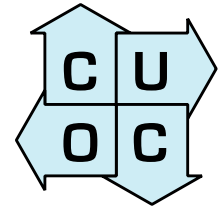




Orienteering Varsity Match

Rules and Guidelines v1.1



1. Definition of terms

1.1. The following terms shall have the stipulated meaning throughout this document:

shall, must	Stipulations using these words are definite requirements. For clarity, such stipulations are in bold text .
should, may	Stipulations using this word are desirable, but not essential.
VM	the Varsity Orienteering Match
VM rules	the rules for the Varsity Orienteering Match set out in this document
OUOC	Oxford University Orienteering Club
CUOC	Cambridge University Orienteering Club
the student clubs	OUOC and CUOC
JOK	Jesus Orienteering Klubb, the orienteering club for alumni of the University of Oxford
DRONGO	DRONGO, the orienteering club for alumni of the University of Cambridge
the alumni clubs	JOK and DRONGO
the organiser	the individual appointed as organiser for the Varsity Match in a given year
the President(s)	the head(s) of the committees of the specified clubs. At the current time, this refers to the President of OUOC, the two joint Captains of CUOC, the President of JOK, and the Captain of DRONGO.
the Captain(s)	the Captains of the student clubs. If a student club has separate Men's and Women's Captains, this term encompasses both unless specified otherwise.
the Universities	the University of Oxford and University of Cambridge
in writing	It is acceptable for any notifications, declarations or agreements required by these rules to be given "in writing" to be made by email or via a persistent instant messaging service.

2. Preamble

2.1. **The Orienteering Varsity Match is contested between the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge.**

2.2. **The Varsity Match shall take place under the rules of orienteering as determined by the British Orienteering Federation (BOF).** The organiser should also give due

regard to any relevant BOF guidelines. **Where the VM rules conflict with the BOF rules, the VM rules shall take precedence.**

2.3. **Any permanent changes to the VM rules must be agreed in writing by the Presidents of the student clubs and of the alumni clubs.**

2.4. **Any temporary variations to the VM rules must be agreed in advance and in writing by the Captains of the student clubs and the organiser of the VM in that year. Such variations shall apply only to the VM for which they have been agreed.**

3. Scheduling

3.1. **The VM shall be contested once in each academic year.**

3.2. The VM should take place either during Hilary/Lent term, or during the Easter vacation. If held during term time, it should normally take place on a Saturday.

3.3. **When choosing a date for the VM, the organiser shall consult with the Presidents of both the student clubs.** The date chosen should have due regard both to academic commitments and to other major orienteering events, including the various British Championships, the British Student Championships (BUCS), and any designated selection races for British teams or squads.

3.4. **The alumni clubs shall take it in turns to arrange for the organisation of the VM. If an alumni club is genuinely unable to arrange for the organisation of the VM in a particular year, ultimate responsibility for the arranging for the organisation shall fall to the associated student club.** The current pattern is for JOK to organise in even years (2024, 2026 etc) and DRONGO to organise in odd years (2025, 2027 etc).

3.5. The VM should be held overseas in every third year. The current pattern is for the VM to be held overseas in years that leave a remainder of one when divided by three (2026, 2029 etc).

3.6. **When held in the UK, the VM shall be registered as an event with the British Orienteering Federation.** When held overseas, the organiser should ensure that appropriate third-party liability insurance is in place for the VM.

4. Officials

- 4.1. **The committee of the alumni club responsible for organising the VM in a given year shall appoint an organiser and a planner for that VM.** The organiser and planner may be the same individual, and need not be a member of the alumni club.
- 4.2. The committee of the alumni club responsible for organising the VM in a given year may also appoint a controller for that VM. **If appointed, the controller shall not be a current member of either student club; nor shall they be a current student of either of the Universities.** When the VM is held in the UK, the controller should be licensed as a controller by the British Orienteering Federation.
- 4.3. **In the event of any protests arising from the VM, the organiser shall appoint a balanced jury of three suitably knowledgeable individuals to adjudicate. No member of the jury shall be a current member of either student club; nor shall they be a current student or employee of either of the Universities. The organiser, planner and controller of the VM shall not be members of the jury. The decision of the jury shall be final.** The ideal balance of for a jury would be one member of JOK, one member of DRONGO, and one member of an orienteering club local to the VM venue with no ties to either University, who should act as chair. Alternatively, all three jury members could be members of a local orienteering club with no ties to either University. Ideally, all three jury members should be licensed as controllers by the British Orienteering Federation and be present at the VM. However, it is recognised that in practice it will often be difficult to appoint a jury which meets all of these criteria, and the organiser should use their judgment in making the appointments. It is recommended that organiser attempts to identify and contact possible jury members in advance of the VM.

