



What can we learn from incidents in our events in 2024?

IOF Event Adviser Seminar
23rd November 2024

IOF HLE SEAs 2024

Incidents



This is the right time of the year to revisit the incidents which happened in 2024

We may not be able to avoid them in our future events, but we may know how to solve them faster and better

When an incident has happened, most of the time there are only bad solutions available...

An experienced organiser and many-many hours of prior checking generally – but not always – will help in preventing some of these incidents

Too many of these incidents were the results of late changes. Please try to avoid these with careful planning!



Events in focus



EUROPEAN YOUTH
ORIENTEERING
CHAMPIONSHIPS

ZECIN, POLAND
/06/2024



SEA: Kell Sønnichsen

Incidents



No complaints or protests

Fair play incidents

- Use of mobile phone in Quarantine
- Not following market route

Other

- Too tight transport schedule
- Ceremonies

Use of mobile phone in Quarantine



A Team Official was seen using his mobile phone in the Quarantine area of the Long Distance. He was approached and asked to stop using it. This was before the live production had started so it had no further consequences. Rule was emphasized on next TOM.

Learning points:

- Not all Team Officials or athletes know basic the basic fairness rules about quarantine behaviour. Maybe especially in youth competitions / regional championships.
- Emphasize the rules in the last Bulletin or first TOM.

Not following marked route



During the Sprint competition a couple of runners didn't follow the marked route for the arena passage.

The organisers didn't realize this, but the competitors – showing an exceptional amount of fair play, turned themselves in after the race.

Learning points:

- The organizers should have officials checking that all runners follow the marked routes.
- A detailed map showing the layout of the arena should be put in the last Bulletin so the runners know what to do at the arena passage.

Too tight transport schedule

Transport from quarantine to pre-start in the Long distance was done using several 9-person minibuses. Due to an optimistic time schedule that didn't count with extra capacity needs and parking problems at the quarantine, the situation was quite chaotic before the first start.

Learning points:

- Always put provision into the time schedule and capacity of transport.



Ceremonies

In the Sprint, an Australian runner ended up as number 2 in W18. As per the Rules she was not eligible for a medal. The organisers acknowledged the achievement by having her on the podium alongside the European 2nd place and given a prize. This was well received by the teams.

There was only one flag of each nation available.



Learning points:

- Plan for what to do in the event of two or more from the same nation on the podium, shared medals, etc.





JWOC

JUNIOR WORLD ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

2024

JUNE 30 ————— JULY 7

PILSEN • CZECHIA



SEA: Radoslav Jonáš

IOF Ethics Rules Breach



ISSUE

At each JWOC, the teams prepare their presentation and publish the presentations on social media. One team has prepared their presentation in a way which was in conflict with the IOF ethics rules. The presentation was prepared with good intention however it could be interpreted also as promoting corruption, alcohol and violence.

RESPONSE/SOLUTION

At the first Team Officials' Meeting, the importance of ethical behaviour in IOF events was explained to the teams.

The respective team was asked to remove the presentation from public space, and they removed the presentation.



Missing punches in SIACs



ISSUE

Teams of Belgium, South Africa and Portugal filed the complaints on missing punches in SIACs and provided the information proving the presence of their competitors on the control.

RESPONSE/SOLUTION

This is a pretty standard situation, especially at sprint competitions. Since the proofs presented were not strong enough that the missing punches were not the fault of the runners, Rule 20.5 was used and in all cases the organiser has decided not to re-instate the mispunched runners.

These teams understood the rules before filing the complaints and anticipated the result, however the main reason for the filing of the complaint was to show (to runners, to national federations) the activity focused on protection of the runners.

It is important that organiser is prepared for this likely situation.

JWOC 2024
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Too narrow passage in Sprint



ISSUE

The team of Sweden has filed the complaint about a too narrow and not obvious passage in the fence before the last control on the stadium with the conclusion that this situation impacted the results, especially in W20 where Sweden lost a potential medal position due to a mistake of their competitor on the last control.

