



**INTERNATIONAL ORIENTEERING FEDERATION  
TRAIL ORIENTEERING COMMISSION**

**TECHNICAL NOTE 09/02**

**OUTLINE SPECIFICATION FOR TEMPO**

TempO may be considered a 'sprint' version of 'classic' trail orienteering.

The 'classic' form of trail orienteering tests skills of map reading and terrain interpretation, requiring competitors to view, from the tracks, various numbers of flags around features in the terrain. The task is to decide which flag, or none, agrees with the centre of the circle on the map and the description of the feature there. The main part of a trail orienteering course is not competitively timed and participants are ranked according to the number of correct answers given. In order to separate those with equal scores, one or more special timed controls are set in which the speed of answering is recorded.

The 'sprint' format of TempO is a development of the timed control concept. A TempO course consists of a number of stations from which can be seen clusters of flags. At each station the competitors are given a set of maps, each map showing a different control circle and description. The answers, in sequence order, and the overall time between map issue and last answer are recorded. On completion of the course the competitors are awarded a total time, which is the accumulated time at all of the stations plus time penalties for wrong answers. A typical time penalty is 45 sec. The winner is the competitor with the lowest total adjusted time.

An elite standard TempO competition might have five stations with up to five maps per station. In this format the 'zero option (Z)', no flag at the centre of the circle and in accordance with the control description, is permitted (but not obligatory) and this can greatly increase the level of potential difficulty. TempO thus presents a considerable intellectual challenge with competitors having to make testing technical decisions in the shortest possible time.

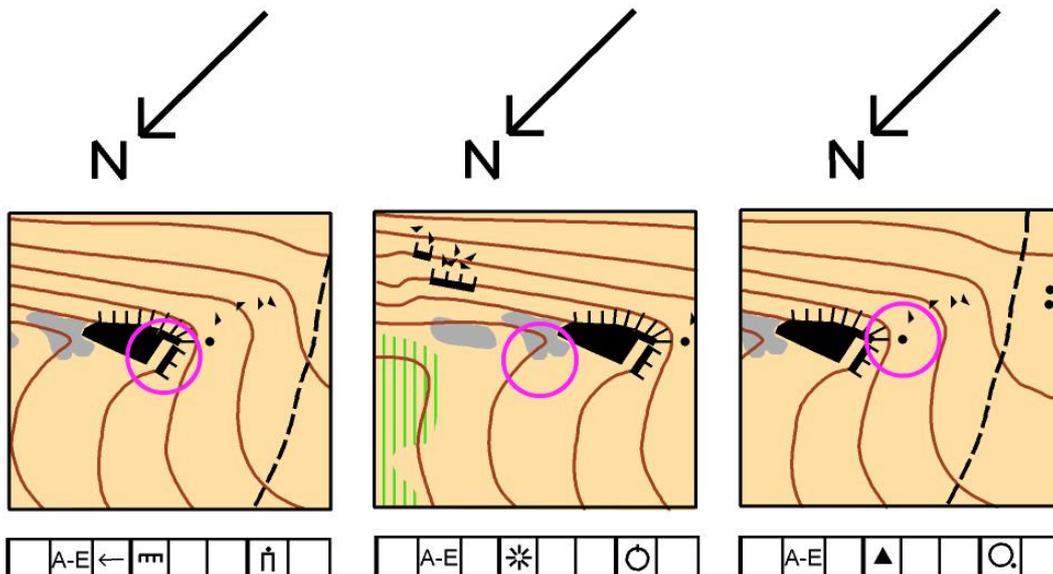
To date at WTOC timed controls, times and answers have been manually recorded by officials. Electronic recording has been successfully demonstrated for TempO using sets of standard recording units at the stations and software developed to give instant overall scores on download. Future development being pursued is to radio link the recording units with the results computer so that the progress of a competitor could be displayed in real time, thus offering spectator possibilities.

Take up of TempO at demonstration events in Scandinavia and elsewhere has been particularly encouraging, especially among able-bodied young orienteers, who respond to the challenge of quick thinking. It appears possible that, following the introduction of a Tempo world competition, competitor numbers would rise to the point whereby qualification heats and a final would be necessary. TempO is well suited to such an arrangement as the overall competition time is short compared with the classic format.

The aim of the IOF is eventually for WTOC to contain both classic and TempO formats. As an intermediate step, before awarding TempO full world championship status, it is intended to stage world competition at a lesser level.

## An example of a Tempo station

*"There are five flags: From the left, Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo. There are three maps. Your time starts now!"*



The answers are coded at the bottom of the page.

Brian-Henry Parker  
 IOF Trail Orienteering Commission 2010  
 September 2009. Reissued with minor changes June 2010

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The correct answer letters are, in order, in the word: DANZIG