



**INTERNATIONAL ORIENTEERING FEDERATION
TRAIL ORIENTEERING COMMISSION**

TECHNICAL NOTE 12/02

TIMED CONTROL PROCEDURES (Guideline)

1. What are timed controls?

At a timed control in trail orienteering we measure the times taken by competitors to solve control problems, from when they are given the map to when they give an answer.

In the Classic form of trail orienteering the time controls are used to separate competitors with the same point scores for correct answers. The number of timed controls, additional to the main course, is usually 2-4 in number. The competitor with the fastest overall time at the timed controls for any particular final score is ranked above slower competitors with the same score.

In the TempO form of competition all the controls are timed. In this competition there are several stations and many controls.

2. Basic requirements of timed controls procedure

At a **single** timed control the competitor is introduced to the terrain, then immediately given a map complete with a control circle and a description.

The timing starts at this point, with two stop watches.

The competitor gives an answer and the timing stops.

Both times and the answer are entered on a record sheet and repeated on the competitor's control card.

At a **multiple** timed control the logic is the same but there are two ways to proceed:

1. The maps can be handed out in turn and each is timed separately.
2. The maps are handed out as a set and the timing is from then until the last answer.

In Classic TrailO both procedures are used. The second procedure is usual in TempO.

3. Typical detailed procedure at a timed control

It is usual to view the terrain and flags from a shelter.

In the shelter, over the viewing point, there is a chair. For wheelchair users the seat is placed to one side and the wheelchair manoeuvred into position over the VP marker.

The normal staffing is for three officials, the recorder plus two timing officials. It is possible, but more difficult, to manage with two officials by overlapping duties. Two is a minimum, four is fully staffed.



A timed control at WTOC 2008. Seated competitors have the same view as those in wheelchairs.

The competitors are held at a stop point some distance away, from which they cannot see the control terrain and flags. They are brought forward one by one. The fourth official can be usefully employed for this but an alternative is to place a suitable notice at the stop point and the recorder or one of the other officials calls the competitors forward.



As the competitor comes into the shelter the control card is handed over. The competitor's details (name and number) are entered into the record.

At least one timing official stands in front of the chair to block the view of the terrain and flags while the competitor settles.

Once settled, the competitor is introduced to the terrain with a standard routine. The officials step aside and one of them points out the flags in turn, speaking the labels: **Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, (Foxtrot)**. This takes about one second per flag.

Competitors are not allowed to slow this process by saying they cannot see one of the flags. Sometimes flags can be difficult to see easily (sunshine, flags at very different heights or distances, etc). In these cases the official should add additional information to precisely indicate flag positions to competitors, such as "far away", "beside ...", "behind ...". The official's statement should be the same for all competitors.

Immediately following the pointing out of the last flag the competitor is handed one or more maps with the words **the time starts now**.

For Classic one map at a time (2.1 above):

The competitor gives an answer and the **timing stops**. The timing officials step back to block the view.

The answer is given either by speaking, using the International Phonetic Alphabet "**Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, (Foxtrot)**" or by pointing out the letter on a pointing strip, or both. The pointing letters may be on the map or a separate card or, as in the photograph, on a trestle in front of the competitor.



The answer is repeated by the recorder and entered into the records, together with the two times, each rounded down to completed seconds.

[The reason the recorder repeats the answer is to confirm the selection and avoid problems where the competitor's pronunciation is not clear.]

The competitor is allowed a maximum of 60 seconds to give an answer. A ten seconds-to-go warning is given at 50 seconds.

Once the times and answer are recorded the watches are re-set, the officials step aside and the **timing starts again** as the next map is handed to the competitor. The answer is given and the **timing stops**. The answer and the two stopwatch times are recorded.

For Tempo several maps together (2.2 above):

The competitor is given a set of maps in order. It is essential that the order is checked before handing the maps to the competitor.

The competitor considers the problem on the **first map** and gives an answer. This answer is repeated by the recorder and entered in the records.

Without delay the competitor considers the problem on the **second map** and gives an answer. Again the answer is repeated by the recorder and entered into the records.

Without delay the competitor continues to the **last map** and gives an answer. The **timing stops**.

Competitors must follow the map order and deal with each map without reference to earlier or later maps.

The two stopwatch times are entered in the records.

Finally ...

Finally, whatever system is in use, the times and answers are copied onto the competitor's control card and the competitor departs the timed control station.

4. The future

The system described here is that of manual timing and manual recording of answers and times.

Electronic recording of answers and times is being investigated by the IOF.

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