Using SPORT*ident*

Notes for Officials

Robin Strain 19/08/08

Using SPORTident

In the light of experience at a number of events I have produced these guidelines/suggestions. I have used material from many people including John Emeleus, Robert Findlay, Donald Petrie and David Rosen, but where the notes say "I", it is my opinion which you are reading. These notes, and others, are available to download via the SOA website. Follow the link "Links" SportIdent Resources

There are a large number of other sources of advice. The SPORTident web site www.sportident.net is the obvious place to start. This has links to the software developer's site, www.sportsoftware.biz/

There is an unofficial egroup for the exchange of problems and solution. Send an email to SportIdent-subscribe@egroups.com.

The help files which come with the software are also worth reading.

The 2003 edition of the BOF rules have been rewritten to take account of electronic punching. See appendix I

Please, please make as many suggestions as you like. If you had a problem not addressed here, someone else might have it in the future.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you are having a problem. I can usually give advice that will save you a lot of time, or worse, making a mistake and spoiling an event.

Robin Strain 19/08/08

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Contents

Equipment

The bulk of the SI equipment in Scotland has been purchased by the 6 Day Company and made available for use free of charge.

The equipment available includes

Hardware

160	Base stations (BSF7) for use as controls and prestart, start and finish
3	Base master stations (BSM7) for downloading e-cards and for programming the BSF with serial connections
4	Base master stations (BSM7) for downloading e-cards and for programming the BSF with USB connections
2	Timemaster units for preparing units without using a computer
260	e-cards
6	Dell Laptop computers – 2 running XP and others W98 incl network cards

Networking

2	Switches (two 8-port 10/100)
3	Hubs (two 8-port and one 5-port)
	selection of 90m to 2 m network cables
4	Laser Printers (Brother 2030 and Brother 2040)
3	Thermal printer for split times
1	Dot Matrix printer

Generally the kit is divided into two sets, including 70 units programmed as controls no 100-169, and two start, finish, check and clear.
Two laptops, one laser printer and one split printer are sufficient for most events although a third laptop can be useful

Software

The software runs on any PC under Windows95/98/Me/NT/2000/XP and higher. MS Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher must be installed on that PC.

The software is as follows

SIman	Programming units and reading e cards		
OE200x	single day event software		
MT200x	multi day event software		
OS200x	relay software		
. AM	Archive manager	)	
LM	Layout manager	}	required by OE, MT and OS.
SI-Config	Programming units		

The free software and various other documentation are available from www.sportsoftware.biz and from www.sportident.net.

SIman, the basic software for handling the stations is available without payment, but a license must be purchased before the more advanced event software can be used. The SOA laptops will have necessary software loaded, but this should not be used until the Club concerned has its own license. Once a club has a license the software can also be used on any member's own PC. A demo version of OE200x can be downloaded and is turned into the full version by inputting the license number. The license has details of the URL for downloading the other items of software.
There is very little difference between the operation of OE and MT software and they share the same help files.

At present Robin Strain keeps the equipment and takes bookings.

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Instructions for Planner

The use of electronic punching brings benefits to many aspects of orienteering. The planner has some new responsibilities and tasks, but the experience so far has been very positive. Good luck.

Introduction
Each control will have a SI base unit as well as a backup punch. SOA has 160 base stations. Approx 10 (depending on the assembly layout, number of starts etc) will be required for event management leaving 150 for controls. If more units are required they have to be hired from another association (£4 per unit per day).

Course design
Electronic punching means that it is impossible for runners to punch controls out of order and so courses can be planned with cross-overs and without manned controls or, often, second maps. SIcards have normal capacity of 30 controls (just like a traditional card).
However, as using all 30 controls may lead to problems at the finish if a competitor punches any extra controls, courses should be planned with a max of 27/28 controls.
An extra 6 control numbers can be stored in an Sicard although for these the time is not stored. It is not advisable to plan a course which needs these controls.

Finish location
After the 'final' control, competitors punch at a control on the finish line. After that they proceed to the results area and download their times into the computers. It is preferable that the finish and results area are close together but as the results area requires access for vehicles, and generator or mains power this may be impossible. If the finish line is distant from results, it must be made clear that competitors must go direct to download, and not, for example, to their car.

Control numbers
One set of controls units are numbered from 100 to 169 and the other set from 150 to 219
The units can have their control number put in them when they are programmed for each event and previous settings can be changed. However it is hoped that over time clubs will renumber their Tbars to match.

If the control numbers have to be changed, plastic electrical tape should be used to cover (almost) the permanent numbers (but please fold one end in to make the tape easier to remove by the next planner). Paper labels or masking tape might seem a good alternative to the plastic tape, but are very much more difficult to remove by the next planner.
If changing the control numbers note that they must be between 31 and 255.

Course descriptions
The results team need a list of all controls used and details of courses - lengths, start location, and controls and classes. Control numbers are all that is required, although the software can be used to produce control description sheets, pictorial and text if required. There is also a method of using files from CONDES or OCAD software.
The computer which will be used to prepare the base stations does not have to have any of the course information in it. This is an entirely separate task.

Preparing units
The new units have new electronics including an accurate clock, a long-life battery and a display.
They only have two states: Standby and Active.
A punch from any SIcard switches them from standby to active (even if the memory of the card is full and it does not cause the unit to beep.)
This punch takes a little longer than normal. The first runner might notice, but is unlikely to be disadvantaged (except in a head to head race).
When they are active the display cycles between the control no, the time and the last SIcard (and some other details).
Two hours after the last punch, the units return to standby.
This can also be done by using the purple "Service" SIcard (kept on an orange tape)
The units can be programmed using the old SImanger in Training Mode but I prefer using the newer SI-Config software. (See appendix B)
It is no longer necessary to prepare the start and finish units and the final controls (and clear and check units) on the morning of the event to minimise any timing errors.