5. Embargo

- 5.1. **The organiser shall notify the Captains of the student clubs in writing of the area to be used for the VM as soon as is practical.**
- 5.2. **Once this notification has been given, the area is to be considered embargoed until the conclusion of the VM. No current member of a student club shall enter the embargoed area during this period without prior written permission from the organiser.** If granting permission to enter the embargoed area, the organiser should endeavour to avoid giving an unfair advantage to any potential VM competitor. An exception to this rule may need to be agreed by the Captains and the organiser if a current member of a student club is directly involved in the organisation of the VM.

- 5.3. **Any individual who enters the embargoed area during the embargo period shall not be permitted to compete at that VM.**

6. Courses

- 6.1. **There shall be separate Men's and Women's courses.**
- 6.2. **The Men's course shall be equivalent to an M20L course as defined in the rules for the British Long Distance Orienteering Championships.**
- 6.3. **The Women's course shall be equivalent to a W20L course as defined in the rules for the British Long Distance Orienteering Championships.**
- 6.4. Where possible, there should be a separate "novice" course of lower technical difficulty. The length and technical difficulty of this course should be agreed by the organiser in discussion with the Captains.

7. Eligibility and declaration of teams

- 7.1. **If a Captain is for any reason unable to fulfil their role under this or the next ("Start lists") section of the rules in person, they may nominate a deputy to act on their behalf. Such nominations must be made in writing to the organiser.**
- 7.2. **Eligibility to compete in the VM shall be as stipulated by the Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge.** For information only, the Varsity Match Eligibility criteria as promulgated by the Joint Blues Committee on 1st October 2021 are at Appendix A to this document.
- 7.3. **The Men's competition shall be contested on the Men's course between declared teams of six individuals from each University.**
- 7.4. **The Women's competition shall be contested on the Women's course between declared teams of five women from each University.**
- 7.5. **In either competition, a University may enter an incomplete team of fewer than number of competitors stated above. This shall not prevent the other University from fielding a full team.**
- 7.6. **Eligibility to compete in the Women's competition shall be as stipulated by the Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge. Eligibility to compete in the**

Men's competition shall not be restricted by sex or gender. No individual shall compete in both Men's and Women's competitions at the same VM.

- 7.7. **The members of each of the University teams and their start order shall be declared in writing to the organiser by the respective Captain in advance of the race. The deadline for this declaration shall be set and announced by the organiser.**
- 7.8. **The organiser shall not announce or make public the declared members or start order of any of the University teams until after declarations have been received from all of the University teams.**
- 7.9. **After a team has been declared, alterations may be made to the members of the team or the start order by the team Captain only in the event of genuine illness, injury or other unforeseen circumstances, and only with the agreement of the organiser. Any such alterations must be notified to the organiser before the earliest VM start time on the day of the VM.**
- 7.10. **A "B Team" competition between the Universities may also be held at the Varsity Match. If such a competition is held, the eligibility criteria shall be as specified for 2nd team competitions by the Joint Blues Committee, and the method of scoring shall be agreed in advance between the organiser and the Captains.**
- 7.11. **A competition between the alumni clubs may also be held at the Varsity Match. If such a competition is held, the method of scoring shall be agreed in advance between the organiser and the Presidents of the alumni clubs.** Traditionally the alumni competition has been decided on the basis of the total time of the four fastest men and three fastest women from each alumni club, but in recent practice these numbers have usually been reduced to reflect the actual number of competitors present from the smaller alumni club. **Alumni who are eligible to represent both alumni clubs must choose which alumni club to represent at each Varsity Match and shall inform the organiser in advance of their choice; this may be done as part of the entry process.**

8. Start lists

- 8.1. **The start interval for the VM shall be six minutes between competitors on the same course.**
- 8.2. **Competitors from each University shall alternate in the start list, so that the start interval between competitors on the same course from the same University shall be twelve minutes.**