RESPONSE/SOLUTION

Organiser verified the size and obviousness of the passage with the conclusion that the passage was easy to pass through (about 60 cm wide) and was clearly marked both in the terrain and on the map and rejected the complaint.

However, it is important to consider all minor and potential influences of the terrain and courses on competitors especially at the closing parts of the courses, where the atmosphere is quite hectic, and competitors are under public pressure.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3r3NkzfyBU&t=2380s>



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Cheating attempt



ISSUE

During the Sprint competition, the SEA was informed about the attempt on cheating through Livelox involving one of the present team coaches. The attempt was made by creating a separate event in Livelox expanding for several months

IOF Competition Rules 26.5.: Any attempt to survey or train in the competition terrain is forbidden, unless explicitly permitted by the organiser. Attempts to gain any information related to the courses, beyond that provided by the organiser, is forbidden before and during the competition.

print area
with route
and thus
could have

RESPONSE

livelox and
to the IOF



Disciplinary Panel.

However, it is important to know about this option and to keep the test runners GPS records strictly confidential during the preparation phases.

Entry of non-accredited competitor



ISSUE

Because of health issues of two Australian competitors during the Long distance competition, the Australian coach asked the SEA to enable further (non-accredited) Australian competitors to let start in the Australian team for the Middle distance and Relay competitions.

RESPONSE/SOLUTION

Since rule 9.7 of the IOF Competition rules does not allow the addition of non-accredited members, the addition of new members above the accredited team members was not allowed.

However the travelling distance was quite long and there was another Australian competitor present, this runner was allowed to run the relay competition, but the relay would not be placed. This decision was announced to everyone on the Team Officials' Meeting. (Rule 2.14.: [JWOC] must have a social, rather than a competitive atmosphere, accentuating exchange of experience.)



Course setting experiences



ISSUE



The SEA has come to contact and discussion with 5 different course setters (for the 5 competitions). Considerable number of course setters with different age, different experiences, different involvement in today's orienteering, different personal characters posed a challenge to SEA communication skills which in one extreme case has led to temporary resignation of one of the course setter in a very late preparation phase. Lack of communication or its insufficient quality can lead to the delay in course finalisation and lack of time to reach the best quality of the courses.

RESPONSE/SOLUTION

I have no special measure to take in this situation. The major role is played by personal characteristics of both sides.



SEA: Janos Manarin

Weather situation at KO Sprint qualification race



During the KO Sprint Qualification race, there was a thunderstorm after the men's race was over and before the start of the women's race. The result of this thunderstorm was that we had to delay the start of the women's race by 30 minutes.

The race was stopped when the first athletes were already at minute -2, picking up their loose control descriptions.

The Event Director was at the finish line.

The SEA was in the pre-start with the Start manager and the National Controller. We had a Whatsapp group to quickly communicate.