Putting out the units
The units can be put onto the Tbars at any time.
The longer they are in the forest, the greater the risk of theft.
If units are "Active" they can, rarely, interfere with each other. This is more likely to happen if the units are face to face.
At the six day in 2005 we have a few controls with apparently random times. We suspect that the units were made active before they went out to the forest and that they were then carried in a bag. The problem had not been diagnosed at that time.
Preferred procedure
Decide on the order you are going to visit the controls. Thread the units onto a rope (or a piece of electrical flex)
Optional: On arriving at the control, punch the unit and look at the display. Check the control number and the time. Switch the unit off (to save battery life) if you have the purple Service SIcard
Optional: Visit all controls just before the race and make them active.
Checking the time and number is **not** vital. (any problems can be dealt with at download if necessary.)
Waking up the units before the event is also **not** vital except perhaps for the final and finish controls.

Control collection
Units are probably most at risk after the end of the event and you should minimise that risk. You should have recruited a team of control collectors before the day of the event and have pre-drawn maps ready to hand out to them. It is no good asking people on the day to stay back - they will have arranged to have tea with grandma.

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Instructions for Entries

The SportIdent software can handle all aspect of taking entries, allocating start times, producing mailing labels, accounting etc.
It is possible to use BOF numbers to reduce the typing necessary.

However - there is little experience in Scotland at doing the whole system using SI software, The allocation of start times has usually been done without getting them drawn by the SI software.

Use of the archive files

1. From www.sportident.co.uk download the competitor archive
1. Open Archive Manager. These instructions are for version is 9.7 14/5/2001.
2. Archive Menu
    a. Select
    b. Find the archive folder in OE2003
    c. OK
3. Import menu
    a. Runners
    b. Find the downloaded file
    c. Settings-
        i. Runner Clear and create again
        ii. Identify runners by database ID
        iii. Clubs Clear and create again
        iv. Classes clear and create again
        v. File format CSV Semicolon
    d. Import
    e. Close
4. Open OE2003
    a. Entries Menu
    b. Archive
    c. Show archive table

You can now get the BOF member number, Club and SI number from a name (or vice versa or….).

What is described here is a combination of SI and traditional methods for handling entries.

Entry Information
Ensure that the event publicity includes the need for supplying both SI numbers and (for Regional events and above) BOF numbers. There is a 50p per day hire charge for SIcards which should be passed on to competitors.

Computer files
Robin Strain can supply a template which has much of the standard information pre entered. This will have all normal SOL classes and course combinations and all clubs already.

Event - Restore. Create a new event.
Navigate to the folder containing the template.
OK
Event – settings
Change the name, date and zero time.
Sportident options
Use start station for real time start
Use finish station.

Putting in Entries
Select Entries - Entries
You need to set up the columns you need to work with using the View menu. At this stage from the optional columns you will need Stno, SI card, Rented, and Db Id (for BOF no).
The start number is important for later stages in the event and should not be left blank.
You are now ready to put in the entries as you receive them. Start times will be put in later.

SI Card Hire
Obtain a list of all SIcards available for hire from Robin Strain. These can be allocated as entries are put in, or later using an option in the program to pick out missing SI cards.

Start Time allocation
The best method may be to export the information from OE onto a spreadsheet and to allocate the times there. The simplest method is then to use OE entries - entries, put in the column Start time and type them in there. There is a choice of how to enter times. Easiest for you is to type in minutes after zero time. There is an import facility in the software, but it has caused problems.(See Appendix E)

Course details
Before the event, but not necessarily before you start putting in entries, you will need to get from the planner a list of all the control numbers he is using and the course details - controls, lengths, climb, run in and start.
Go to Courses - Controls and enter all the controls that will be used, including the start location (use control nos 1,2 etc for this).
Go to Courses - Courses and put the details in for each course
Go to Courses - Classes and check the allocation of Classes to Courses
Go to Entries - Classes and show the optional column Start location and put in the start for each class. (There is a reason for doing this by class and not by course - it makes sense in Sweden apparently).
Both Condes and Ocad can export the courses in a way which can be loaded into OE2003. (See Appendix E)

Information for Competitors
You can print out start lists and send the same information to every entry. The alternative of printing details for each entry separately is probably more work than is necessary
Control description sheets for all courses have also been sent to every entry. Although you may use minutes after zero when inputing start times, the information for runners should always be clock time

Information for Starts
You will need to produce start lists in time order for each start using Startlist | Reports..

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Instructions for Start Team

Introduction
The start team is responsible for keeping track of who has started and on ensuring that they start at the correct time. They should also check that SIcards have been cleared ready for the run.

There are two systems for starts which are usually called timed starts and punching starts.

Timed starts
Runners have their start time allocated on entry and the start team will have a printed list of starters. Some other runners not on the list will possibly have a "stub" (late entries, EOD or other changes).

Punching starts
Runners start time is recorded on their SIcard when they start by the use of a start unit.

At SOL events runners will be allocated start times and will be expected to start at the correct time. However a punching start is usually used, giving more flexibility to the runners and a more secure system for the computer team. If there is misuse of the flexibility, the procedure may have to be re-evaluated.

You will receive a start list as up to date as possible, two clear units, two check units (labelled –3 and –1) and two start units (one to be held as a spare)

In the pre-start area there should be 2 Clear Stations on Tbars.

At call up runners are checked off against the start list.
Runner missing – no action required
Extra runner – should have a card from registration. No action required.
Wrong SIcard – advise runner that there will a minor problem at download.
Wrong time – start when possible without changing other's start times

All runners punch (hand held) check station (to check that they have cleared)

On start line, ALL RUNNERS punch a second check station. This will be used to confirm who has actually started..

At the correct time, all runners should punch the start unit on a Tbar, pick up their maps (unless on course 1 & 2 when they will already have them) and go.

Helpers, particularly those starting early or late, must also punch the check and start units.

The procedure at district and local events is likely to less formal and there will be no start lists. All runners should go through the clear/check (one only) /start sequence but allocated start times, if any, are simply to ensure that there is not a large queue waiting to start any course.

Return of the units
It is very important that the units, particularly the –1 check unit and start unit, are returned to the computer team AS SOON AS START HAS CLOSED. Too often this stage is overlooked and the units are left at start after the last helper has gone off on their run , or are locked in a car or…

Only once the computer team have the units can they provide information about who has been out an unreasonably long time and who has not finished.

You will have noted that you have not been asked to add any information to the start lists. For this to work we have to trust the information stored in the check and start units and to get them back as soon as possible.

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Instructions for Finish

The use of electronic punching brings benefits to many aspects of orienteering. Many of the benefits come from the reduction of work at the finish and the increase of information to the runners.

