Using SPORT*ident*

Notes for Officials

Robin Strain 12/04/13

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Using SPORTident

In the light of experience at a number of events I have produced these guidelines/suggestions. I have used material from many people including John Emeleus, Robert Findlay, Donald Petrie and David Rosen, but where the notes say "I", it is my opinion which you are reading. These notes, and others, are available to download via the SOA website. Follow the link "Links" SportIdent Resources

The help files which come with the software are also worth reading.

The 2011 edition of the BOF rules have been rewritten to take account of electronic punching. See appendix I

There is a user guide to AutoDownload on the SPORTident UK website.

Many clubs have written their own guides

On the BOF site there is a note entitled SportIdent Tips for Controllers which should really have wider distribution.

Please, please make as many suggestions as you like. If you had a problem not addressed here, someone else might have it in the future.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you are having a problem. I can usually give advice that will save you a lot of time, or worse, making a mistake and spoiling an event.

Robin Strain 02/04/13

Previous editions of these notes referred to the software written by Stephan Kraemer whose web site is www.sportsoftware.biz/

This version is based on AutoDownload from SportidentUK www.sportident.co.uk

Equipment

The bulk of the SI equipment in Scotland has been purchased by the 6 Day Company and made available for use free of charge.

The equipment available includes
Hardware
   160   Base stations (BSF7) for use as controls and prestart, start and finish
     3   Base master stations (BSM7) for downloading e-cards and for programming the BSF with serial connections
     4   Base master stations (BSM7) for downloading e-cards and for programming the BSF with USB connections
     2   Timemaster units for preparing units without using a computer

   240   e-cards

     6   Dell and HP Laptop computers – running XP and W7

         Networking
     2   Switches (two 8-port 10/100)
     3   Hubs (two 8-port and one 5-port)
         selection of 90m to 1 m network cables
         A Wireless router for providing a local WiFi network

     1   Laser Printers (Brother 2250)
     3   Thermal printer for split times
     1   Battery powered ink jet printer

         Kit for remote data collection from wired and radio controls

Generally the kit is divided into two sets, including 70 units programmed as controls no 100-169, and two start, finish, check and clear.
Two laptops, one laser printer and one split printer are sufficient for most events although a third laptop can be useful

Software
All software requires either a Windows PC or a Mac running a Windows emulator.

AutoDownload provides full event management facilities, course checking and results processing.

SPORTident Config is required for managing units.

Other items of software for more specialized tasks can be downloaded from http://www.sportident.co.uk/downloads/index.php
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<h1 style="text-align:center"><u>Instructions for Planner</u></h1>

The use of electronic punching brings benefits to many aspects of orienteering. The planner has some new responsibilities and tasks, but the experience so far has been very positive. Good luck.

Introduction

Each control will have a SI base unit as well as a backup punch. SOA has 160 base stations. Approx 10 (depending on the assembly layout, number of starts etc) will be required for event management leaving 150 for controls. If more units are required they have to be hired from another association (at least £5 per unit per day), although other Scottish clubs may hire theirs for a lower fee.

Course design

Electronic punching means that it is impossible for runners to punch controls out of order and so courses can be planned with cross-overs and without manned controls or, often, second maps. SIcards have normal capacity of 30 controls (just like a traditional card).

However, as using all 30 controls may lead to problems at the finish if a competitor punches any extra controls, courses should be planned with a max of 27/28 controls.

An extra 6 control numbers can be stored in an Sicard although for these the time is not stored. It is not advisable to plan a course which needs these controls.

(There are cards with differing capacities. The latest cheapest have exactly30 spaces)

Finish location

After the 'final' control, competitors punch at a control on the finish line. After that they proceed to the results area and download their times into the computers. It is preferable that the finish and results area are close together but as the results area requires access for vehicles, and generator or mains power this may be impossible. If the finish line is distant from results, it must be made clear that competitors must go direct to download, and not, for example, to their car.

Control numbers

Two set of controls units are numbered from 100 to 169

The units can have their control number put in them when they are programmed for each event and previous settings can be changed. However it is hoped that over time clubs will renumber their Tbars to match.