Weather situation at KO Sprint qualification race



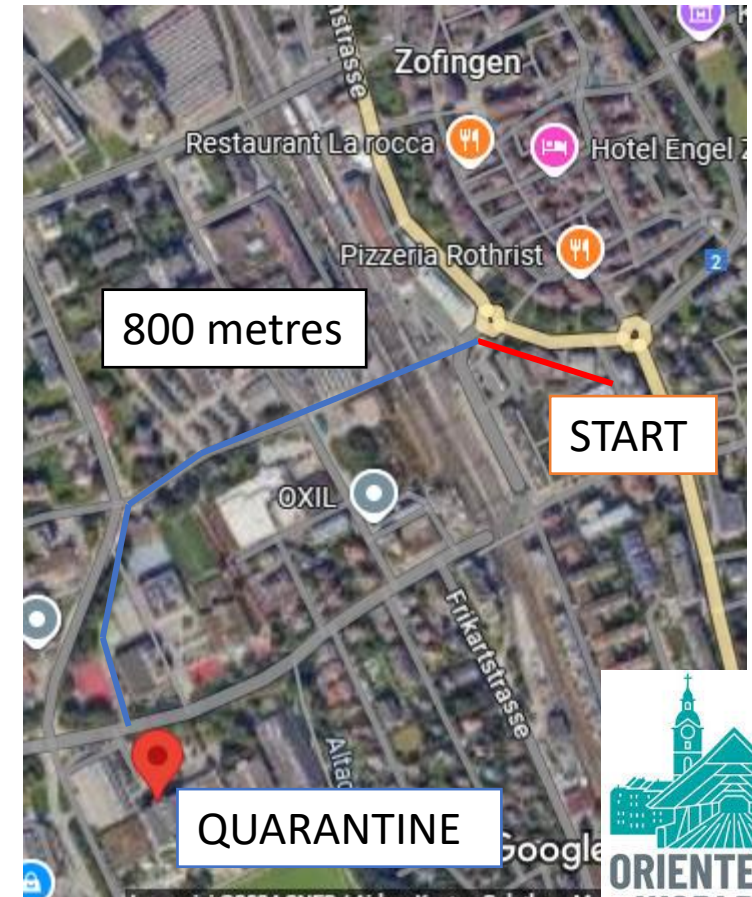
We were expecting rain, but not a thunderstorm, which came in 5 minutes.

Who can take the decision of stopping a race?

I, as the SEA took the decision to stop the race.

The Event Director communicated that we will stop the race for 30 minutes.

We let the athletes go back to quarantine



Weather situation at KO Sprint qualification race



PROBLEMS:

- Quarantine was 800 metres from the prestart
- Athletes have already left their jacket to be collected in the arena
- For how much can the roads stay closed to traffic?
- Can someone have contact with the athletes in these 30 minutes on the road to quarantine?

The women's race started 30 minutes afterwards with no problems, finishing in the sun. No reports of problems. No complaints.

What would I do differently now?

Stop the race 5/10 minutes before. Even if the condition were not extreme. (at least before first athlete enter to the gate.

SUGGESTION

Consider to have a covered area before the prestart if the quarantine is so far away.





SEA: Péter Molnár

Incidents – Technical issues



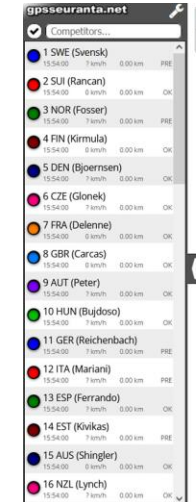
- **Leaking issue #1 – relay – GPS provider**
- **Leaking issue #2 – relay – Strava**
- **Complaint on Sprint last control misspunch**
- **Relay arena setup**
- **Relay forkings**
- **Relay first controls**