Finish Control
Normally the finish line will be near the results computing area. In this case some competitors will try to come straight to the download without punching on the line. Someone on the line checking against this may be helpful.

Download station
For an SOL event one download unit seem to be enough although a spare should be available. The unit can be mounted on Tbars outside the tent.

Splits printing
SOA has recently bought a fast thermal printer that can print splits onto strips of paper.

Problem Runs
Someone needs to be identified who will be able to deal with any runners whose download causes a problem. It helps if they have a start list and a copy of the map with all controls.

Common problems include

missing control It is very, very unlikely that if only one runner has a control missing that the unit is faulty. If the splits of this runner are compared with others on the course, often it can be shown that they missed the control. It may be possible to interrogate the base unit later, but this will not result in a reinstatement, the rules are clear on this point.

If many runners have the same missing control, it can be assumed that it is faulty. If not too far away, it may be possible to program a spare station and replace the faulty one. There is an option on the software to insert a control into every runner's records.

wrong control Show the runner the master map with their control and the one they punched

wrong SIcard Either a mistake by the entry team or by the runner.

Use entries - entries to put in the correct SIcard/runner combination

wrong course usually caused by the wrong SIcard being used.

Recording Problems

There should be a notebook (not loose sheets of paper) in the finish area to record any problems that have occurred. Problems should be separated in an obvious manner, and once a problem has been dealt with it should be ticked off and initialed

Results

Results can be printed on the same printer as splits or on an independent one. They can be printed out by class or by course. A new page can be taken for each class/course. The option of separate pages by class will take 60 pages or so and will take a lot of display space. Another option is by course and separate pages.

There is an option to print results automatically at fixed intervals (eg 30 minutes) but for a smaller event it is probably better to print on demand, but there should be a note of when it was done and when the next is due. The difference between Official and Preliminary results is that the latter gives an indication of how many entrants are still to finish.

The best method of displaying the results is still evolving.

SportIdent results give splits for all runners, but the number of pages produced is probably more than can be displayed in the field. It is suggested that the split times for the first three runners on each course could be printed and displayed. This will be of interest to other runners.

Results display

As above, there are many different formats for producing the results. The system used for displaying them will depend on what equipment is available and what system the club is happy with. A number of different systems are in use throughout the country, partly depending on the size of the event.

Approx 50 results are printed on one page. Using the suggestion of printing by course (not class) and each course starting on a new page, in 2000 SOL4 needed 14 pages. A number of plastic bags, open at the bottom, hanging from a string would seem to be the simplest system.

Backup

It is a good idea to take periodic backups of the files for the event. To do this all windows of OE on the machine making the backup have to be closed, and all other machines in the network have to be left alone for a few seconds while a backup is made, usually on one of the

machines other than the server. Use event - backup - create folder automatically - ok. Then reopen windows and carry on as normal. Hopefully the backup will never be needed!

Has everyone finished?
Get the (-1) check stations from the start team. Set up a master station which is not being used for download. Use Competition day – Evaluate SI stations. Choose Read SI Stations and read. Once the station has been read, click on save. Repeat if another check unit has other runners in it. Next Choose Actions – Not started runners. It is worth printing out the list of runners who are reported as not starting,

If the check units are not available, but start lists are the following method can be used. Get the start lists from the start team(s) and use Competition day - Finish Times manually - Independent. Enter the start number of the first dns, tab along and change OK to dns and press return. For the next runner all that is needed is start number and return. If in fact the runner has already finished (it is easy for start to miss someone) their time will be shown. You will have to reenter them to cancel out the dns.

You can then get a list of all those who have not finished from Competition day - More reports - Missing runners. At the top of the page is a list of the numbers involved, but their names are printed further down.

Reprogramming Units
It is necessary sometimes to use one of the download stations to reprogram some base units. It is safer if OE is closed on that laptop before SIMAN will run correctly - and vice versa.

Time on Laptops
The internal clocks in the laptops are not perfect and the time should be checked before programming any units. It is strongly recommended that all times should be accurately set to teletext, the pips, a radio controlled clock or similar. To change the time on the laptops double click on the time in the taskbar.
To synchronise the time on all laptops on the networks, set one as above and on each of the others open a MS-DOS window (in Start - Programs) and use
>net time \\server /set /yes
where server is replaced by the name of the computer providing the time eg dell2
>exit
will return to windows.

Finally
Do not panic if something goes wrong. Once a card has been read all the information on it is in the system somewhere and can be processed later - at home if it has to be.

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Instructions for Results

Unfortunately the work is not finished when the last runner is accounted for.

Results
Results should be published on the internet and sent to competitors.

Split times should be published on the internet.
Take care with the columns you include in the final results. SI card, for example, is not required.

OE2000 can export html files using Competition Day - Results - Official or SportIdent - Report - Publish.
The Official results can be produced in a variety of formats including by Course and by Class. Both can be posted on the internet. The Split time files can be very large and it can be best to use the option to split into separate files.

There are a number of alternative ways of displaying the split times provided by third parties. Some may give you URLs to display on your results page. You can upload the results to the WinSplits site.

The URL of the results can be published by you on the BOF results page and Roger Coombs (coombs.five@btinternet.com) will update the SOA page.

Many clubs have web space they can use. If you do not, Robin Strain may be able to help.

BOF ranking lists
The production of the BOF ranking lists is now automated and you have to submit a file online. The following instructions are copied from the software EPS Tools which can be downloaded from the BOF web site
http://www.cs.man.ac.uk/arch/watson/orient/rankings/index.html

* Run OE200x (OLEinzel v9.5, 9.51, 9.6, 9.61)
* Select event
* Select Ordinary results from Results menu
* In Results form, check
* Time format is HH:MM:SS, then
* Click on Report menu
* In Select report form, check
* Report type is Categories
* Sorted by Category no
* How many runners? is All
* Selection is All, then
* Click OK
* In Results form, click Interface
* In Save report to ASCII interface file, check:
* Character separated columns
* Delimiter is Semicolon (or Comma)
* String delimiter is double quotes, i.e. "
* Select file name of your choice (helps to be limited to 8 characters and extension .CSV), then
* Click OK

The latest version of EPS tools (1.04) is required to work with the file produced by OE2002 or MT2002. If it is necessary to do any editing to the results in eg Excel, care must be taken to ensure that the times are not corrupted. Change the format of that column to text. If the file is in the correct format, EPS Tools changes it into the correct format for submission to BOF which is done at the same URL

Badge Times
The same web site should be able to calculate badge times, but I have not had any success with this yet.