- 8.3. **Starters on the Men's and Women's courses shall be staggered by three minutes, so that there is a three-minute interval between competitors on different courses.**
- 8.4. **Non-VM runners (i.e. alumni, University B Team, and (at the organiser's discretion) guest runners) may be permitted to run the VM courses.** To ensure it is clear who is in the declared University teams for the VM, is recommended that the VM competitors are listed in the start lists and the results as representing 'Oxford' or 'Cambridge', and that non-VM runners are listed as 'OUOC', 'CUOC', 'JOK', 'DRONGO' or 'Guest', as applicable. **No non-VM runner shall set off during the VM start block. There shall be a minimum gap of twelve minutes between the start time of the last antecedent non-VM runner and that of the first VM competitor on the same course, and between the last VM competitor and any subsequent non-VM runners on the same course. The minimum gap between the first and last VM competitors and any non-VM runners on different courses shall be six minutes.** It is recommended that, as far as possible, non-VM runners should start prior to the VM start block. Start intervals between non-VM runners are left to the discretion of the organiser.
- 8.5. **The pattern of starts shall be as set out in the table below. The roles of University A and University B shall alternate between the Universities each year.** The current pattern is that in even years (2024, 2026 etc) Oxford is University A and Cambridge is University B, and that in odd years (2025, 2027 etc) Cambridge is University A and Oxford is University B.

Time	Men's Course	Women's Course	Novice Course
Base time	Last pre-VM start		
+3min			
+6min		Last pre-VM start	Last pre-VM start
+9min			
+12min	University A – Man 1		
+15 min			
+18 min	University B – Man 1		
+21 min		University B – Woman 1	
+24min	University A – Man 2		
+27min		University A – Woman 1	
+30min	University B – Man 2		
+33min		University B – Woman 2	
+36min	University A – Man 3		
+39min		University A – Woman 2	
+42min	University B – Man 3		
+45min		University B – Woman 3	
+48min	University A – Man 4		
+51min		University A – Woman 3	
+54min	University B – Man 4		
+57min		University B – Woman 4	
+60min	University A – Man 5		
+63min		University A – Woman 4	
+66min	University B – Man 5		
+69min		University B – Woman 5	
+72min	University A – Man 6		
+75min		University A – Woman 5	
+78min	University B – Man 6		
+81min			
+84min			First post-VM start
+87min		First post-VM start	
+90min	First post-VM start		

8.6. If a University has fewer than the maximum number of competitors in a team (six men or five women), the Captain of that team may choose which of their team's start slots to leave empty.

9. Scoring

9.1. The times recorded by each individual shall be rounded down to the completed second.

9.2. There shall be trophies for the fastest individual competitor in the declared teams in each of the Men's and Women's competitions.

- 9.3. The organiser should provide prizes for the fastest three individual competitors in the declared teams in each of the Men's and Women's competitions.
- 9.4. **There shall be separate Men's and Women's team competitions.**
- 9.5. **The combined time for each Men's team shall be determined by the sum of the four fastest times recorded on the Men's course by declared members of that team. The winning team shall be the team with the lowest combined time.**
- 9.6. **The combined time for each Women's team shall determined by the sum of the three fastest times recorded on the Women's course by declared members that team. The winning team shall be the team with the lowest combined time.**
- 9.7. **In the event it is impossible to calculate a combined time for a team because fewer than the required number of declared competitors in that team have completed the course, that team competition shall be awarded to the opposing team by default. If neither team in a competition has the required number of competitors who have completed the course, that team competition shall not be awarded.** If either of these scenarios seems likely to occur in a competition in a particular year, it is strongly recommended that the organiser should endeavour to agree a revised team scoring system for that competition with the Captains in advance, as permitted by rule 2.4 above.
- 9.8. **In the event of a tie in either an individual or team competition, the trophy shall be shared between the individuals or teams with identical times.**

Appendix A – Varsity Match Eligibility

The below are the rules on Varsity Match Eligibility as agreed by the Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge and in force from 1st October 2021. **This is for information only; the eligibility rules that apply at the VM shall be those agreed by the Joint Blues Committee and in force at the time of the VM.**

A resident bona fide student member of the University is eligible to compete in a Blues Status Oxford versus Cambridge sporting contest, subject to the stipulations that he or she is:

1. A fully registered member of both a College and of the University for the current year according to both College and University academic registers (see Note 1 below); and
2. Registered for, and actively studying for, a recognised degree, diploma or certificate of the University where matriculation for all members of said course is compulsory (see Note 2 below); and
3. In residence for the duration of the term outlined in the relevant statutes as appropriate for the degree being undertaken (see Note 3 below); and
4. Not already the holder of 8 Blues, having previously competed in 8 Blues status Varsity Matches in any one sport (including all Blues won in either Cambridge or Oxford); and
5. Has not already participated in a male or female Varsity Match for the same sport in the same academic year (see Note 4 below).

and either

6. Is an undergraduate, in which case his or her eligibility continues until 30 September in the year in which she or he completes her or his undergraduate course;

or

7. Is already the holder of a degree from a recognised University and is therefore reading for a further degree or for a diploma, certificate or higher degree of the University, in which case her or his eligibility is limited to five (5) postgraduate appearances. These five years need not be consecutive (see Note 5 below).