Leaking issue #1 – GPS provider



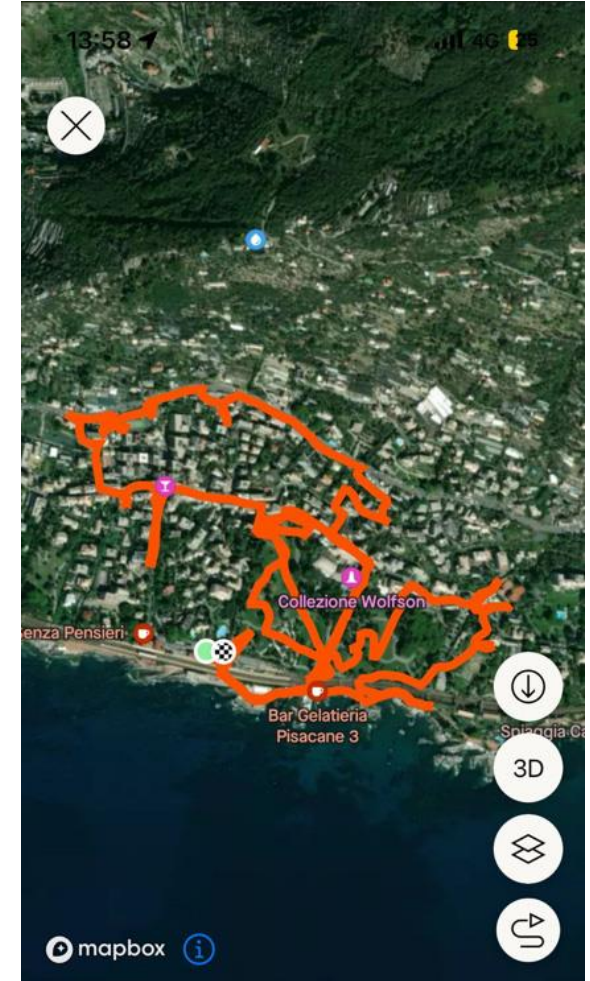
- **4 hours before the event the men’s course appeared on the GPS provider’s website under the link of the individual race the day before. It was available for 17 minutes, was downloaded 25 times.**
- **A Crisis Management Group meeting was organized:**
 - **They assumed that runners who saw the map turned away.**
 - **Since there is no chance to replan courses and the TV-window is fixed, the race will be held with the original courses.**
 - **Teams will be asked if this can still be considered a World Cup race.**
- **Teams agreed that runners who saw the course, shouldn’t run, but this would only affect a few athletes.**
- **The Crisis Management Group decided to keep the race as a World Cup, distribute prize money, but not offer Team World Cup points.**
- **Race was held normally, big mistakes showed that most of the runners did not study the course.**



Leaking issue #2 – Strava



- On 18th March 2024, the course planner visited the Sprint Relay terrain for some field checking. His GPS watch was turned on and after the run, automatically synchronised with the app on his phone, which synchronised with Strava.
- An Italian athlete saw the track on Strava (didn't search for it, but it appeared on his timeline) and made a screenshot.
- The Italian coach sent the SEA an e-mail about it.
- The SEA asked them to delete the screenshot and not to spread the information.
- The SEA asked the course planner not to use his GPS watch in the terrain any more.



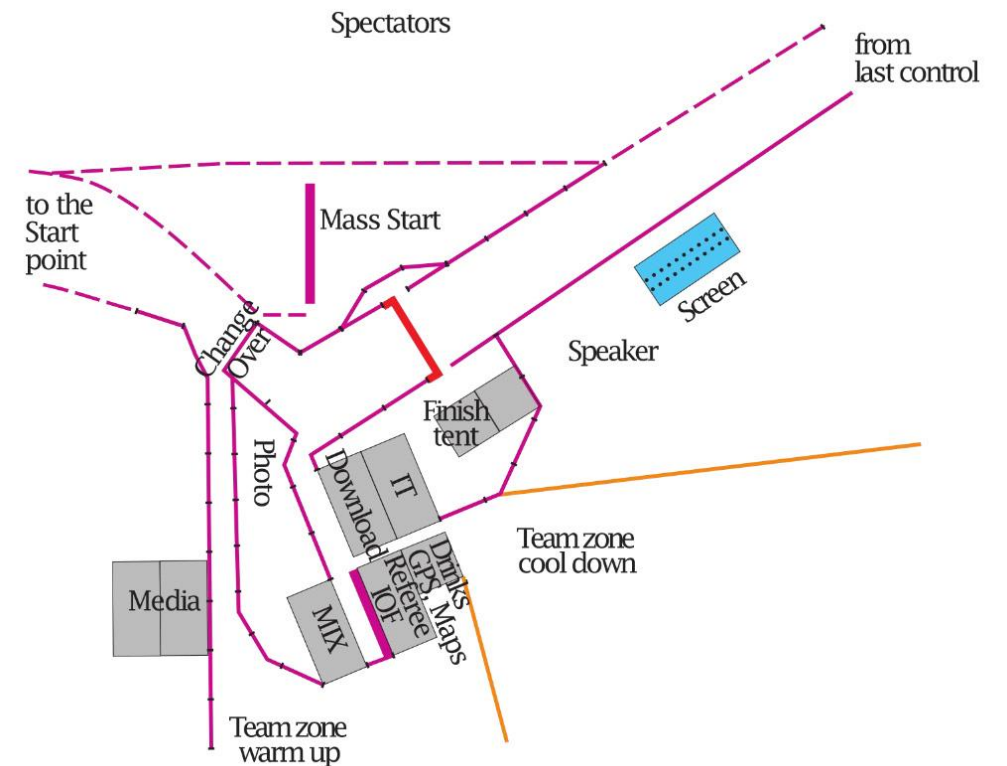
Complaint on Sprint last control mispunch