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Instructions for Networking

At any event with more than perhaps 100, it will be beneficial or indeed necessary to link up two or more computers. One computer will hold the data files for the event or "host the event" and is sometimes referred to as the "server". The other computers access the data files on the "server". A printer connected to any computer can be used by any of the others in the network.
Note that there is no difference between any of the SOA laptops. The "server" is simply the computer with the data files. For very large events there may be a benefit in using a higher specification machine as the server, but this is not necessary at SOLs.

Connecting the computers
All the SOA laptops are equipped with network cards with can be used in one of three ways.

If only two machines are needed, a UTP Cross-over can be used.

If two or more machines are used they can be connected together using UTP connectors and a hub. SOA has three hubs which can be daisy chained if necessary. They have 8, 8 and 5 connections.
The Hubs require a power supply. The network cables are from 90 to 2 metres. Extra machines can be added to the network at any time.

Testing the network.
Open Network Neighbourhood. All stations on the network should be visible. Sometimes it is necessary to refresh the window (press F5) several times. At times restarting a laptop seems to help.

Setting up basic networking
(This should be have been done before you get the laptops. Check if you have problems)
Control Panels
- Network
  - File Sharing
    - tick in "allow others to share my files"
  - Identification
    - workgroup Scotland
  - TCP/IP ----- ethernet card
    - properties
      - Obtain an IP address automatically

To connect other machines to the "Server"
In OE200x, Options menu - LAN - tick in "data from remote installation"
navigate via Network Neighbourhood to select the folder containing OE200x.EXE
This is usually C:\Program Files\SportSoftware\OE200x

(The error messages at this stage are sometimes unhelpful, but usually mean that you have selected the wrong folder, possibly by going one level too far down.)

Event menu - Select to choose the event you want from the list on the server.
There are more details in appendix F

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Instructions for Registration

The following note is aimed at SOL events.

There are a number of reasons why people cannot go straight to start and need to speak to registration.

1	**EOD for badge courses**	Filled-in slip Check map availability Pay Get time Get course card Get SIcard if nec	Passed to computer Is there a card available (or do they just take a chance) To show start that they have registered
2	**EOD for colour coded**	Filled-in slip Check map availability Pay Get course card Get SIcard if nec	
3	**Change of class**	Filled-in slip Check map availability Pay Get time Get course card	 The difference between pre-entry and EOD?
4	**Change of start time**	Filled-in slip Get time	
5	**Change of SI Card**	Filled-in slip	
6	**Pick up maps for course 1 & 2**	Checklist	
7	**Pick up hired SI card**	Checklist	
8	**Pay for pre-entry**	Checklist	

9	**Pay surcharge**	Checklist
10	**Report withdrawals**	Slips for EOD and for Computer
11	**Other enquiries**	

Preparation

Allocate staff to each of the above tasks.

1, 3 and 4 all need access to the available start times.

1, 2, 3 and 4 all need access to the cards showing available maps

Number/label desks/cars/tents

Notice for runners telling them where to go for each task.

It causes frustration when runners waiting for a simple transaction such as 5 to 10 have to wait in the same queue as those for time consuming tasks

Registration slips available for self-completion before queuing or given out by eg 5-11-person

List of SI cards to be picked up / envelopes containing SI cards

List of available extra maps or cards for each map which can be taken to start

List of allocated start times

List of runners yet to pay or to pay extra

List of runners on Courses 1 & 2

Manpower options

a)	One person for 1 – 11	not recommended
b)	One desk with two people for 1 – 11	not recommended
c)	One desk with two people for 1 – 4 One person for 5 – 11	
d)	One desk with two people for 1, 3 and 4 One person for 2 One person for 5 – 11	
e)	1,2,4 3 5,10 8,9 6,7 11	

plus one or two people processing entries directly to the computer from slips.

Instructions for Colour Coded Events

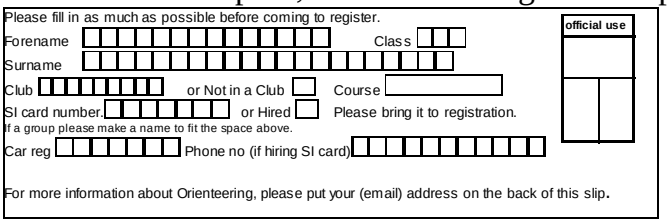
The following procedures have been used successfully at events with up to 200 competitors.

SI Event Preparation

A template holding classes for a colour coded event and clubs will be on the laptop from SOA. It will also have an up-to-date list of BOF members/Sicards holders[1]. The control and course information will have to be added.

Registration

On arrival at car park, all runners are given a slip[2] to complete, e.g.


Please fill in as much as possible before coming to register.
official use
Forename
Class
Surname
Club
or Not in a Club
Course
SI card number.
or Hired
Please bring it to registration.
If a group please make a name to fit the space above.
Car reg
Phone no (if hiring SI card)
For more information about Orienteering, please put your (email) address on the back of this slip.

At one car runners buy a map, and hire a SI card, if necessary, and get control descriptions. If there is a distance to the start it might be advisable to allocate suggested, but not mandatory, start times. There is no need to note names against times, just which times have been used.

Runners go to the computer handling entries. If they have their SIcard they can use it register and their details will appear on screen. If they have forgotten to bring their card, typing in their SIcard number has the same effect. Runners with hired SI cards will have to be typed in. The paper slip is kept as a backup. The official use box was designed to hold the entry number allocated by the system, but in fact that is rarely done.

Use of "Special SI Stations"

Clear stations : Two on route to start is possible with one more at start just in case. Alternatively (preferably) Two in the prestart area.
Check station : We are trying to promote the idea that the check is a safety check (rather than - or in addition to - a check that SIcards have been cleared.) It is better if the check station is hand held by an official who can ensure that everyone punches in it. The check station can be read to get information about everyone who started and who should finish. It is true that at a colour coded, punching start, event that information could also be read from the start block but I think that if all runners get used to this use of the check station it will be best. There should be a second check station (in case of failure.)
Start station: Only one is needed as there is no problem waiting for a few seconds if there is a queue. There should be a second start station (in case of failure.)
Finish station: Two, just in case one fails or there is a sprint to the line.

