An SI-stick

A retractable ID holder is used to attach an SI-stick to your bike

Inserting an SI-stick into the SI unit at a control

The **SPORTident** electronic timing system is used regularly at orienteering events. Instead of competitors carrying a paper control card and manually punching their card at each control they visit, they instead carry an **SI-stick** which they insert into the **SI unit** at each control. The **SI-stick** records the control number and time visited. After the competitor "punches" the "finish" **SI unit** at the end of their course, the information on their **SI-stick** can then be downloaded to computer and a printout made showing the controls visited, time visited, split times between controls and total elapsed time. Of course the computer can then tell if the correct controls have been visited and if they were visited in the correct order.

SPORTident and MTB-O

Getting an SI-stick
Regular orienteers have purchased their own **SI-sticks**, but cards can also be hired at events for a small fee.

Attach the SI-stick to your bike
Just as a paper punch card needs to be attached to your bike, so does the **SI-stick.** However it needs to be on a retractable device so that it can reach the SI unit at each control. These **SI units** will be hung beside the control flag on a cord. The control flag number should correspond to that on your map.

What happens at a control?
When at a control you place the end of your SI-stick into the hole on the top of the unit. The unit has a small red light that will flash and/or will emit an audible "beep" so that you know it has recorded your visit. Make sure at least one of these happens otherwise you will be down as missing that control.

What happens if the control unit doesn't work?
Occasionally these units fail. If the light doesn't flash and there is no sound, there is a manual punch on the stand with which you should punch your card to show you've been to that control.

Before you start, Clear and Check
On the way to the start or at the "pre-start" you will see two SI units set up with "Clear" and Check" labels. The SI-sticks have a limited memory so they need to be emptied before each event. The "Clear" unit will do this. The "Check" unit comfirms that after clearing, your SI-stick is working OK.

What happens if I punch the wrong control?
If you punch an incorrect control this does not matter as long as you do punch **all of the correct controls and in the correct order.** Any extra controls are disregarded.

When to start?
When instructed to start, you punch a "Start" control, after receiving your map.

Was my route better than yours?
The advantage of using SPORTident for competitors is that it provides time splits for each leg which enables competitors to compare route choices and riding performance.