- Italian athlete Francesco Mariani did not have a punch in either of his SIACs at the last control.
- He obviously visited the control – see photo
- Team Italy filed a complaint to the referees.
- The referees rejected the protest since the punch was missing from both SI cards.



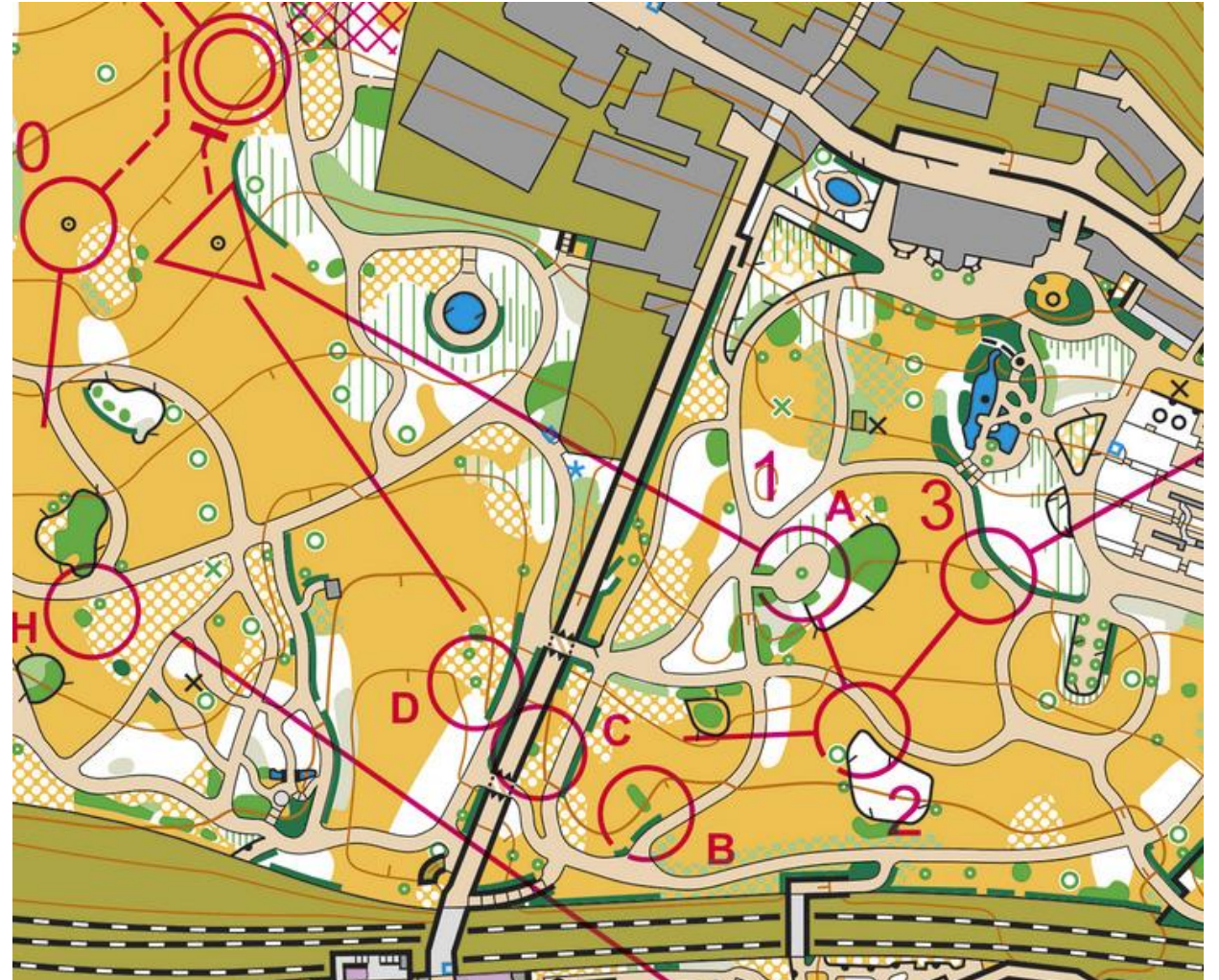
Relay arena setup

- **Changeover: downhill, dangerous angle**
- **Not clear where is it allowed to go**
- **Small place for warm-up**
- **Narrow passage for starting runners to changeover**



Relay forking

- **Four first controls were used both for women and men randomly distributed.**
- **It was published in Bulletin 4**
- **Forkings were tested to be equal, difference was only 1-3 seconds.**



Relay first controls

- **The flow of the course at the first controls was not the same for everybody.**
- **There were 55 runners and some of them were running from opposite direction to control nr. 2, so there were some collisions.**



Non-technical issues



- **Delays in transport (arena – quarantine)**
- **Delays in luggage transport**
- **Too few toilets in Sprint Relay quarantine**
- **No organised accommodation for teams**
- **Not the best place for Team Officials' Meetings**
- **Big screen out of order for a while**
- **But overall, this was a very successful event!**





EOC 2024

SEA: Jerzy Antonowicz

Issue	Impact	Solution
<p>extremely high temperatures</p> <p>thunderstorm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the health of competitors and organisers extended running times interruption of competition evacuation of fans and teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ emergency meeting 2 days before the competition of the key organisers ✓ implementation of additional solutions to reduce this effect ✓ extension of the quarantine zone to include the surrounding forest ✓ full cooperation and communication with competitors and team leaders ✓ postponement of the closing of the quarantine zone during the long race ✓ emergency meeting of the key organisers