Start procedure

Runners enter prestart when there is a map available for copying and use Check station.
Runners copy their map. (Yellow and white should have copied it at registration, but there could be another master map at start if it is a distance from assembly.
Punch start unit and go.

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[1] This "Archive" has to be copied onto each computer used, not just the master.
[2] Two versions of this is available via the SOA website | Links | SPORTident resources. One for Colour coded and one for age class events

Master maps
Unless there is a very large number of controls on a complex map, one master map per course should be enough.

Equipment
The following setup is recommended. (See Appendix D)
Two laptops[3], two download units, one laser printer, one splits printer, hub and networking.

Laptop A should host the event. B should be a slave. A third laptop separating entries and results can help.

If only one laptop is used there will be times when entries are being processed at the same time as finishers are wanting to download. This can be done, although note that the download unit can only be active for one purpose at a time.

At a recent event the generator[4] failed and at another it didn't arrive and everything was done using one laptop, one download unit and the splits printer, powered using a 12V **à** 240V inverter[5] in a car. The splits printer can be used to print results in this situation. Because of the limited width reduce the number of fields to the minimum before setting the width of the printout to that of the paper

[3] A diagram showing the connections at each laptop is at http://www.rstrain.ndtilda.co.uk/SI/connect_computer.doc
[4] A generator is *not* supplied by SOA.
[5] Again, *not* supplied with the rest of the kit

Other Notes for Organisers

SOA does not own a generator.

Clubs are expected to provide their own paper for the laser printers

Generators
2.5kVA seems to be enough. laser printers are quite heavy on power.

Final Details
This should include something like
"It is the competitor's responsibility alone to record a punch at each control by holding their SIcard in the hole long enough to hear a bleep or see a flashing light. It this doesn't happen then they must use the pin punch on the Tbar to mark their map

Collection and return of equipment
Kit may not be available until the week before an event although it is hoped that two weeks in advance may be possible. Kit should be returned as soon after the event as possible.

Appendix A

Using SIMAN

These notes refer to version 9.8 Mar 2002.of **SIMAN - Sport Ident Manager**

There is excellent online help with the program and this should be studied. The purpose of these notes is to emphasise parts and to overcome difficulties which I and others have encountered. Do not be daunted. It is not hard to use.

This software is free and its main use is the programming of base stations, although it can be used at other stages of an event. However it does not cater for competitor names, course checking and has limited results processing. These functions are better achieved with the other software MT200x or OE200x.

Note that if OE200x or another similar program is running, it is safer if it is shut down before opening Siman.

SIman can also read the information stored in base units after an event.

Nomenclature

The base units are referred in the help information as
BSF Base station Field and BSM Base station master
BSF are the units which are used for the course
BSM units are used to prepare BSF and to read e-cards.
Training mode is a system for preparing BSF units in a way which makes them easier for use in training exercises. We use Competition mode.

BSM

These must be switched on using a magnet. Swipe across the top surface, and the red LEDs should flash from then a yellow LED flashes every 2 seconds.
Power. The internal battery can be used or an external power supply (set to 7.5 or 9 V dc or ac).
The unit switches off after 4 hours automatically whether powered by battery or mains. They can also be switched off using a **purple** OFF SIcard. (Sometimes the unit switches itself off after a couple of minutes. See the FAQ appendix for the solution.)

The unit is connected to a PC serial port. The one serial port on the DELL laptops is COM1 and the software has to be set to use this. (This should already be done. See “Start up SIman” later in the note.)

BSF

The same unit can be used for check, clear, start, control and finish. The previous use of any unit can be kept (so permanent labeling on the units is possible) or can be changed to any new use.

Preparing the units

Before starting to program the units, lay them out in order and using white plastic electricians tape put a strip on each one. (Stretch the tape over several, cut it between them, and fold in one end to make removal easier, press down firmly). (Do not use paper-based tape.) Using a

waterproof OHP pen write the number of the control on the strip. This is done for the planner/ controller/control-putter-out, not for the runner. Do not write the numbers so large that they could be confusing to the competitor if seen up side down, or if for any (good) reason not on the Tbar of the same number.

Preparing the BSM

Use a magnet to switch on the base master unit, plug it into the laptop, connect the external power supply (if possible - not essential). Put in the coupling stick. I find it easier to tape the coupler into the BSM and to put the BSM onto the BSF rather than lifting the BSF onto the BSM.

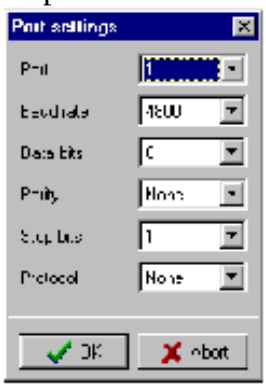
Start up SIman

There may be a shortcut on the desktop. If not use start - programs - sport software to find SIman.

Go to event new to create the files that are used to record what is done using SIman.

Go to SI stations - Prepare - Training mode.

Check the settings. Use Options - Serial port. These are the correct ones for the laptops.



ie 1,4800,8,None,1,None

Time

You get a reminder to check the time on the Laptop. Click on OK.

The internal clocks in the laptops are not perfect and the time should be checked before programming any units. It is strongly recommended that all times should be accurately set to teletext, the pips, a radio controlled clock or similar. To change the time on the laptops double click on the time in the task bar.

Programming the units

Set the control number and the task for the first unit. Controls have to be 31 to 255; start, clear etc 1 to 30. You can have more than one control with the same number if needed.

Use “Clear completely” not the alternative “clear”.

Put the unit upside down on the master unit. Click on “write”.

After a few seconds the information will have been written into the BSF, the current contents will show what has been programmed, the battery indicator will show the current and future battery state. The control number will have increased by one, ready for the next unit. (Take care if you are having the same number on more than one base unit.)

If you get the message “SI unit not found” or similar, try programming it again.

