Running and Judging Systems

There are a handful of different running systems you can pick from for your competition, most of which will be different based on your region and listed Delegates for the competition. This document aims to guide you through the most common running systems that are used all around the world.

Below are the three different roles regularly used at competitions which can be altered based on the competition. Generally, all of them can be mixed with the different alternatives.

Runner

Runners are responsible for picking up scrambled puzzles from the scrambling area, identifying the competitors (usually by calling their name), dropping off the scrambled puzzle at a vacant solving station, and directing the competitor to the same solving station.

Apart from this, runners also pick up covers with solved puzzles from judges (usually signalled by them holding up the puzzle) and take them back to the scrambling table. At the scrambling table, they then pick up more scrambled puzzles and repeat the process.

In general, runners never sit down during the group they are running; they actively go between the competing area and scrambling table to return solved puzzles or to take covers with scrambled puzzles to a solving station.

To ease the job of the runner, stations can be numbered to make calling easier. Whether it is to be able to call the competitor to a certain station or to identify the station the competitor is seated at.

Judge

Seated/Fixed:

Seated judges are judges who sit next to the solving station throughout the entire group/round. They do not call for competitors, the only thing they do is judge and afterwards signal to the runner that the attempt is done, typically by holding up a cover with the solved puzzle and scorecard. In some regions, these are called "Fixed judges" instead.

Running:

Running judges are judges, who also do the duty of a runner. On top of their responsibility of judging, they are also responsible for picking up scrambled puzzles and calling for competitors before moving to a solving station that is available. This system of judges is mostly done if there is not many available judges.

Competitor

Stationary:

The competitor completes all of their attempts in one sitting. They do not have to go back to a waiting area between attempts. In certain regions this system is used exclusively. This system may also be used in cases where the group is small enough (e.g. there are enough solving stations for the number of competitors in the group). Some competitions (especially championships) also use this system for the final round of 3x3. This is usually done for the final rounds of certain events at major championships and national championships in some countries.

Non-stationary:

The competitor goes back to a waiting area after every attempt until they complete all of their attempts in the round. This method is usually preferred, as it is often more efficient than a competitor holding up a solving station while waiting for their puzzle to be correctly scrambled. Depending on the event, the

region where the competition is taking place, as well as the scale of competition, this method can save a lot of time.

What is the best way?

There is not a single answer to this, as this can vary a lot between regions and even competitions. In some regions one way works better than another.

> **Example: In some competitions in China, running judges are preferred as competitors complete all their attempts in one sitting. Whereas in many parts of Europe, seated judges with runners are preferred as competitors usually complete all their attempts non-stationary.**

The running system might also change as the competition progresses (e.g. Using seated judges with runners for first rounds and using running judges for final rounds where less competition staff might be available).

A lot of factors play into the chosen system for a competition: A lack of staff, a lack of space for solving stations to have more chairs, a lack of chairs, etc. It is important to always listen to the advice from your Delegate(s) on which system is the most suitable for the competition you are organizing.