<p>expected longer winning time in Middle F and Long M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exceeding the television broadcasting window 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ decision to bring the start forward <p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ testing courses during preparation ✓ more detailed analysis ✓ prepare courses according to the winner's lower time limit or, if this is not possible, publish the real time of the winner in the bulletin ✓ take the possibility of extreme weather conditions into account
<p>error of the primary timing system radio control failure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> incorrect running times possible complaints / protests cancellation of competition no results presented during TV broadcasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ use of a back-up system during the whole competition ✓ attempt to fix radio stations <p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ increased testing of all IT components including connection to TV
<p>competitors turning off their GPS trackers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no identification of the location of the competitor breaking the principle of fair play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ discussion of the topic at the TOM
<p>power interruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> short power failure (2-3 times) in the competition arena (did not affect TV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ fast identification of single point of failure and fix <p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ key elements of the energy infrastructure must be duplicated





General issues

- **Financial issues during summer 2023 → WOC 2024 was very close to getting cancelled last August**
- **Almost nothing happened for 3 months, which resulted in late preparations**
- **Not enough experience in organising Knock-Out Sprint competitions**
- **Fairness issues in training (two-way problem)**
- **Extremely late preparation of Bulletin 4**
- **Late preparations resulted in not perfect maps**
- **Extremely tight timelines during the competition days**
- **Some terrain preparations were extremely late – linked to confidentiality. Sprint Final terrain was almost not ready in time**
- **Issues with IOF Eventor**