Checking batteries

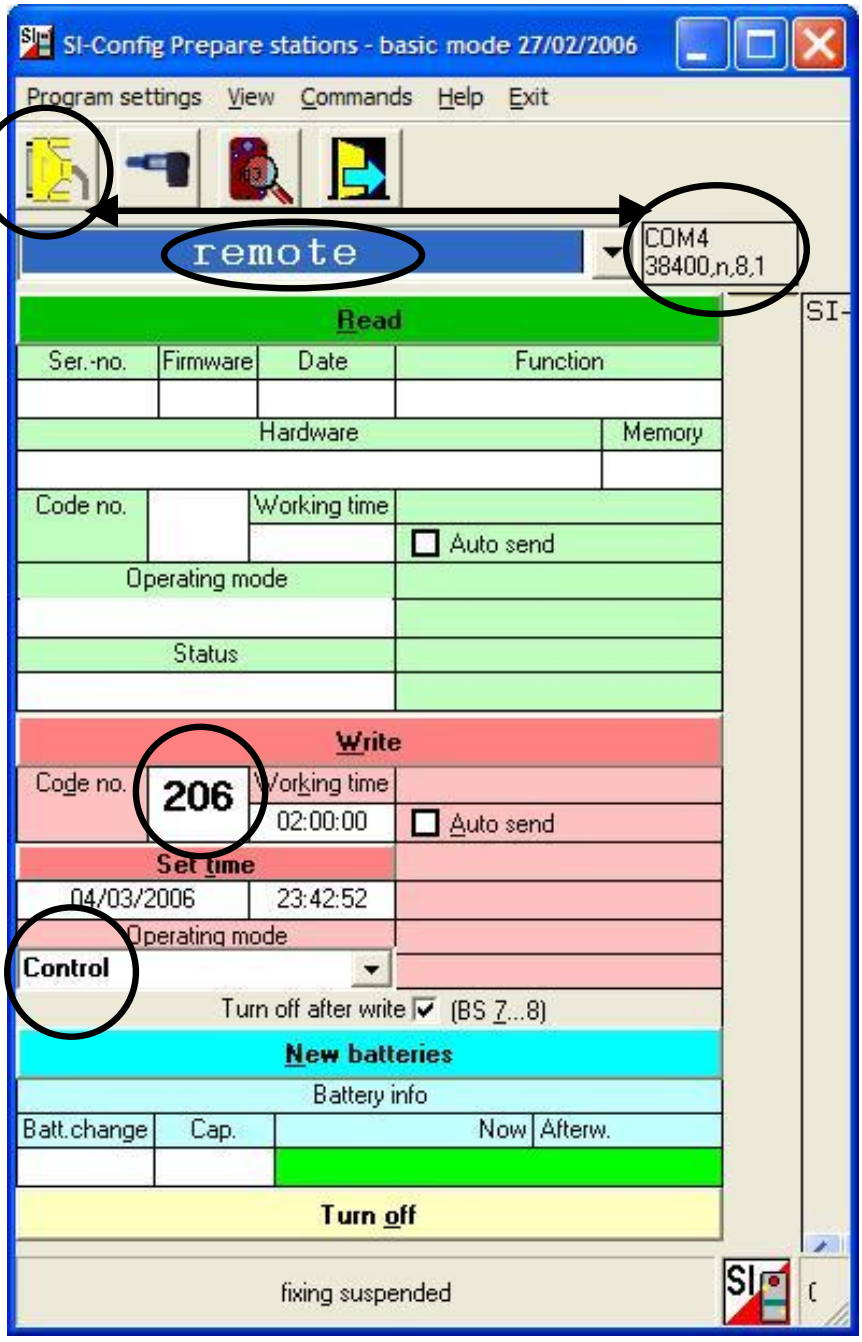
The battery life of the new units is much greater than the old ones and should not be an issue for planners.

Appendix B

Using SI-Config

A new version of the software for preparing SI units was released on 27/02/06. and can be downloaded from
www.sportident.com/sportident-english/english/download.php

There is a basic mode and an expert mode. This screenshot shows the basic mode which does all that is required normally.



You may have to adjust the COM port settings. The settings in this diagram are for the new master units. If using the old master units you should choose COM1 and 4800

Remember that the old master units have to be switched on by swiping them with the magnet. The new units will turn on automatically when they are being programmed

Choose **Remote** to program normal units. (**Direct** is used to program the unit connected to the computer)

Set the control number and the mode. Note you must check the mode yourself. It is possible to do it wrong. [at SoSOL6 I programmed units 200 to 205 as Finish units]

Click on **Write**.

If you get an error message try writing again.

Appendix C
Timemaster Unit

The small new blue SI unit could be used as an ordinary unit, but in addition it can be used to set the clock in other units (with or without a clearing of the memory)

SPORTident master is an extended SPORTident control station. It works and can be configured as any other SPORTident station.
In addition two new service modes are implemented:

TimeMaster
ExtendedMaster

As “TimeMaster” the station transmits its clock time to any other SPORTident station inductively coupled to the SI-Master. So a set of SPORTident stations can be synchronized very quickly. SI-Master in this mode works together also with older SPORTident stations from series 3, 4 and 6.

