Given changes in the age profile of the people participating in orienteering, members of OD feel that it is time to make some changes to the scoring system for the CompassSport Cup and Trophy to ensure that it stays as fair as possible.

The demographic of orienteering has changed over the years. Dave Nevell’s article on Long term Trends in Orienteering Membership and Participation in the February 2010 edition of the CompassSport magazine clearly shows this in his analysis of BOC attendance figures. The average age of competitors is slowly rising with the over 50’s now making up just under half the entry. There are now a very large number of entries on the Blue Men’s course (185 for the last final) and the number of entries on the Green Men’s and Women’s courses has been rising too with both being over 100 for last year’s final. And this figure is only set to rise further as the high level of M/W21’s from 30 years ago moves up through the age groups. Whereas we are unlikely to see a similar rise in the number of M/W21’s due to the current large drop out of juniors as they become seniors. Looking at the attached figures for the number of entries in each of the qualifying rounds for last year and this it can be seen that in most cases the number of entries on the Green Men’s and Green Women’s courses was similar to or exceeded the number of entries on the Brown course. For Green Men the number exceeded Brown in every region this year except Scotland. So there can no longer be a case for the Brown class to be considered a large class compared to the Green Men’s and Women’s classes.

With this in mind and taking into account that the Blue Men’s class is now so large, as well as a desire to make the classes as fair as possible in that similar ability competitors (in terms of theoretical physical ability that is) run against each other the club would like to suggest amending the eligible age classes per course as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **CompassSport Course** | **Eligible Age Classes** | **Class Size** |
| 1 | Brown | Men Open | Large |
| 2 | Short Brown | M20- M40+ | Large |
| 3 | Blue Women | Women Open | Large |
| 4 | Blue Men | M50+  | Large |
| 5 | Green Women | W20- W45+  | Large |
| 6 | Green Men | M60+ | Large |
| 7 | Short Green Veterans | M70+ W60+  | Large |
| 8A | Light Green Men | Men 18- | Small |
| 8B | Light Green Women | Women 18- | Small |
| 9A | Orange Men | Men 14- | Small |
| 9B | Orange Women | Women 14- | Small |

I.e. introduce an additional course (Short Brown) to split the Blue Men class up (and which also includes M40’s from the Brown course), and move the M70’s up to the Short Green Veterans class.

Shown on the attached figures on the 2011 Final sheet is what the split would have been per course for the last final with these age splits. As can be seen the number of competitors per adult class is then getting towards 100 per class. A much more even spread. With this in place we could then move to the points dropping by 1 point per place for each of the adult classes with a maximum of 4 to count per class per club for the Cup competition and 2 per class per club for the Trophy. Which we think would be a fairer system. With similar numbers of entries in all the classes and the same point system per adult class, equal value will be given to being near the top (not just top) of the field in one age group as to being near the top of another one. And there will still be a maximum of 36 runners per club to choose the best 25 scores from for the Cup competition, and 18 per club with the best 13 for the Trophy.

We feel that the M70’s should be allowed to run the Short Green Veteran course if they wish to. The event guidelines for the British Long Distance Champs and JK Individual events in fact have M70’s running the same course as W60 and W65’s. The top runners in each of these classes are fairly equally matched and the M70’s certainly don’t stand a chance of being fairly scored for their ability at present on the Green Men’s course.

With regards to the Junior classes the feeling in the club was that the current system of dropping 4 points per place was too harsh. The competition at the top of these classes is comparable to that at the top of the brown and blue courses. In their age group the top juniors are extremely talented and the competition is intense. There are significantly fewer juniors though and the standard does drop quicker so the points system does need to reflect this. With the move to all the adult classes dropping by one point per place as per the suggestion above it was felt that the Junior classes could then move to dropping 2 points per place to give a fairer scoring system. The very talented juniors at the top would then be scored fairer relative to the adults and by keeping the rule of a maximum of 4 runners (2 runners in trophy competition) per pair of small classes this would stop the junior scores skewing the total score significantly when the numbers are small.

We feel that these changes would make the scoring system fairer and hope that you will take the time to consider them.

Appendix: Current course table for comparison:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **CompassSport Course** | **Eligible Age Classes** | **Class Size** |
| 1 | Brown | Men Open | Large |
| 2 | Blue Women | Women Open | Small |
| 3 | Blue Men | M20- M45+  | Large |
| 4 | Green Women | W20- W45+ | Small |
| 5 | Green Men | M60+ | Small |
| 6 | Short Green Veterans | M75+ W60+  | Small |
| 7A | Light Green Men | Men 18- | Very Small |
| 7B | Light Green Women | Women 18- | Very Small |
| 8A | Orange Men | Men 14- | Very Small |
| 8B | Orange Women | Women 14- | Very Small |