Sprint Qualification

- **Late accreditation for some teams (WOC Clinic) meant that there was an athlete in the startlist, who didn't come to WOC at all**
- **SIAC number issues at the entrance of the quarantine**
- **Tram crossing was supposed to be the biggest fairness issue for this race. It was very well mitigated in the end!**
- **Live radio times were not appearing on the internet for about 20 minutes after the first start. This happened because the Starlink internet connection's fixed IP address should have been modified when it changed satellites.**
- **One runner clashed heavily with a cyclist during the competition. He still qualified!**
- **A runner had an incident with a dog chasing her.**
- **No complaints. Very good courses for a qualification race!**



Sprint Final I.

- **An extremely hectic race to organise! In hindsight, we shouldn't have organised a WOC race around the castle entrance.**
- **Also: a great course overall with extremely difficult route choices and lots of mistakes.**
- **The start backdrop was visible from the bus on the way back from the qualification race.**
- **Issue with the start location: a protest was going on for months there.**
- **Terrain preparations were extremely late**
- **Only one issue with the crowd: one competitor got held up by a bus on Royal Mile. He was already mispunched at this point though.**
- **One athlete was disqualified for entering an out-of-bounds area and not coming back. A marshal shouted at her, but she didn't come back.**
- **One missing punch on the last control (again).**

Sprint Final II.

- **Some issues around the map change / map flip.**
- **8 male runners ran into an out-of-bounds area before the final park. The main issue was that some athletes expected a different gate to be open. The map was clear enough here, but could have been even more clear. They came back and were not disqualified. They came back and were not disqualified.**
- **One of these runners didn't come back, but we only discovered this when the results were official. He lost a lot of time on this leg.**
- **Malin Agervig Kristiansson case**



Malin AK case

- **Malin leads the race at #9 (except for Hanna L.)**
- **She goes South towards #10, but runs very close to the fence and gets trapped between the extra IOF tape and the wall. She ducked under the tape.**
- **She then saw a marshal and understanding that she shouldn't have crossed an IOF tape, asked: Should I go back?**
- **The marshal answered you can go back if you want.**
- **She lost approx. 30 seconds here and a lot of concentration apparently. She ends up as #5, 23 seconds off the bronze medal.**
- **Danish team complained. The referee answer was: "The referees found that this was an unfortunate situation caused by wrong taping. However, the referees saw no way from the Competition Rules of compensating the athlete for the time lost. Also, it was not found that the incident had a severity that could lead to voiding the race. Thus, the referees rejected the complaint."**



Sprint Relay

- **Only 2-3 forkings in the course, but they were quite long, 2-4 controls. Worked well.**
- **One of the running camera operators got sick for this competition. One option was to use an accredited Norwegian athlete, who was not going to run any more in this WOC. I rejected this and we found another person.**
- **The start was brought forward from 12:45 to 12:40 to better use the TV-window (12:30-14:00). This was done 2 days before the race with no side-effects.**
- **Teams with confirmed mispunches were taken out of the competition mid-way – this rule 22.1.4 is sometimes difficult to understand for the teams during the race.**
- **All mispunches were clear and accepted right away, including for the leading nations.**
- **The maze used was a good compromise between too complicated and very simple.**
- **This was the competition with the least problems, a lot of good ideas were discussed during the preparation phase and the outcome was ideal.**

KO Sprint Qualification

- **There was one extra runner in the start list, 5th starter (so rather good runner). He told the Event Office before the Sprint that he will not start, but he was still in the IOF Eventor entries for the KO Sprint. He indicated again at the TOM for the KO Sprint that he will not run. At this stage, it was too late to withdraw / make a new start list.**
- **Few issues on the days before the race with reconstruction / scaffolding in one of the areas, but this was cleared up the day before. Still, it took quite a lot of attention from the organisers.**
- **All mispunches were clear, no complaints.**
- **I received reports / suspicions about a runner, who, without any previous results, a poor ISQ race and not selected for the Sprint Relay, led his qualification race in the beginning, winning several legs. He also qualified for the quarter-finals. There was no hard proof of any wrong-doing though, so his result was confirmed.**

KO Sprint Finals I.