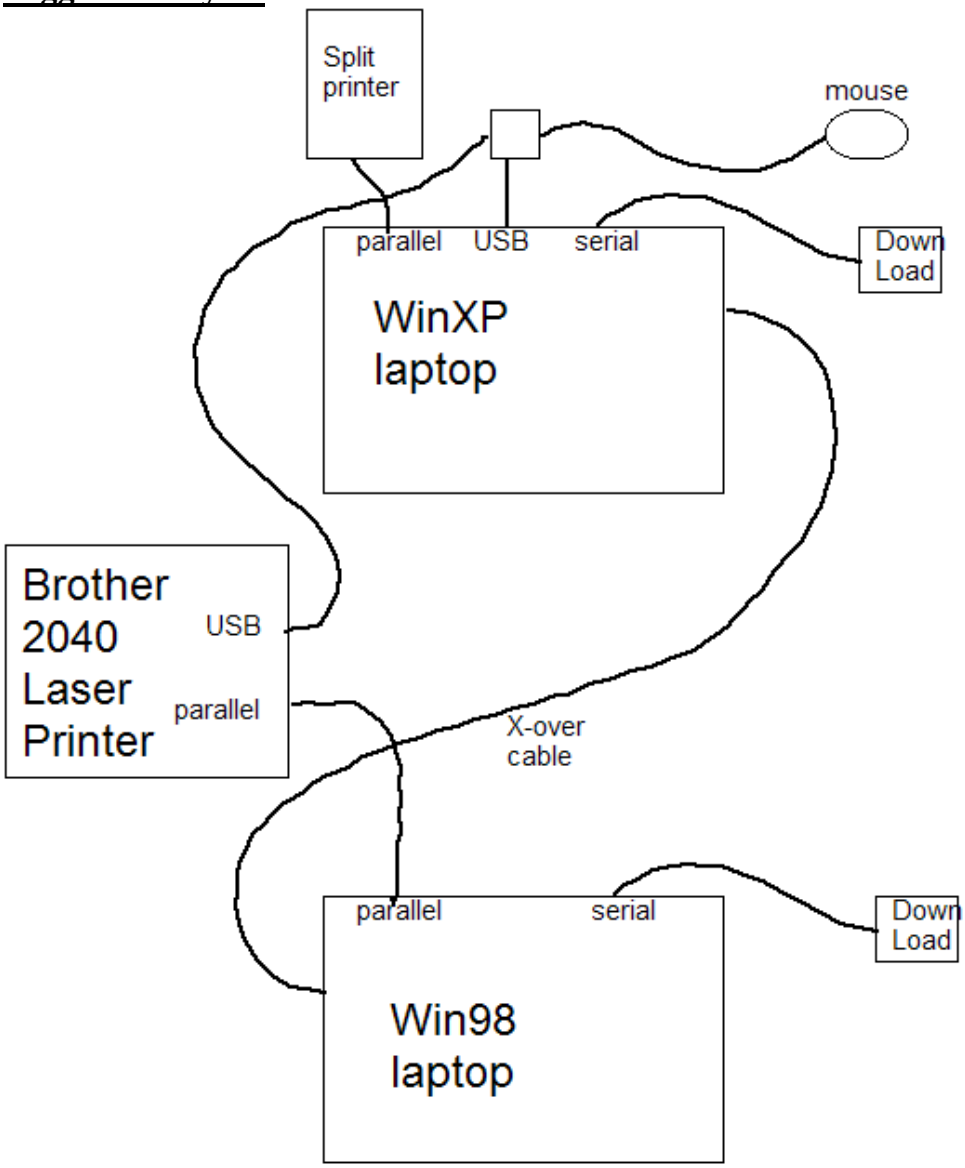
In “ExtendedMaster” mode the SI-Master additional clears the backup memory of slaved stations and transmits its own active time to any other unit. The ExtendedMaster functionality only can be applied to SI-stations of series 7 and 8.

The different service modes are activated by using the purple "Service"-card. There is the following order:

Service (SERVMO)
TimeMaster (TIMEMA)
ExtendedMaster (EXT MA)
Off

After being activated by a Timemaster unit the other units remain active and should be switched to standby by using the purple “Service” Sicard

Appendix D
Suggested Layout



WinXP Hosts the event. Used for download and ,initially, entries

Win98 Used for entries after first finishers. Printing results. Trouble shooting. Reading blocks

We also have a Brother 2030 printer which can only be connected to one PC using its USB connection

Appendix E

Importing and Exporting with SportSoftware

There are often times when it is advantageous to transfer data into and out of the SI software (OE, OS and MT) and other software.

Condes

To transfer course data from Condes into OE2003

1) OE: Event backup (in case it all goes wrong)
2) Match the names of the courses in Condes and OE. You can change them again later in OE, but if they don't match during the transfer, you will need to reallocate the classes to courses later.
3) Condes: File | Export data | xml. Select all courses. File type IOF Version 2.0. Omit "CourseIDs" selected. Export
4) OE: Close all windows. Courses | Import Courses. Courses - Add and Update. Controls - Keep existing. File Format - XML. Import
5) Check in Courses | courses and Courses | classes that nothing has been messed up.

Excel

Entry Data

Data can be imported into OE from Excel, but only if the first row is exactly the same as is expected.

The best way to prepare the excel file is to export a file from OE. Entries | Entries | Reports | Entries

Report type – Individuals. OK

Interface | Delimiter comma | CSV Excel time format

To import entries from Excel save as a csv file

In OE, do not use Entries | import entries (I am not sure what use this is)

Close all windows

Event | Import

Competitors – Clear and create again

Clubs – Keep existing

Classes Keep existing

CSV settings – as above

Import

In the Excel file it is the Club no and Class no which are significant.

Allocating Start Times

There are many ways in which start times can be allocated.

The following is a suggested method

Use OE to input the entries (without start time). This allows you to use the archive of BOF members/SIcard holders.

Export the entries to Excel

Allocate the start times in minutes after the start time (usually 10am)

Import back into OE ensuring that the time format is mmm

You could do it all within OE using start blocks but it doesn't cope particularly well with multiple classes on the same course and it tends to bunch starts at the beginning of each block. After you have drawn the start times there will be a certain amount of manual adjustment needed .

Results

The input for WinSplits and SplitsBrowser is the csv export of the SportIdent results (by class)

The input for Mike Napier's Etools is the csv export of the Official results (by class).
The output of Etools is the input to the BOF ranking system and badge time calculator.

Appendix F

Networking the SOA Laptops

Networking has always produced a few problems, often seeming more of a black art than a science.

The two part network adapters that were originally included in the kit have been replaced by new cards with integral sockets. This should remove the trouble we have had with the connection accidentally breaking.

Corega

Unex

Two different types have been purchased and at present they are not performing in identical ways.

It seems to make a difference which type is in the laptop switched on first.

The preferred method is as follows

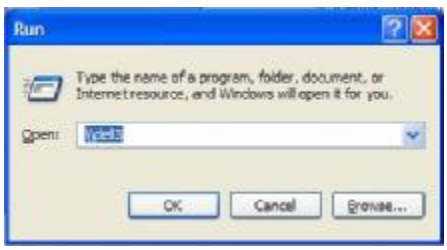
Connect hub to power.
Connect a laptop containing a Corega card to the hub
Switch on the laptop
When asked for a password just press return (ie leave it blank)

Connect other laptop(s) to the hub and start them up in the same way.

