

KNC event formats and mispunching or extra/superfluous controls

A full KNC season means we need 26 venues. Rather than keep visiting the same limited number of places, for variety we take the opportunity to use a range of areas. Some of these are quite small, and using a simple score format would mean that faster competitors could finish well within the hour.

A number of ingenious score formats have been devised (thanks given to those who came up with these!), so everyone can get an hour's entertainment. Examples are 90s & 100s, odds & evens, brown>blue>black feature sequence, dumbbells and so on.

In normal line orienteering there is no penalty for visiting extra controls or going to the same one twice, as long as the controls on the course have been visited in the correct order. Additional controls, mispunches and repeats are ignored, so the run is still valid. The competitor is often penalised in the sense that time has been lost.

The same principle applies for a straightforward score event.

For the special prescriptive score formats that are often used at KNCs, there is a real risk that someone (eg a newcomer) fails to understand unfamiliar rules. Faced with a splits printout that shows this, the Organiser usually looks as favourably as he can to maximise the score. We don't want to put people off – they may have travelled some way, on a cold damp night, and they have found controls in the dark ('the right controls, but not necessarily in the right order...').

An example is when someone finds 15 controls alternating odd > even > odd > even..... when it should have been odds then one switch to evens. In this case, rather than awarding the competitor 2 points, they would get 8 points (1 odd then 7 evens, discounting the other odds as mispunches).

Nevertheless it is important that people go away having had a positive experience and not annoyed that others have cheated or been treated differently.

Use of AutoDownload at all the events (so far) this season is a good innovation. It means that the website results now show the control sequence for everybody. You can scrutinise them to see exactly how others did it. Note that a competitor's subsequent visits to a control already visited don't normally appear in the website Results presentation, however.

The Organiser produces the Results; my advice is to look favourably on what the competitor has done, not only for the reason above, but also in a 'spirit of the KNC competition/fair and encouraging play' concept, in that people are only human and make mistakes.

Competitors should be aware of this advice, so if you do switch by mistake, it is likely that the Organiser will look on this as a mispunch (if you advise him at the end of the event) and ignore it. There is no advantage gained by mispunching or visiting superfluous controls – you have usually lost time.

Better, of course, that people take care and don't mispunch – it makes it easier for everybody.

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