If the control numbers have to be changed, plastic electrical tape should be used to cover (almost) the permanent numbers (but please fold one end in to make the tape easier to remove by the next planner). Paper labels or masking tape might seem a good alternative to the plastic tape, but are very much more difficult to remove by the next planner.

If changing the control numbers note that they must be between 31 and 255.

Course descriptions

The results team need a list of all controls used and details of courses - lengths, start location, and controls and classes. It is normal to export this information from Condes, Ocad or PurplePen. It is useful for an All Controls map to be available at Download

Preparing units

The new units have new electronics including an accurate clock, a long-life battery and a display.

They only have two states: Standby and Active.

A punch from any SIcard switches them from standby to active (even if the memory of the card is full and it does not cause the unit to beep.)

This punch takes a little longer than normal. The first runner might notice, but is unlikely to be disadvantaged (except in a head to head race).

When they are active, the display cycles between the control no, the time and the last SIcard.

The units stay active for a period after the last punch. This period can be set using SPORTident Config (See appendix B)

Although the clocks in the units are fairly accurate, this should not be relied upon and they should be synchronized regularly (See appendix XX)

The memory of all units should be cleared before each event, eith using a purple "Clear backup card" or one of the other techniques described later. (See appendix XX)

Putting out the units

The units can be put onto the Tbars at any time.

The longer they are in the forest, the greater the risk of theft.

If units are "Active" they can, rarely, interfere with each other. This is more likely to happen if the units are face to face.

At the six day in 2005 we have a few controls with apparently random times. We suspect that the units were made active before they went out to the forest and that they were then carried in a bag. The problem had not been diagnosed at that time.

Preferred procedure

Decide on the order you are going to visit the controls. Thread the units onto a rope (or a piece of electrical flex)

Optional: On arriving at the control, punch the unit and look at the display. Check the control number and the time. Switch the unit off (to save battery life) if you have the purple Service SIcard

Optional: Visit all controls just before the race and make them active.

Checking the time and number is **not** vital. (any problems can be dealt with at download if necessary.)

Waking up the units before the event is also **not** vital except perhaps for the final and finish controls. (Some controllers have different opinions)

Control collection

Units are probably most at risk after the end of the event and you should minimise that risk. You should have recruited a team of control collectors before the day of the event and have pre-drawn maps ready to hand out to them. It is no good asking people on the day to stay back - they will have arranged to have tea with grandma.

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Instructions for Entries

Use of the archive files

1. From www.sportident.co.uk download the competitor archive. This should be done before every event

Entry Information

Computer files
Robin Strain can supply a template which has much of the standard information pre entered.

Putting in Entries
Entries can be added directly into AutoDownload, but it is more efficient to use a spreadsheet and import them. Competitors whose details are in the archive don't have to be entered before they get to download. This can save a lot of work in events with no pre-entry

SI Card Hire
There is a help sheet suggesting methods of dealing with the allocation of hired SI-cards.

Start Time allocation
It is possible to allocate Start times in AutoDownload if the relevant module has been purchased

Course details
Before the event, but not necessarily before you start putting in entries, you will need to get from the planner a list of all the control numbers he is using and the course details - controls, lengths, climb, run in and start.Both Condes and Ocad can export the courses in a way which can be

Information for Competitors
You can print out start lists in a variety of orders

Information for Starts
You will need to produce start lists in time order for each start.

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<div align="center">**Instructions for Start Team**</div>

Introduction

The start team is responsible for keeping track of who has started and on ensuring that they start at the correct time. They should also check that SIcards have been cleared ready for the run.

There are two systems for starts which are usually called timed starts and punching starts.

> **Timed starts**
>
> Runners have their start time allocated on entry and the start team will have a printed list of starters. Some other runners not on the list will possibly have a "stub" (late entries, EOD or other changes).
>
> **Punching starts**
>
> Runners start time is recorded on their SIcard when they start by the use of a start unit.

At SOL events runners will be allocated start times and will be expected to start at the correct time. However a punching start is usually used, giving more flexibility to the runners and a more secure system for the computer team. If there is misuse of the flexibility, the procedure may have to be re-evaluated.

