

**SECTION 7**  
**SURFBOARD RIDING EVENTS**

## 7.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

- (a) The Surfboard Riding rules in this Section apply to the Short Board, Long Board Riding and Surf Team events.
- (b) The Short Board and the Long Board Riding are to be conducted as separate and distinct events.
- (c) While the general conditions and scoring system for the two events are the same, the judging of the wave riding criteria is different.
- (d) Short Boards – The restriction for the type of craft that can be used in the surfboard riding event is a surfboard that has a maximum length of less than 2.74m (9 feet) measured from the nose to tail on the deck of the surfboard. SLSA at this time does not impose further specifications on this type of surfboard other than the maximum length permissible to compete in this event. However, the Referee has the authority to declare a surfboard ineligible for a competition if the surfboard is considered dangerous to the competitor or other competitors in the competition.
- (e) Long Boards – The specifications for surfboards used in this event are:
  - (i) A minimum length of 2.74m (9 feet) measured from the nose to tail on the deck of the surfboard.
  - (ii) Minimum width dimensions to total 1295mm (51 inches) aggregate i.e. the total of the widest point, plus the width 305mm (12 inches) up from the tail and the width 305mm (12 inches) back from the nose.
  - (iii) The shape of the long board is to be traditional and may include multiple fins and channels, but cannot include add on tail or nose blocks.
- (f) In addition, the Referee has the authority to declare a Long Board ineligible for a competition if the surfboard is considered dangerous to the competitor or other competitors in the event.
- (g) Venue – The competition venue shall be determined by the relevant SLSA authority organising the competition in conjunction with the Referee.

**Note 1:** Alternative venues shall also be selected in case the surfboard riding conditions at the nominated venue are not suitable on the day of the competition.

**Note 2:** Where the surf conditions are not suitable to conduct the competition it may be cancelled or postponed to another day at the discretion of the Referee.

- (h) Officials – The officials required for the conducting of Surfboard Riding Competitions will be as follows: Referee, Referee Steward, Marshall, Judges (scoring), Recording Judges, Course Judge/s (Wave Spotter/s).

**Note 1:** If necessary, Accredited Judges from recognised surfing organisations may be invited to officiate provided that they judge under the rules of SLSA.

**Note 2:** In competitions where there are a large number of entrants it is permissible to conduct more than one competition area concurrently. In such circumstances additional judging personnel shall be required.

- (i) Water Safety – The main requirement of water safety at any Surfboard Riding Competition shall be one IRB/Jet Ski and crew. The IRB and crew shall act under the

direction of the Referee to assist competition where necessary and to ensure there is no outside interference or unauthorised encroachment on the competition course.

- (j) Competitors may use leg ropes and hand webs. Wetsuits and board shorts or other items may be worn at the Referee's discretion provided that the identification of the distinguishing colours of competitors is not impaired.

**Note:** It is permissible for competitors to wear wrist watches in Surfboard Riding competition.

- (k) Competitors may be required to wear distinctive coloured rash shirts/vests and/or caps to assist with identification for judging purposes. Such apparel will be supplied by SLSA and should be of distinctive colours and suitable to wear in the water.
- (l) Replacement of damaged or lost boards is permitted during a round. Club members shall be permitted to assist a competitor in replacing the damaged or lost board, but only to the extent of placing the replacement board at the water's edge.

## **7.2 THE COURSE**

- (a) The Referee shall determine the location of the competition area and define the boundaries by the placement of buoys. Where two or more areas are run concurrently it is desirable to separate them by a buffer zone.
- (b) All competitors shall be informed about the course layout prior to the commencement of the competition.
- (c) Once the competition area has been established and the competition commenced, no competitor or other club member shall warm up or free surf within that area.

## **7.3 PROCEDURES**

### **7.3.1 Conditions**

- (a) Prior to the commencement of an event, all competitors should be advised of the conditions of the competition, the skills to be judged and the number from each heat to progress to further rounds.
- (b) It is deemed that a 45cm of wave height is a minimum to conduct a successful competition, however in special circumstances this may be put aside if the surf is rideable.

### **7.3.2 Draws and Seeding**

- (a) The number of entries received for events shall determine the necessity to conduct heats and further rounds prior to the conduct of a final.
- (b) The initial draw for heats and beach positions, which may include seeding, may be conducted as directed by SLSA or by nominated officials and supplied to competitors. Draws for positions in rounds, quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals may be drawn at the competition by SLSA or their nominated officials. The Referee shall approve the method used for the draw, including seeding, which should occur at least following the first round of an event to ensure the fairness of competition.
- (c) The maximum number of competitors in each heat, quarter-finals, semi-finals and finals will be four, however in special circumstances six may be considered necessary to best

conduct the event. The Referee, taking into account the overall fairness to competitors and availability of Judges and the surfing conditions, shall best determine this number.

