

Responses from federations to the MTBOC proposal on the allocation of start slots for World MTB Orienteering Championships long distance

AUS:

“Orienteering Australia comments on MTBO WOC qualification

Orienteering Australia acknowledges IOF’s wish to remove the qualification race for the MTBO WOC long distance. We do, however, have significant concerns with the use of World Rankings as a basis for qualification, as we believe this will significantly disadvantage countries from outside Europe, particularly those with limited capacity to organise World Ranking Events of their own, or to access WREs in neighbouring countries.

We believe that, with present competitor numbers, no qualification scheme is required. Instead, we propose that the maximum number of competitors per country be reduced to 3, with a personal place for the World Champion (as is the case for the foot WOC). Whilst larger team sizes may have had a place in the early stages of the event’s development to ensure fields of reasonable size, this is no longer the case.

With a maximum of 3 competitors per country, based on 2012 participation, the field size would be approximately 70 for men and 60 for women. Council has already indicated a willingness to accept fields of this size or larger for the foot WOC, and we do not see any clear reason why such a field size should not be acceptable for the MTBO WOC.

If the MTBO WOC grows in future to a point where qualification is required (we suggest that this point would be when there are more than 80 competitors), we would propose that qualification be based on previous WOC results. Again, this would be consistent with Council decisions on qualification for the foot WOC. The option would exist of using the same method as used for the foot WOC (which should be finalised in the first half of 2013) or some other method.”

BEL:

Dear members of the I.O.F. Council,

Please find below the comments of the Belgian Orienteering Federation with respect to the proposal for “allocating WMTBOC Long distance start slots” as distributed December 12, 2012.

First of all we want to state that the global idea of the proposal was well received and that the explanation, including the example, seemed very clear.

However we have 2 remarks concerning the proposal.

- 1) We believe that the smaller European countries get a disadvantage while the non-European countries are well respected. We can accept that for these countries the last 2 World Championships are taken into account (seen the long and expensive travel) but we propose that an extra method for allocating starting slots to the smaller European countries should be added.

First we have to define “smaller European countries”. Well we believe it can be defined as these countries that participated in the previous WMTBOC (just 1 year and not 2 as for the non-European countries) but that did not have athletes within the first 15.

Proposal: for these countries we analyse the results of the previous year and when they have one or more athletes placed within position 16 to 30, they obtain one extra starting slot. One extra slot is the

maximum because otherwise we possibly impose a disadvantage for other countries that had athletes finishing within the first 15.

In your example this would mean an extra slot for AUT, GER, LTU and POL. However when we continue with the allocation of the remaining slots, we noted that all these countries would lose a start slot in the allocation via the World Ranking. So overall in the example it doesn't make a difference.

Based on the final result it might look as a senseless addition but it removes the discrepancy during the allocation process based on the results of the previous WMTBOC and secondly it can be important for countries/athletes that don't have the possibilities to participate in other World Ranking races.

- 2) We believe that the allocation of starting slots to the organising country should be based on the amount of participating countries. To take an extreme example if we have 57 participating countries then each country is allowed to enter 1 competitor while the organising country can enter 4.

Proposal: 4 slots if 35 or less countries
3 slots if between 36 and 45 (both numbers included) countries
2 slots if between 46 and 59 (both numbers included) countries
1 slot if 60 or more countries

This variable number of start slots should also be the maximum number of athletes from any specific country.

We know that today we are far away from this large number of countries but we believe that the aim of I.O.F. is to go as worldwide as possible and the procedure we introduce should be as safe as possible for the future.

So far our comments to the proposal. We hope that the "big" European countries are well aware of the fact that when more than 60 countries entered the competition, each country can only have 1 (one) athlete in this race (apart from the reigning world champions). In case there are more than 60 interested countries, we believe that the number of available start slots should be increased to the amount of participating countries."

ESP:

"We think that this measure will reduce the participation in the MTB-O World Championships, because some countries that will have only 1 start slot for long distance, may decide not to send a full team. At the same time we think that participation should be taken into account and not only quality. The proposed option will seriously affect the emerging countries, so that we give some ideas in order to reduce the effect of this procedure.

We propose for 2013 to have a Final A following the described procedure in the document, and at the same time to have a Final B with 60 runners, so that each country could have 4 participants between both finals. In 2014, the runners (countries) that finish from place 1 to 10 of final B in 2013 will be classified for Final A, and the 10 last runners (countries) of Final A will be in Final B in 2014.

We hope you keep this suggestion, or a similar one, in mind in order not to damage Federations with only 1 allocated start slot for Long Distance."

EST:

"The proposed system looks fine for Estonian OF's MTBO specialists."

FIN:

“To IOF Council and IOF MTBO commission

Finnish answer for the proposed procedure for allocation start slot for WMTBOC Long Distance competitions

The withdraw of qualifications from the WMTBOC is very good development. The proposed scheme seems to be well prepared. However, we have some recommendations:

Number of nation slots:

- The organising Federation automatically has the maximum of **2 start slotsⁱ** per gender class.
- The maximum number of start slots for any one Federation is **6 per genderⁱⁱ** class.