You will receive a start list as up to date as possible, two clear units, two check units (labeled –3 and –1) and two start units (one to be held as a spare)

In the **pre-start** area there should be 2 Clear Stations on Tbars.

At call up runners are checked off against the start list.

> Runner missing – no action required
> Extra runner – should have a card from registration. No action required.
> Wrong SIcard – advise runner that there will a minor problem at download.
> Wrong time – start when possible without changing other's start times

All runners punch (hand held) check station (to check that they have cleared)

On **start line**, ALL RUNNERS punch a second check station. This will be used to confirm who has actually started..

At the correct time, all runners should punch the start unit on a Tbar, pick up their maps (unless on course 1 & 2 when they will already have them) and go.

Helpers, particularly those starting early or late, must also punch the check and start units.

The procedure at district and local events is likely to less formal and there will be no start lists. All runners should go through the clear/check (one only) /start sequence but allocated start times, if any, are simply to ensure that there is not a large queue waiting to start any course.

Return of the units

It is very important that the units, particularly the –1 check unit and start unit, are returned to the computer team AS SOON AS START HAS CLOSED. Too often this stage is overlooked and the units are left at start after the last helper has gone off on their run, or are locked in a car or…

Only once the computer team have the units can they provide information about who has been out an unreasonably long time and who has not finished.

You will have noted that you have not been asked to add any information to the start lists. For this to work we have to trust the information stored in the check and start units and to get them back as soon as possible.

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Instructions for Finish

The use of electronic punching brings benefits to many aspects of orienteering. Many of the benefits come from the reduction of work at the finish and the increase of information to the runners.

Finish Control
Normally the finish line will be near the results computing area. In this case some competitors will try to come straight to the download without punching on the line. Someone on the line checking against this may be helpful.

Download station
For an SOL event one download unit seem to be enough although a spare should be available.

Splits printing
SOA has recently bought a fast thermal printer that can print splits onto strips of paper.

Problem Runs
Someone needs to be identified who will be able to deal with any runners whose download causes a problem. It helps if they have a start list and a copy of the map with all controls.
Common problems include

missing control	It is very, very unlikely that if only one runner has a control missing that the unit is faulty. If the splits of this runner are compared with others on the course, often it can be shown that they missed the control. It may be possible to interrogate the base unit later, but this will not result in a reinstatement, the rules are clear on this point.
	If many runners have the same missing control, it can be assumed that it is faulty. If not too far away, it may be possible to program a spare station and replace the faulty one. There is an option on the software to insert a control into every runner's records.
wrong control	Show the runner the master map with their control and the one they punched
wrong SIcard	Either a mistake by the entry team or by the runner.
	Use entries - entries to put in the correct SIcard/runner combination
wrong course	usually caused by the wrong SIcard being used.

Recording Problems
There should be a notebook (not loose sheets of paper) in the finish area to record any problems that have occurred. Problems should be separated in an obvious manner, and once a problem has been dealt with it should be ticked off and initialed

Results
Results can be printed on the same printer as splits or on an independent one. They can be printed out by class or by course. A new page can be taken for each class/course. The option of separate pages by class will take 60 pages or so and will take a lot of display space. Another option is by course and separate pages.

Results display
As above, there are many different formats for producing the results. The system used for displaying them will depend on what equipment is available and what system the club is happy with. A number of different systems are in use throughout the country, partly depending on the size of the event.

Live Results
AutoDownload can be set to display live results on laptop screens, removing the need for printed results. A local wifi network can also be set up giving up-to-date results on smartphones etc

Backup
It is a good idea to take periodic backups of the files for the event onto a different laptop from the server

Has everyone finished?
Get the (-1) check stations and start stations from the start team. Set up a master station which is not being used for download and follow the help instructions for "Safety Check" in AutoDownload

Time on Laptops
The internal clocks in the laptops are not perfect and the time should be checked before programming any units. It is strongly recommended that all times should be accurately set to teletext, the pips, a radio controlled clock or similar. To change the time on the laptops double click on the time in the taskbar.
To synchronise the time on all laptops on the networks, set one as above and on each of the others open a MS-DOS window (in Start - Programs) and use
>net time \\server /set /yes
where server is replaced by the name of the computer providing the time eg dell2
>exit
will return to windows. See (appendix XX)

Finally
Do not panic if something goes wrong. Once a card has been read all the information on it is in the system somewhere and can be processed later - at home if it has to be.