### **7.3.3 Starting**

- (a) Following marshalling, allocation of coloured vests and/or caps and briefing by the Referee, the competitors shall start their competition. Two methods of starting competitors may be used. These are:
  - (i) A wet start whereby competitors, are dispatched to the assembly buoy 5 minutes before the finish of any preceding round or prior to the start of a new event. At the Starter's signal competitors move into the competition zone and commence their rides.
  - (ii) A dry start whereby competitors are marshalled at the water's edge and on the signal to start enter the water, paddle out and commence their rides.

### **7.3.4 Time Keeping and Starting**

- (a) To signal the start and completion of rounds, a system of either gunshot/siren/whistle and flag/light signals shall be used. Competitors shall be briefed as to what system will be used prior to the commencement of any event.
- (b) In all competitions a combination of audible and/or visual signals shall be used to signal:
  - (i) The start of heats or rounds gunshot/siren/whistle and green flag/light.
  - (ii) A 5-minute warning prior to the end of a round – visual/sound or PA.
  - (iii) The finish of a round gunshot/siren/whistle and red flag/light.

### **7.3.5 Surfing**

- (a) Once started, each competitor selects and rides waves for the duration of the round. Competitors should endeavour to display the skills and attributes indicated in the judging section and should, at all times, compete fairly and in the spirit of SLSA competition, being particularly mindful of the safety of fellow competitors.

### **7.3.6 Finish**

- (a) Once the round is completed, the appropriate signalling system shall be activated. Competitors who have already commenced a ride prior to the finish signal will be judged until that ride ceases.
- (b) All competitors shall immediately return to the beach. Stand-up surfing on return to the beach shall not be permitted. Each competitor returning from a preceding round shall report to the Marshall and return their allocated vest and/or cap.

### **7.3.7 Riding Time**

- (a) The riding time shall be determined by the Referee prior to the commencement of the competition and will be dependent on the prevailing surf conditions and the number of competitors in the event.
- (b) The riding time allowed for each round will be a minimum of 20 minutes up to a maximum of 40 minutes, with competitors being permitted to catch ten waves to a maximum of fifteen waves or as determined by the Referee before the particular, rounds, semis or final concludes. The Referee has the discretion to extend the times for

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semi-finals and finals up to a maximum of 40 minutes, even if earlier rounds had been conducted over a shorter time.

- (c) The initial time limits shall be advised to competitors at the pre-event briefing.
- (d) However, should the surf conditions change during the competition, the Referee may alter the time limit. Any changes shall not occur during the conduct of a heat/round. Where a change is effected the competitors are to be notified prior to their entry into the water.
- (e) Once a competitor has caught the maximum number of waves they are expected to immediately return to the beach without causing any interference to any other competitor in the event or standing up on another wave. An attempt will be made to inform the competitor by acoustic or other signal when they have caught their maximum wave limit.

#### 7.3.8 Points Allocation

- (a) The Referee will decide and advise competitors prior to commencement of a round:
  - (i) Confirm that the best two waves will be counted in the competitors score.
  - (ii) The maximum number of waves that can be caught.
  - (iii) The riding time limit.
- (b) The Referee will take into account the surf conditions when making these decisions.
- (c) At the conclusion of a round the officials will determine the best two scoring waves from the judging sheets and score only those waves for the competitor to determine a result.

#### 7.3.9 Number of Rides

- (a) The Referee will determine the maximum number of rides, (minimum ten to a maximum of fifteen) in the allocated time that may be attempted during a round.  
**Note:** Where a competitor does not obtain the required maximum number of waves, no penalty is applied.
- (b) An attempt will be made to inform the competitor by acoustic sound (two to finish) or other signal at the completion of their maximum number of rides. Once the maximum waves have been achieved no further scoring will take place for that competitor and it is expected that the competitor will immediately return to the beach without causing interference to any other competitor in the event or standing up on another wave.
- (c) If the competitor ignores the signal to return to shore after completion of the maximum rides, the Referee may impose a penalty for every extra wave caught.
- (d) At the discretion of the Referee, if at the halfway mark of any round and no competitors have caught a wave, then that round may be cancelled and re-run.
- (e) If two adjoining competition areas are being used the zone between the areas is regarded as being a “no competition” zone. Competitors may surf into this zone but, are not permitted to use the zone as a take-off area.