Personal slots:

- The reigning Long Distance World Championⁱⁱⁱ

Start lists of the final and allocation of nation slots

The World Ranking should be utilized more, in two ways:

- The last 30 riders of the final should be the 30 best riders of the World Ranking.
- number of nation slots should be primary base on the World Ranking, secondly on the other criteria.

ⁱ Four automatically given start slots for the organizing federation is too much. The organizing federation may be relatively weak in top level sport and start slots 3-4 wouldn't represent the needed quality for the WMTBOC.

ⁱⁱ The maximum number of start slots for the best nations should be more than four. The current amount, six start slots would be ideal at the moment. This would guarantee that best world riders will get their chance in WMTBO. If and when the participation of countries will increase in future WMGBOCs, the maximum start slots can be lowered.

ⁱⁱⁱ There is no need to give personal slots for the reigning Long distance Junior World Champion. The gap between junior and senior classes is too remarkable.”

IRL:

“The World Ranking list doesn't take into account that the only race that the slots being allocated for is the long distance. So someone on the world ranking list could be there based on sprint and middle results only, thereby getting a long distance slot for their country having not taken part in a long race.”

JPN:

“PREAMBLE:

I also deeply understand the need for a qualification system for the long race in MTBO.

As (AUS) also mentioned, we suppose there has been insufficient discussion, especially from countries outside Europe, such as New Zealand, Australia, and Japan.

I think there are two problems mainly here.

- **Radical changes**
- **Insufficient consideration to Outside Europe**

Radical changes:

Last WOC we all had 100 competitor entries in Long qualification from 26 countries. We basically agree with limited slots in each nation. I guess even max.3 is acceptable for many nations. If top6 nations get 4 and rest may get max.3, we may be able to decrease the number of competitor 100 to ca.75 according to 2012 start list.

Ex. 4: AUT, CZE, FIN, FRA, RUS, SUI, 2:ROM, 1: BRA, BUL, NOR, TUR, 3:the rests

As the first step of reform procedure, we Japan think radical change may lead to many problem results. Already defined rules normally will be difficult to be revised or cancelled. Japan officially proposes IOF firstly should limit the number of long entries to 3 slots for each nation. No other fixed rule looks needed for now. Some tentative rule for 2013, for example one more allocation to strong countries, less one shedding from not so strong countries are acceptable. We should reform the rule gradually for years.

The IOF proposed allocation procedure looks very complicated and those works much worse for Outside Europe countries due to the lack of chances to take part in European completions.

Insufficient consideration to Outside Europe:

As you IOF see, AUS and JPN MTBO competitors' results have been good or rather sometime better than the average of European so far.

If IOF new procedure start, for the countries outside Europe such as New Zealand, Australia, and Japan, our total allocation may be soon limited to 3-5 (1-2 for each nation) in 60 slots, due to the lack of chances. It seems very difficult to get more than 2. We AUS, and Japan team surely lose the motivation to send big team. It affect seriously to our MTBO competitors situation.

For example, Our Japanese FootO national team now become difficult to organize/send big team due to the lack of chance of race. Same in FootO, We recent 5-7years Japan team had many difficulties to motivate the runner to become strong. If MTBOWOC become same – lack of chances, since we Japan has only ca.20 MTBO Biker, we very soon lose the motivation to go WOC.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS to PROPOSAL

- 1) Each participating federation is allocated one automatic start slot. **Possible 3.**
- 2) The organising Federation automatically has the maximum of 4 start slots per gender class. **Agree 3-4**
- 3) Start slots are added for each European Federation on the basis of the first 15 finishers in the long distance event at the previous WMTBOC (in year N-1) within the limit of the maximum of 4 start slots.

4) Start slots are added for each Federation outside Europe on the basis of the first 30 finishers in the long distance event at the WMTBOC in the year N-1 or N-2, whichever of these two gives the higher number, within the limit of the maximum of 4 start slots.

Correlation between Rule 3) and 4) are not fair.

Practically 15 slots will be surely allocated to ca.25 European nations, and meanwhile 0 to only max.2 will be allocated to Outside Europe.

5) Following the allocation of start slots in steps 1-4 above, a maximum of 60 start slots is made up from the World Ranking list as it stands three months prior to the championships. The riders who have gained start slots for their Federation on the basis of previous WMTBOCs will not be considered when allocating start slots based on the World Ranking.

It never works for Outside Europe for now.

At that time, Not the name of "World Ranking" should be in fact based on "European Ranking".

6) In addition to the allocated start slots, the reigning Long distance World Champions and the reigning Long distance Junior World Champions may be entered by their Federations provided they are members of their Federation's senior team. **Agree**

7) No further allocation of start slots is made if a Federation does not take up its start slots or if the figure of 60 (plus 2 champions) is not reached. An exception to this can be made by the organiser only in case of a late pre-entry; the Federation concerned would then be allocated one start slot.

7) It looks too much detailed. So far we have no result from new procedure; therefore we should have room/ways to cope with unexpected problems."

RUS:

"Good project, no remarks!"

SUI:

"For Swiss Orienteering Federation the proposal is ok."