- **The Team Officials' Meeting was extremely long, more than 1,5 hours. This was caused by mostly the team officials logistics being changed during the TOM (where can coaches go?). Some coaches were still not happy with the solution and I feared that something would go very wrong because of all these last minute pushing from the coaches and all the changes. An arena sketch was not presented in Bulletin 4. We also had 3 permission issues to take care of.**
- **Again, secrecy caused problems. Everyone knew that the quarantine was close to the Event Centre, the teams could have walked there. Instead, they took a bus, that was supposed to be leaving quite late and this needed to be changed.**
- **The day before the competition, Jari and I found 3 new construction sites. These were all taken care of by the time of the competition.**
- **Terrain works finished extremely late. One of the issues was that most marshals were running the spectator races. Some errors needed to be fixed last minute.**
 - **I even had to initiate the postponement of the finals by 4 minutes, since we had troubles in getting ready with the terrain works for both the quarter- and the semi-finals.**

KO Sprint Finals II.

- **We had 7 complaints in a short time between QF #11 and SF #1. This was an immense pressure on the referees and the organisation:**
 - **Complaint #1: Rancan pushing Kirmula**
 - **Complaint #2: Bonek pushing Michiels**
 - **Complaint #3: Allocation of 2 extra men into the same SF**
 - **Complaint #4: 2 athletes watching the course on the screen before SF #1**
 - **Complaint #5: Print shop passage being unfair in SF #1**
 - **Complaint #6: Ohlsson and Haestad Bjørnstad pushing Beauvir in SF #1**
 - **Complaint #7: Norway wanted the Knock Out Sprint Final to be voided due to unfair circumstances in SF #1 (pretty similar to complaint #5)**
 - **(The 8th and last complaint was Casado pushing Jónás in SF #5)**

KO Sprint Finals III.

- **The pushing issues were caused by the uphill finish (tired runners), lots of turns near the finish, courses without forking and nervous athletes.**
 - **A Working Group led by Graham Gristwood is looking into how to ensure fair play during these first-to-finish competition formats. A guideline is expected to be ready by Q2 2025.**
- **The other issues were caused by late changes in and around the arena**
 - **A second screen was brought into the arena without the start and course teams knowing about it. The start team was not aware that the course presentation would affect them bringing in the athletes, since this screen was not in the plans until a few days before WOC 2024!**
 - **Another unfortunate issue was that the Royal Mile was not closed until 16:00 (the deal was to close it at 15:30 with the first start at 16:12.) Local traffic management officials (an external company) thought that it's enough to close it from 16:00.**

Print shop issue

- **In the first semi-final, between controls 5-6 the field chose to run through a print shop which was specifically opened for the race. They hesitated a lot before entering and this was broadcast on TV. The teams affected claimed that this was unfair, because they are not trained to run through buildings unless informed so in Bulletin 4 or the Team Officials' Meeting.**
 - **Note that there were at least two similar situations in the Sprint Final also**
- **Especially Victoria Haestad Björnstad lost 4 places and some time here and her team wanted to get her progressed through to the final and when this was turned down, subsequently requested to void the competition (which was also declined).**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUkJoxaTq90&t=1797s>



Print shop issue

- **Situation was slightly improved after SF #1 (see picture below for SF #2)**
- **Since we received many negative comments about this entrance, we thought that this had to be an organisational mistake. The TV-footage changed my mind though. I now think that this was a borderline situation, which with a very slight improvement was changed into an OK situation.**
- **I think the athletes in SF #1 only followed Tove and didn't pay attention to the map.**
 - **Similar issues happened in the women's final.**
- **The organisers planned to mention it at the TOM and make it really clear on the ground, but other issues prevented them in fulfilling these plans.**





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Questions



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**Thank you for your
attention!**