## **7.4 JUDGING**

### **7.4.1 Short Board Wave Riding Criteria**

- (a) The judging objective is to assess the rider's style, skill and ability to make full use of the wave being ridden, by their performance in wave selection for quality and size and for the longest time at the fastest speed using the widest range of manoeuvres in the most critical section(s) of the wave.
- (b) Judges should be guided by the following factors:
  - (i) Judging will commence when the surfer's hands leave the rails of their surfboard to stand up.
  - (ii) After the initial take off, a competitor must perform committed radical controlled manoeuvres in the most critical sections of a wave with style, purpose, power, speed and flow to maximise scoring potential. Innovative and progressive surfing will be taken into account when rewarding points for committed surfing. The competitor who executes these criteria with the highest of degree of difficulty and commitment on the wave shall be rewarded with the higher score.

### **7.4.2 Long Board Wave Riding Criteria**

- (a) Judging will be based on a competitor's ability to execute to the maximum degree a combination of traditional and modern manoeuvres with control being the major judging factor.
- (b) A competitor must perform radical controlled manoeuvres in the most critical section of a wave with style, purpose, speed, power and flow to maximise scoring potential. The competitor who executes these criteria with the highest degree of difficulty and commitment on the wave shall be rewarded with the higher score.
- (c) Total use of the entire length of the surfboard is required. A competitor performing radical manoeuvres while using only the tail of the surfboard should not be scored as highly as a surfer who utilises the full length of the surfboard to combine and perform similar manoeuvres.
- (d) Judging will commence when the competitor's hands leave the rails of their surfboard to stand up.

### **7.4.3 Judging Philosophy**

- (a) SLSA Surf Board riding judging is a subjective system (0-10 points using 0.1 point increments) and there will be an active judging panel.
- (b) At times it is not possible for a judge to measure every ride and record every competitor or surfboard movement. Therefore, each judge allocates their points subjectively and, providing their aggregate is consistent and relative in relation to each competitor, their scoring will assist determine a fair result.

### **7.4.4 Scoring**

- (a) Each judge shall allocate points from a range of 0 to 10 points broken into 0.1 point increments using the following five scoring categories:

0.0 – 2.0 points	Poor
2.1 – 4.0 points	Fair

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4.1 – 6.0 points	Average
6.1 – 8.0 points	Good
8.1 – 10.0 points	Excellent

- (b) This scale should reflect the quality of the surf during the competition and judges should avoid restricting the use of the full range of points because the surf quality is poor.

### 7.4.5 Judging Panel and Master Card

- (a) The best two waves for each competitor is tabulated on the judge's card and a placing allocated to each competitor for that round or final.
- (b) The result placings from the judge's card are then transposed to the Master Card.
- (c) A standard judging panel shall consist of either three judges or five Judges.
- (d) Where three scoring judges are used, the judges' result placings are transposed to the Master Card and, the placings of competitors from all three judges shall be utilised to determine a result. The lowest total (which represents the best placings) is first, next lowest second, next lowest is third and so on.
- (e) Where five Judges are used, the judges' result placings are transposed to the Master Card with the lowest and highest placings for each competitor discarded and the remaining three placings used to determine a result. The lowest total (which represents the best placings) is first, next lowest second, next lowest is third and so on.

### 7.4.6 Recording

- (a) Judges cards have a provision to display a variety of information. Each Judge should ensure their card is completed by indicating:
- (i) The competition venue, date and current round.
  - (ii) The judge's name in legible form.
  - (iii) The score for the competitor's rides by circling the highest required number of wave scores and noting any fouls that the judge considered may have occurred.
- (b) Once this process has been completed the judge shall total the relevant wave scores for each competitor, allocate a placing to each competitor based on the two scoring waves recorded, sign the card and pass it to the Recording Judge.

**Note:** Competitors or team managers may check the score cards after the results have been formalised by the nominated official.

### 7.4.7 Missed Ride by Judges

- (a) Where a judge misses judging a competitor's ride, an attempt will be made to identify the missing ride by referring to other judges' cards.
- (b) If the Referee is satisfied that the missed ride has been identified a score is given to the ride by calculating the average of the scores awarded by other judges for the same wave and then adjusting the average of this score to reflect the scoring level given by the judge who missed the ride.
- (c) The Referee will determine that the value given to the ride is satisfactory and authorise the adjustment of the judge's card accordingly.

- (d) This situation can be avoided if the wave spotter keeps the judges well informed of the competitor's positions.