Open Network Neighborhood on each laptop. You should see all the machines on each one.

If a laptop containing a Unex card is swithched on first, instead of seeing all laptops in each Network Neighborbood, only the first machine will be available.

However, the network can still be used.
To confirm that other PCs are available go to start/run and type in \\ followed by the name of the other computer.

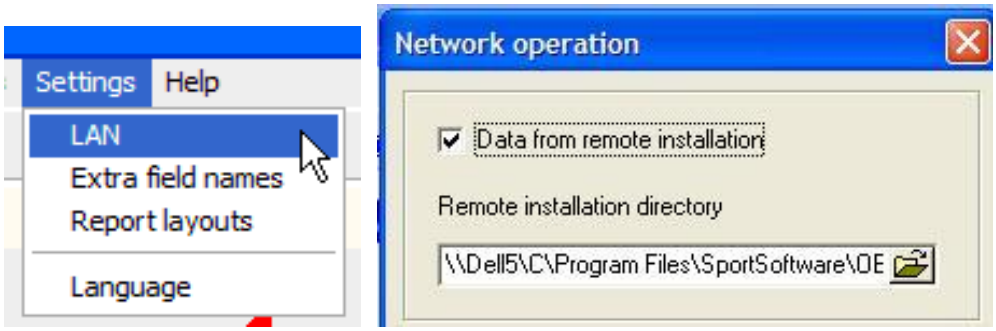


Although it matters which machine is switched on first, it does not matter whether this machine is the one which will be used as the server, holding the event files.

To use the network for sharing tasks for an event the following settings in OE2003 are preferred.

PC1 should hold the event files and should be used for download.

PC2 should be set to remote as follows.



All the SOA laptops have a similar directory structure and all that is required is to change the computer number (in this case 5) to that for PC1.

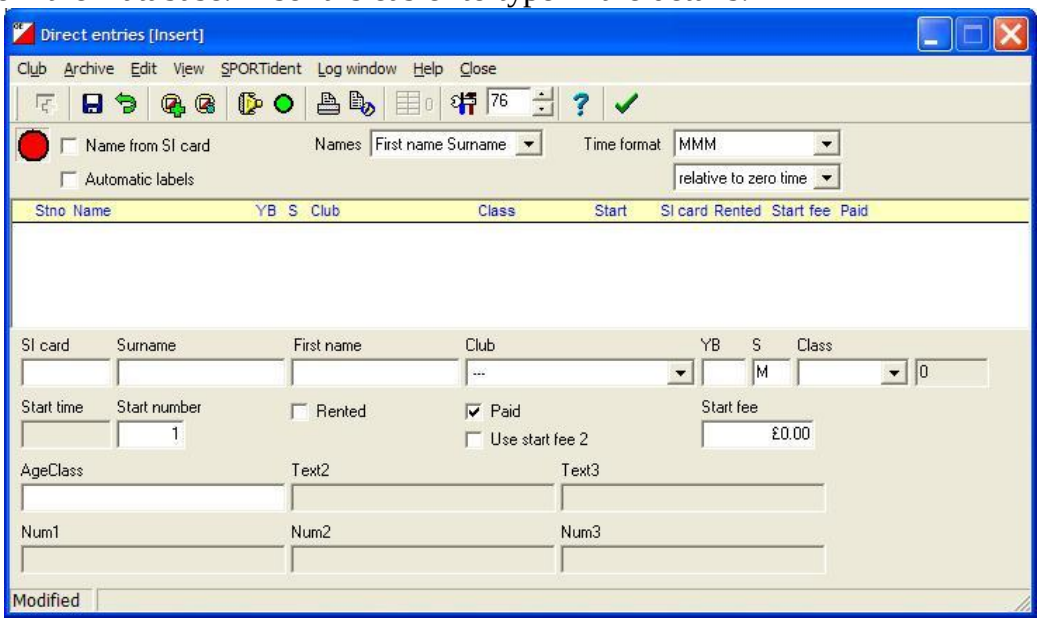
PC2 should be used for entries and for printing results

If there is a third PC it can be double up processing entries or download depending on where there is a need.

Appendix G

Direct Entries

When processing entries there are many advantages in using Entries | Direct entries. The main advantage is that using the SIcard number (typed or read in a master unit) can pull the details from the Database. Also it is easier to type in the details.



To use the database of SIcard holders choose Archive | Show archive table

Activate the Master unit by clicking on the green button or use SPORTident | restart. If there is an error check the port settings.

Type or read in the SIcard number.
YB and S are rarely used and can be ignored.
Rented is easier dealt with later. Entries | Entries, sort by SIcard
Class has to be entered.

You have the option of whether or not to enter start times. If you are using a punching start make sure that View | Start time is not ticked. If some people are being allocated a start time you will have to put in one for everybody. Put in 0 if you don't have an actual start time.

Start numbers: These are used to make various future stages easier. There is an option not to use them, this is not advised. There are problems if using Direct entries coincidentally on more than one PC. (see below)
Age Class can be put in for CC events. (the name of the field is set in Settings | Extra field names)

Once all essential data is entered and return is pressed, the entry is entered into the database and displayed in the window above. Note that if it is necessary to edit the entry Entries | entries must be used.

Start numbers with more than one PC

There will be conflicts of start numbers when more than one PC is used for direct entries.

A start number is automatically entered into the Start no field and the number is always one greater than the last one completed and saved into the entries database. It often happens that the same number is pre-entered onto both computer's screens. When the entry is completed and an attempt is made to save the entry the message "Start no already in use" appears.

There are a number of ways to get round the problem.

- Use different sequences on each PC – the person using the higher sequence will have no problem. The other/s (possibly more proficient operator/s) will have to type the next number in themselves, but their screen will always show them what the last number **they** used was. Entries statistics can be obtained from Entries | Entries and then Reports | Entries summary. *This is the preferred method.*
- Keep telling each other which is the next number – *keeps the sequence complete but is a guddle.*
- Pre-allocate the start numbers on the entry slips – *Slips will arrive at the computers out of order so the number will have to be entered in anyway*
- Enter the start numbers later using Entries | entries – *possible if there are not too many.*
- Don't use start number**s. – *not a good idea***