

# MTBO ORGANISERS' GUIDE

Version 2014a

## INTRODUCTION

A collection of good practice recommendations assembled by the NZ MTBO Committee after the W2W Carnival. This is the first edition. It is by no means comprehensive.

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## 1 Indication in the Terrain of Hazardous Areas

A tiny minority of hazards might fall outside the normal hazards that mountainbikers must expect, eg a fallen tree just round a corner on a fast downhill, or a stream which has eroded the ford and leaves a drop. We have a duty to put a warning in the terrain for hazards that cannot reasonably be anticipated, such as "danger" tapes. The presence of such hazards, and the particular signage used, should be advised to all competitors before the event.

## 2 Who may be a Controller

We decided to compile a list of capable MTBO controllers, as a resource rather than a requirement. The next step of actually doing it is on the future action list.

## 3. Problems with Tight Areas

Legibility of the map and course is paramount. This is challenging when the map includes complex areas of dashed or dotted track. Solutions may include an enlarged section of map, though this needs to be drawn to competitors' attention as it may be folded under when the time comes to use it.

The length of the one-way arrow represents 16m for many maps, so the shortest link that can carry an arrow would seem to be 20m (we mustn't hide the junctions). If exaggeration cannot be used to provide this track length then the area cannot be used at this scale. Controllers are reminded that wide route choices are quite frequent in MTBO so avoiding such areas will require vigilance if the ire of track authorities is to be avoided☺

Similar problems may occur with purple crosses and zig-zags for out of bounds. Offsetting the crosses or zigzags may be used, ie they don't need to be centred over the track/road. It is the controller's judgement

as to whether the result is unambiguous. The tracks can be displaced apart sometimes, as well, if there's nothing else in the way.

When everything is too tight then these areas cannot be used at this scale. Save them up for a separate sprint-distance event when you can display it legibly.

#### 4. Scales

The IOF rules list "normal" scales as follows:

Sprint: 1:5000, 1:7500 or 1:10,000

Middle and Relay: 1:10,000 or 1:15,000

Long: 1:15,000 or exceptionally 1:20,000

However legibility is more important than a specific scale. In-between scales may be used to make best use of standard paper sizes, eg 1:16,000, 1:9000. However you should remember the limitations of typical mapholders when planning the scale and layout.

Note that the mapping specifications give one set of symbols for scales of 1:15,000+, and another set 1.5X larger for scales of 1:10,000-. Any scales in between should use symbol sizes pro rata. When changing scale OCAD has a tick-box for whether to also change symbol dimensions, and this should ONLY be ticked between 10,000 and 15,000

#### 5. North Lines

The spacing is different from the foot-o standards.

At the scale of 1:5000, 1:7500 and 1:10,000 the spacing is 30mm, while at 1:15,000+ it is 20mm. Only when going from 15,000 to 10,000 do the north lines stay at the same place on the map. This is the easiest scale change to do as the symbols change in proportion as well.

#### 6. Information for Competitors

Our rules state that the following "restriction symbols" will be in the map legend: only one direction allowed; forbidden points, routes or areas; and compulsory routes. This is a fraught area. It is not reasonable to expect a competitor to study the legend on the start line, so if you use these, you also have to draw attention to them in the pre-event information. Some of these symbols are hard to fit on the map, particularly in tight areas. You can exaggerate things, offset symbols, or move tracks to some extent.

A compulsory route from the last control to the finish (dashed line) is not going to be noticed on the map. If you can't show these restrictions absolutely clearly, you simply cannot use that part of the map, or even have it on a route choice.

The program/bulletin should have all this information in, and then some important points may have to be

reiterated at the start, either on a written board or verbally. Vital information might relate to safety, or unusual features of the course such as extensive one-way tracks.

## 7. Course Planning General

When laying out the map and choosing the scale, remember that route choices in MTBO can be quite wide. The course should not be close to the edge of the map unless there is an unmistakable boundary such as a main road.

A one-way requirement should be restricted to single-tracks where there is a local one-way rule or it is needed as a safety measure for the event, such as a high traffic downhill single-track. An arbitrary restriction will be ignored, or partially ignored which is worse.

## 8. Course Planning Software

As at 2014 Condes appears to be better for course planning than the facilities within OCAD.

Where there could be doubt as to which track a control is on, you can use a circle with a small dot in the middle. Both Condes and OCAD let you specify this kind of control circle.