [27.2]

Any protest shall be made in writing to a representative of the organiser no later than 15 minutes after the organiser has informed the complainant of the decision about the complaint. Protests received after this time limit may be considered at the discretion of the jury if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained in the protest. [27.3]

There is no fee for a protest. [27.4]

## **2. The MTBO Competitors' Code**

[Competition Rules, Appendix 1]

1. Slow right down when passing members of the public who are on foot or on horseback.
2. Avoid damaging the track through aggressive riding such as skidding.

3. When two riders converge:

- i) riders should normally pass with their right shoulders
- ii) any rider travelling uphill must be given priority
- iii) at an intersection, the rider on the smaller track should give way to any rider on the larger track/road.

4. Riders should overtake on the right.

5. Slower riders should give way to overtaking riders.

6. When riding on public roads the traffic rules must be observed.

7. Competitors must stay on permissible tracks marked on the competition map or on open areas mapped as item 839 'Open Land Permitted to Ride'. This applies even if the terrain or road conditions force riders to dismount and push or carry their bikes. No off-track short cuts through the bush are permitted. If competitors inadvertently take an indistinct track which is not marked on the competition map, they should retrace their route to the previously known point, and not continue cross county to the nearest marked track.

8. Competitors must not become separated from their bike during the competition.

9. The Event Controller may approve additions or changes to the above code to improve safety.

### 3. Drinking Water

Competitors are expected to carry their own water. [Competition Rules, Appendix 3, 2.1]

### 4. Environmental Code of Practice

Competitors' responsibilities [Competition Rules, Appendix 4, 6.5]

Read and adhere to organisers instructions.

Pets and firearms must not be taken to events because of the restrictions that generally apply.

Fire restrictions must be observed. *Note: Fires are prohibited at all ONSW events, unless the Organiser gives specific approval to a fire being lit.*

*Leave a gate as you found it. If a gate is found open, it should be left open, and if it is closed, it should be left closed.*

Report any damage to property to the organisers.

Avoid spreading seeds and mud when cleaning your bike, shoes and clothing. This can be done by cleaning them at the event site, provided that this does not spread material from an infested area on the course to a 'clean' assembly area. If cleaning at home, dispose of the material so that it is not spread elsewhere. Do not leave the cleaning until you arrive at the next event site.

Avoid fauna and stock as much as possible. Cattle trapped at fence corners or in a confined area can stampede and should always be given a wide berth.

Try to avoid disturbing wildlife. Keep a distance whenever possible to avoid stressing any animal.

Remove your own rubbish. Do not leave it for the organisers to collect and take away. Drive and park as directed by the organiser. The organiser is responsible to ensure you do not cause damage by becoming bogged or by trampling sensitive vegetation or pasture.

Wherever possible avoid damage to sensitive areas such as wetlands, marshes and soft earth embankments. Mossy rock surfaces should be avoided to prevent damage and also because they could be slippery and dangerous.

Respect the rights of other users of the area such as walkers, picnickers and, of course, resident land owners. Do not approach farm residences.

*Smoking at ONSW events is discouraged and prohibited at events where there is a risk of fire.*

## 5. General Hygiene

It is the responsibility of all orienteers and event officials to maintain strict personal hygiene, as this is the best method of controlling the spread of infectious diseases. [Competition Rules, Appendix 3, 1.1]

All orienteers with prior evidence of infectious diseases are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation. [Competition Rules, Appendix 3, 1.2]

## 6. Athlete Code of Conduct

[Member Protection Policy, Appendix D4]

You must ... in any activity ... *under the auspices* of Orienteering Australia:

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow players, coaches, officials and spectators.
2. Do not tolerate acts of aggression.
3. Respect the talent, potential and development of fellow players and competitors.
4. Care for and respect the equipment provided to you as part of your program.
5. Be frank and honest with your coach concerning illness and injury and your ability to train fully within the program requirements.
6. At all times avoid intimate relationships with your coach.
7. Conduct yourself in a professional manner relating to language, temper and punctuality.
8. Maintain high personal behaviour standards at all times.
9. Abide by the rules and respect the decision of the official, making all appeals through the formal process and respecting the final decision.
10. Be honest in your attitude and preparation to training. Work equally hard for yourself and your team.
11. Cooperate with coaches and staff in development of programs to adequately prepare you for competition at the highest level.
12. *Not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.*

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Introduces a rule where competitors who breach out-of-bounds rules may be disqualified after results are finalised.

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