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<u>**Instructions for Results**</u>

Unfortunately the work is not finished when the last runner is accounted for.

Results
Results should be published on the internet as soon as possible after the event.

There are a number of alternative ways of displaying the split times provided by third parties. Some may give you URLs to display on your results page. You can upload the results to the WinSplits site.

The URL of the results can be published by you on the BOF results page and Roger Coombs (coombs.five@btinternet.com) will update the SOA page.

BOF ranking
The best file for submitting results to the BOF site is the OE export, although any editing between creation and submission of the file must be done carefully.

Badge Times
AutoDownload can calculate badge times (although I am not sure if this is still relevant).

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<u>**Instructions for Networking**</u>

At any event with more than perhaps 100, it will be beneficial or indeed necessary to link up two or more computers. One computer will hold the data files for the event or "host the event" and is sometimes referred to as the "server". The other computers access the data files on the "server". A printer connected to any computer can be used by any of the others in the network.

Note that there is no difference between any of the SOA laptops. The "server" is simply the computer with the data files. For very large events there may be a benefit in using a higher specification machine as the server, but this is not necessary at SOLs.

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Instructions for Registration

The following note is aimed at SOL events.

There are a number of reasons why people cannot go straight to start and need to speak to registration.

1	**EOD for badge courses**	Filled-in slip	Passed to computer
		Check map availability	Is there a card available
		Pay	
		Get time	(or do they just take a chance)
		Get course card	To show start that they have registered
		Get SIcard if nec	
2	**EOD for colour coded**	Filled-in slip	
		Check map availability	
		Pay	
		Get course card	
		Get SIcard if nec	
3	**Change of class**	Filled-in slip	
		Check map availability	
		Pay	The difference between pre-entry and EOD?
		Get time	
		Get course card	
4	**Change of start time**	Filled-in slip	
		Get time	
5	**Change of SI Card**	Filled-in slip	
6	**Pick up maps for course 1 & 2**	Checklist	
7	**Pick up hired SI card**	Checklist	
8	**Pay for pre-entry**	Checklist	
9	**Pay surcharge**	Checklist	
10	**Report withdrawals**	Slips for EOD and for Computer	
11	**Other enquiries**		

Preparation

Allocate staff to each of the above tasks.

      1, 3 and 4 all need access to the available start times.

      1, 2, 3 and 4 all need access to the cards showing available maps

Number/label desks/cars/tents

Notice for runners telling them where to go for each task.

It causes frustration when runners waiting for a simple transaction such as 5 to 10 have to wait in the same queue as those for time consuming tasks

Registration slips available for self-completion before queuing or given out by eg 5-11-person

List of SI cards to be picked up / envelopes containing SI cards

List of available extra maps or cards for each map which can be taken to start

List of allocated start times

List of runners yet to pay or to pay extra

List of runners on Courses 1 & 2

Manpower options

a)	One person for 1 – 11	not recommended
b)	One desk with two people for 1 – 11	not recommended
c)	One desk with two people for 1 – 4	
	One person for 5 – 11	
d)	One desk with two people for 1, 3 and 4	
	One person for 2	
	One person for 5 – 11	
e)	1,2,4	
	3	
	5,10	
	8,9	
	6,7	
	11	

      plus one or two people processing entries directly to the computer from slips.

Other Notes for Organisers

SOA does not own a generator.

Clubs are expected to provide their own paper for the laser printers

Generators
2.5kVA seems to be enough. laser printers are quite heavy on power.

Final Details
This should include something like
"It is the competitor's responsibility alone to record a punch at each control by holding their SIcard in the hole long enough to hear a bleep or see a flashing light. It this doesn't happen then they must use the pin punch on the Tbar to mark their map

Collection and return of equipment
Kit may not be available until the week before an event although it is hoped that two weeks in advance may be possible. Kit should be returned as soon after the event as possible.