

(Appendix 2)

Guaranteed Entry for Contenders in championship races.

Championship races are becoming so popular that the race seems to be more about who's the fastest to download an on-line entry rather than who's the fastest fell runner. Most Championship races this year so far have seen many contending runners and existing champions in reserve on waiting lists or worse denied race entry despite trying to enter within a reasonable timescale. This problem has caused Race Organisers, the on-line entry companies and the Champs subcommittee a considerable amount of additional work and for the would-be competitors, considerable anxiety.

We uphold that we cannot offer a credible national championship without the best athletes and defending champions on the start line.

The Champs sub- committee would like to change the process of Championship race entry to allow those in contention to be guaranteed an opportunity for race entry. We also think it is important to enable an open "all comers" approach to Championship races as much as is allowable.

It is important that the process is simple to understand and easy to administrate. We would like to introduce a system similar to that used in British Cyclocross whereby the contending and proven potential athletes are placed upon a priority list. Race organisers must guarantee these individuals a place should they submit an entry within the advertised window.

How it would work

- The system will apply to both the British and English Championships to maintain consistency and avoid confusion.
- The list will only apply to contenders in the individual rankings. Team considerations would be too cumbersome and there are too many anomalies to make it workable and fair.
- Automatic inclusion on the list will include:
 - . the top 20 open men and top 10 open women from the previous year's rankings
 - . the top 5 men and women V40/45
 - . the top 3 men and women of categories thereafter.
 - . All U23s would be guaranteed entry in the interests of supporting and encouraging this cohort through the transitional period to senior level.
- For others who believe that they have a **strong case** to be guaranteed a place, there will be an application window between 1st Nov and 31st Dec every year. **Athletes should only apply who are able to demonstrate an evidenced case to support why they believe that they could be in contention.** The list (one British and one English) will be assembled during early January then published on the "championship" section of the FRA website on the 1st Feb.
- Applications will be made via an on-line proforma (details to follow) for consideration from the British and English sub-committees.
- ROs should not open entries more than 10 weeks before the race unless there is a specific agreement. They should also encourage those who decide to drop out, offering a refund (less admin) to anyone who surrenders their place to somebody on the waiting list.
- ROs should operate an on-line entry system with an advertised time window during which those on the guaranteed entry list can apply. This could be flexible according to the individual races entry system. Essentially, entries must not open on a first-come-first-served basis and be able to ensure that the guaranteed athletes are able to gain entry.

- Those on the guaranteed entry list will have to enter the race in the same way as anyone else and will not be given a retrospective priority after the time window closing date.
- Races will only be selected for championships if they agree to use this system.

Q & A

Q: I've been racing really well in general races often making my mark against some championship standard runners. I think I could do well in Championship races. Can I apply to be on the priority list?

A: Yes but provide sufficient evidence to support the claim.

Q: I've surprised myself, unexpectedly improved and find myself in contention but the season has started. Can I be added to the list at this late stage.

A: Yes, if there is a good case by emailing the relevant Championship sub-committee.

Q I've been injured for a couple of years or taken a break from Championships. I have a proven track record and am fit again. Can I apply.

A: Yes, add recent results to support this.

Q: I know that I won't be eligible for the guarantee list but would like to participate in the championships. Can I?

A: Yes. The list is estimated to be up to 100 people for the British and 150 for the English. Championship races usually cater for about 400 entrants. There should be plenty of general entries.

Q: As a RO, can I keep the entry window open indefinitely if places do not fill to the limit?

A: Yes.

Q: I'm aged 49 and am struggling to make my mark as a V40/45 but I'm strongly competitive against V50s and I'll be fifty soon. Can I be added to the guarantee list as a V50 next season?

A: Yes, recent results will support your case.

Q: I'm on the guaranteed entry list but missed the entry window and I'm not even on the waiting list. Can I still have an entry.

A: No. You had notice and time to enter. You can ask the race organiser to use their discretion, but you are not guaranteed a place after the entry window closes.