Notes

1. The academic register or equivalent must have the student status shown as 'active' for at the very minimum the full term in which the Varsity Match falls, notwithstanding all other eligibility requirements. On occasion it may be necessary for a student to intermit her or his studies. For the avoidance of doubt, students will be deemed 'inactive' (and so ineligible) from the point at which they leave College and/or formally cease to study. They will be 'active' (and so eligible) from the point at which they return to College and/or formally resume study.
2. For all other non-Blue status Oxford vs. Cambridge matches i.e. second team competitions, the current British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) eligibility criteria shall apply. This allows any current student on a recognised course of study within the University, irrespective of matriculation or number of years of previous participation, the right to participate.*
3. Responsibility for maintaining the spirit of Varsity sport lies with selecting Captains, who are reminded that athletes are expected to participate actively in the sport for which they may be selected prior to the Varsity Match. This is particularly important for part-time students, for whom full-time undergraduate and postgraduate residency requirements do not apply. However, it is acknowledged that the definition of active participation will vary from sport to sport and the Joint Blues Committee will not assess such participation as part of an eligibility discussion.
4. From time to time, individuals may wish to participate in a Varsity Match on behalf of the gender with which they do not identify. This would normally be for sporting reasons (i.e. increased standard of competition). Where Captains are in agreement, and the governing body for the sport allows for such cases, then those individuals are eligible. However, if Captains are not in agreement then the Joint Blues Committee will make a ruling in advance of the Varsity Match. Moreover, individuals are not eligible to compete in both men's and women's Varsity Matches for the same sport within the same academic year.
5. The eligibility of a graduate student is limited until his or her results are published in the Reporter (Cambridge) or the Examination Schools (Oxford). However, should extra work be required after a viva to complete academic requirements, then Varsity eligibility is extended until these requirements have been met but shall not extend beyond the academic year in which the original viva takes place. As per Note 1, the academic register or equivalent must have the student status shown as 'active' for at the very minimum the full term in which the Varsity Match falls, notwithstanding all other eligibility requirements.

6. The Joint Blues Committee supports transgender and non-binary athletes participating in University sport on behalf of the gender with which they identify. However, it is crucial to ensure that competition is both fair and safe. As such, Captains likely to select transgender or non-binary athletes are requested to notify the Director of Sport in their University at the earliest possible stage (and no later than six weeks prior to the VM taking place). The final decision as to the eligibility of transgender and non-binary athletes will be made jointly by the Directors of Sport at the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford, prioritising inclusivity, safety and fair competition, as well as respecting the right of the individual athlete to remain anonymous. In making their ruling, the Directors of Sport will take into consideration the guidelines of the particular sport's governing body, any advice received from the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellors within each University regarding equality and diversity policies and the BUCS eligibility of the athlete concerned (if available).

7. Selecting Captains should exchange a list of all individuals in contention for Varsity Match selection no later than six weeks in advance of the Varsity Match. If Captains are not in agreement regarding the eligibility of an individual, the Joint Blues Committee will make a ruling in advance of the relevant Varsity Match in accordance with the agreed procedures. If a transgender or non-binary athlete is to be included on the list, the selecting Captain need only indicate the presence of such an athlete through use of an asterisk at the bottom of the list. From time to time, an athlete may need to be added to the list having not initially been in line for Varsity Match selection, which is permissible but should be done with urgency in order to ensure transparency and fairness.

* Currently, and uniquely, the Isis/Goldie and Orisis/Blondie crews (second teams) are eligible for Half Blues.

Appendix B – The Varsity Relays

1. Overview

- 1.1. **The Varsity Relays shall not form a formal part of the Varsity Match competition.**
- 1.2. The Varsity Relays should normally take place on the day after the Varsity Match.
- 1.3. The exact format of the Varsity Relays is left to the discretion of the organiser.
- 1.4. The organiser should be responsible for selecting the teams for the Varsity Relays. It is traditional to form teams which, as far as possible, mix students and alumni from both Universities, and which mix competitors of different abilities with the aim of creating a close race.