

Appendix 4 to SWOA Minutes Embargo issue

Issue

Does SWOA wish to set a policy or give guidance for the embargo period for areas used for events of either level B or SW Championship standard?

Background

Devon have been looking at the larger event plan for the next few years and any embargo period for events may impact on this plan.

For example, if we use Fernworthy for a Caddihoe Chase event in, say, September 2015 would that place any restriction on using it for say the Tamar Triple in May 2016? We do not want to choose a venue for 2015 autumn which impacts on where we can hold events the following Spring where our access options are more restricted because of ground nesting birds.

I note that under BOF rules the embargo period is 2 years for level A and they suggest certain level B events may be embargoed. I could see nothing further on which events but probably a selection race would be one category. See appendix A of BOF rules (effective 1 Jan 2014). Note Appendix O Embargoed areas comments on the position up to 2013 but as much of it is reproduced in Appendix A referred to above I presume it will be withdrawn in 2014 although there is no note to that effect.

Observations on rules (all references are to 2014 rules)

1. The rules explain that the embargo period is to stop a competitor getting an unfair advantage (1.1.1 and 1.2.1) whether intentionally or unintentionally through access to an area. There is a presumption that an embargo period will begin once an event is advertised (1.1.2). A specific area considered is event officials ie to the extent they have been involved with a previous event there is a sufficient gap to ensure they get no competitive advantage (1.3).
2. Two open events in a multi-day event on the same area are deemed to give the same advantage for all competitors so do not present a problem (1.4.5).
3. Competitors are responsible for determining whether they have an unfair advantage and should use common sense (1.5.6). The matter is of more significance if for selection races.
4. On the basis that the area for a level B event will need to be agreed 12 months before an event then 12 months seems desirable as an effective date for an embargo period (by that date there may already be some event publicity and/ or the event will have been registered). Exceptionally there may be reasons why a shorter period is required between two events and if this is known to all competitors arguably there is no unfair advantage (as for multi day events). For event officials such as the mapper, planner and controller they will have to consider under 1.3.1 whether to declare themselves non competitive because of their knowledge as against under 1.2.2 2 which suggests they should not be unduly penalised by the embargo rules. A factor which may help between two events is that the vegetation may be different eg bracken cover is different at the time of two events.

Matters to consider

1. SWOA to decide whether it wishes to make any comment beyond the rules which have been considered and arrived at in their present form.
2. SWOA to consider whether a level B event which hosts a championship event requires any specific embargo period (SWOA has determined that for Championship events the rules for seeded competitors and timed starts should apply).

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