#### **7.4.8 Interference**

- (a) Before the Recording Judge can process the judges' cards, any competitive fouls through deemed interference must be confirmed by the Referee who shall make a decision in the prescribed manner.
- (b) Fouling occurs where a competitor interferes with another competitor who is deemed to have right of way and their scoring potential is hindered.
- (c) Judges must be careful when deciding if an infringement has occurred and consider the circumstances such as when two competitors stand at the same time on two separate peaks that eventually meet. Where there is only one available direction on any given wave, the competitor on the inside shall have unconditional right of way for the entire duration of the wave.
- (d) Where a judge considers interference has occurred whilst riding a wave or paddling for a wave they shall mark their card by recording the offending competitor's ride with a "triangle". They shall also mark an arrow pointing to the fouled surfer's ride. This action will allow any subsequent protest to identify which competitors were involved.
- (e) Where a majority of judges in the Judge's Panel record interference, the following procedure will apply:
  - (i) Should a majority of judges call interference, then a penalty shall be applied as described in this Section. However until this is determined the offending competitor's ride shall be judged and recorded on the judge's card.
  - (ii) Under the best two wave scoring system, if the majority of judges agree on the interference (as determined by the triangle on judge's card) the interfering surfer will be penalised with a zero score on the wave on which that competitor interfered. In addition, the competitor shall lose 50% of their second best scoring ride. For example if the competitor's second best scoring wave is a 6.8 then it will be counted as 3.4 on the scoring card.
  - (iii) If a competitor repeatedly interferes with other competitors the judges shall report this to the Referee who shall determine if the competitor should be penalised or disqualified from the competition.

#### **7.4.9 Processing Judges' Cards**

- (a) Once the judges have completed and signed their cards, the Recording Judge will check the calculations, consult any judge if any changes are necessary, amend the figures to account for any fouls or tied points and then transfer the relative placings to the Master Card.
- (b) Where a tied score occurs on the Judges' cards, the tied placing allocated to those competitors shall be transposed onto the Master Card (refer next clause).

#### **7.4.10 Processing the Master Card**

- (a) After all judges' cards are processed the placings recorded by the judges are then transposed to the Master Card.

- (b) Where there are three scoring judges used, the cards of all three judges shall be utilised to determine a result.
- (c) Where there are five scoring judges used, the high and low Judge for each competitor is disregarded and the remaining places allocated to each competitor are added together.
- (d) The competitor with the lowest total (similar to Surf Teams Race result determination methodology) of the total placings (ie. 1st, 2nd or 3rd etc.) is awarded first place, the next lowest second place and so on.

#### **7.4.11 Equal Points**

- (a) Where equal points are recorded on the Master Card, and it's necessary to determine a clearly placed result (e.g. final) the following calculation shall be applied to determine placings:
  - (i) The cards of each accepted judge's card will be compared against the highest scored rides of the competitors involved. The countback will be on the best wave of the two wave total. If the tie is still not broken, then this process is continued to the best of three, four or five waves and so on for each tied competitor.
  - (ii) If a tied placing cannot be split with this method of calculation then a dead heat will be declared as provided for under Section 2 of this Manual.

### **7.5 SURF BOARD VARIATIONS**

#### **7.5.1 Board Teams Riding**

- (a) Teams shall consist of five members who shall be marshalled as a team.
- (b) Each team competitor must commence their section of the event from the allocated beach or water start line as determined by the Referee.
- (c) The team member's order of competing in the event cannot be changed following team marshalling. Additionally no substitutions can be made once the event has commenced.
- (d) Each team member can catch a maximum of three waves, a change to this may occur depending on unfavourable surf conditions.
- (e) The recommended match time for each heat/round or final is 60 minutes. No extension to the match time shall be made following the start of that particular heat or round.
- (f) Each wave ridden (or claimed) shall be scored out of 10 as per the normal conditions of board riding competition.
- (g) The Judging Panel shall consist of either three or five judges, who will judge competitors per the general conditions of the judging criteria.
- (h) Each team will nominate one "power" surfer who will have all 3 waves counted into the team score. The order of this competitor is at the discretion of the team and nominated at time of marshalling.
- (i) Each of the other four (4) team members must nominate two of the three waves ridden as counting for the team score. This is indicated by the competitor raising both their hands above their head prior to paddling out again for the next wave, or if the competitor has completed their 2nd or 3rd wave and is returning to the beach. When the competitor has nominated two waves they must return to beach and make contact (visibly tag) the next team member.

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- (j) Stand up surfing for a team member returning to the beach to tag the next member is not permitted.
- (k) On receiving the release “tag” on the designated start line or in the designated zone, the next competitor, who is waiting with their board, will proceed to sea and carry out the next leg of the event.
- (l) The final result is the team with the highest points achieved in the nominated time or the 60 minutes.
- (m) If scores are tied the count back will be applied to the highest scored wave by a team member. Failing a breaking of the tie by this method the count back will then continue to the next highest scored wave by a team member and so on until the tie is broken. If the tie is not broken by this method a dead will be declared.
- (n) Penalties will apply as follows:
  - (i) Team members competes out of turn loss of 5 points
  - (ii) Competitor catches more than the allocated wave limit loss of 5 points.
  - (iii) Riding interference to another competitor zero score for wave
  - (iv) Paddling interference/other interferences loss of lowest nominated scoring ride.
  - (v) Team fails to catch eleven wave limit within allocated time loss of 5 points