

## Children and young people and competition

The recent implementation of the Single Scale Ranking Scheme has raised concerns about young people taking part in orienteering competition. The Rankings Working Group wish to include all ages in the ranking scheme; Coaching Committee amongst others raised concerns about this.

What follows is a brief outline of the discussion points raised so far. Could you:

- a) add any further points for consideration
- b) outline the preferred solution of the group you represent
- c) provide the rationale that led you to your preferred solution
- d) any other points you wish to make

There is an additional issue that orienteering should deal with young people consistently and across events/competitions; to this end this decision is not only about the rankings scheme but about the totality of what is in the best interests of young people. We are seeking criteria, reasons and options rather than a “yes they can” / “no they can’t” response to the rankings.

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The benefits of young people being included in competitions such as the ranking scheme are:

1. It will challenge the talented ie Yvette Baker
2. It is motivating for young people
3. Young people face greater intensity and repetition in other sports at a younger age

The arguments against young people taking part in competitions such as the ranking scheme are:

1. Stress of competition on young people
2. Associated stresses on young people; for instance travel, cost, technical difficulty, pressure on parents
3. Young people should spend more time training and taking part in local events and less in direct competition that is they should learn how to train
4. Competition should be specifically designed for young people ie appropriate length and difficulty
5. Athletics does not allow young people under 18 to run distance events
6. ‘Shadowing’ Is not allowed in serious competition which may place some children in danger or under undue stress
7. Significant numbers of parents across sports are renown for their inability to make appropriate decisions for their children

Other issues

1. How to define the criteria that can be used to determine when children are safe to take part in an event or competition?
2. The physical danger from traffic etc of young people taking part in urban/street races