

**COALITION  
OF  
SURFING CLUBS**

# **JUDGE'S TRAINING MANUAL**

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## INTRODUCTION

Surfing is experiencing a new wave of popularity. Thousands of people are taking up and developing a passion for the sport. Our favorite breaks are more crowded than ever and the days when the crowds would disappear during the winter are a thing of the past. With this increased popularity, surfing is also seeing an increase in the number of surf contests being held. On any given weekend there are contests being held up and down the coast. More people than ever are participating in organized surfing competitions

At the more popular Coalition contests, there can be almost three hundred participants. Not all of the contestants enter with the expectation of winning the contest. If you think about it, contests are not run for the winners. The finalists in each division are only a small percentage of the total number of participants. Sure the finalists get the glory and attention, but what keeps people coming back and paying the entry fees is that the contests are a lot of fun!!

Everyone enters with the expectation of advancing but most surfers realize their chances of winning are remote. If three hundred enter a contest, on the afternoon of the second day, seventy five percent of them will not be called to the podium. However, that seventy five percent will have surfed and hopefully enjoyed the contest.

Contests stop being fun when judging is questionable. Surfers who feel they have not been fairly judged are not likely to enter again. Competitors who feel they have been cheated by biased judging will not have enjoyed the event. Nothing ruins a contest more than the accusation that a judge from one club sabotaged a surfer from another club by biased scoring.

The time has come for the Coalition of Surfing Clubs to meet this problem head on. We need to establish a code of ethics for surf contest judges and introduce a training program to insure quality judges will be available to judge Coalition Contests and weed out bad judging and unqualified judges.

Every surf contest relies upon judges to measure competitor performance and determine the order of finish. Judges have the thankless job of evaluating individual competitors and making arbitrary decisions on how well each surfer performed. The role of a judge in a surfing contest is to decide which surfers performed closest to the judging criteria for the contest. This requires that judges understand their role, the standards to be used in assessing competitor performance and how to consistently and fairly score contestants in widely different surf conditions.

It is essential that judges have the training, knowledge, experience and resources to correctly judge Coalition of Surfing Club Contests. This manual has been prepared to accomplish the following.

1. Provide a reference manual for existing judges.
2. Train new comers on how to judge surf contests.
3. Establish consistent standards for judging surf contests.
4. Provide a clear statement on the ethics for being a surf contest judge.
5. State the job description for a surf contest judge.
6. Explain the basic rules of surf contests.

7. Clarify the rules of interference and how they are applied.
8. Provide rules for competitors to study before they enter a contest.
9. And for the first time, establish a Code of Ethics for judges to follow.

It is not easy to judge a surf contest. Hopefully, this manual will make the job a little easier and improve the quality of our surf contests.

## JUDGING BASICS

Before you can be a judge, you must understand how to evaluate and score competitors. This requires that every judge adhere to consistent standards for rating surfing performance. The standards can vary from contest to contest. For instance a nose-riding contest will use different scoring criteria from those used in a Coalition Contest. Tandem heats require a technical understanding of the difficulty of each maneuver and application of a degree of difficulty multiplier similar to that used in diving competitions. However, for most surf contests, the judging criteria has changed little since the first surf contest was held. The standard for scoring a wave is easy to state yet difficult to apply:

“The surfer who executes and completes the most functional, radical and/or controlled maneuver, in critical sections of the best waves for the longest time, displaying the most control, style and functional moves over distance shall receive the highest score.”

If two surfers ride identical waves the one who completes the best maneuvers in the critical portions of the wave, while displaying the most control, style and skill, and rides the wave the longest should receive the higher score.

In recent years, we have been blessed with near perfect, machine quality waves at a number of contests. Several events at Surfrider Beach have seen ideal conditions with building south swell producing flawless overhead waves for many heats. There were numerous occasions where surfers had nearly identical rides on mirror image waves. Being able to perceive the subtle nuances of each maneuver and understanding the skill displayed under such ideal conditions pose a significant challenge to even the most experienced of judges.

A similar situation was presented at an event in San Miguel. Excellent waves ridden by surfers of near equal ability presented a difficult scoring situation.

Not every contest will have good waves or conditions. Some contests start out with good conditions which then deteriorate to less than ideal.

In every situation, good or bad, judges must apply the same standards in a consistent manner.

The importance of following consistent surfing standards is so each judge will have a complete understanding of what he/she is looking for and each competitor will be aware of how she/he will be judged. It is very important for each member of the judging panel to adhere to the same judging criteria, so that each competitor knows how to maximize scoring potential and understands how they will be scored. Consistency in applying judging criteria is the most important goal for a judge.

## LONGBOARD HEATS

The renewed popularity of Longboarding has brought with it a need to develop a new judging philosophy and scoring standards, especially since many judges have not surfed competitively in the modern era will be judging modern longboard events. The key is to recognize the style and skill of each surfer and not ignore how the sport has evolved.

Longboarding will be judged on normal surfing criteria recognizing a combination of TRADITIONAL and CONTEMPORARY maneuvers with CONTROL, being the major factor. Points are awarded for CLASSIC Longboarding maneuvers such as:

- Nose riding, trimming and stalling;
- Walking on the board;
- Standing and Island pullouts;
- Bottom turns: full rail-to-rail or from the tail;
- Tube rides and cover ups;
- Top turns and fade take offs;
- Late take offs;
- No-paddle take offs;
- 360's;
- Walking to the tail;
- Other critical surfing including maneuvers in the more critical top half of the wave.

A surfer may embellish his or her performance with soul arches, head dips, quasimotos and other maneuvers even though these are not considered FUNCTIONAL maneuvers. Judges should make themselves aware of the maneuvers used in Classic/Traditional Longboard surfing by studying various reference materials in forms of magazines, videos and trade publications. Judges must consider the differences in accomplishment in the various types of nose rides (stretch of cheater five, hang five, hang ten, hang heals, and walking back off of the nose to continue the ride). A clean conclusion to the ride, such as an island pullout as opposed to a wipeout, denotes control.

The method of walking the board, clean and precise using foot over foot, crossover steps should be considered superior to shuffle stepping.

Classic nose rides are usually best presented when the walk to the nose is set up by a tail stall or directly connected to the arc of a turn. It is not necessary for surfers to “work the wave over” to receive a high score. Connected, simple maneuvers such as trimming-turning-climbing-dropping, if performed with control, in the critical part of a wave, should receive a good score.

Translating the performance observed to a score which accurately represents how well the competitor rode a wave is the essence of judging. Scoring scales and how to score is discussed in the following sections.

## **JUDGING PANELS AND JUDICIAL INTEGRITY**

A judging panel consists of 3 or 5 judges supervised and directed by a Head Judges. Judging is based solely on an individual's performance during a heat. Judges scoring must be without bias, prejudice or favor. The integrity of the judging process must be beyond question.

## **HOW TO PREPARE TO JUDGE A CONTEST**

It is important to be prepared for the different challenges judge's face on a regular basis. Judges must deal with event schedules, transportation issues, judging rotation, service payments and other related issues. Judges are expected to perform well despite these problems. A judge must be in good condition, both physically and mentally, and well rested. Competitors are counting on you to discharge your responsibilities as a contest judge.

Judges must participate in any pre-event meeting to have a good understanding of the criteria and rules of the contest. Judges must know the criteria and rules of the event and be able to consistently interpret them in the context of the contest.

Judges should arrive early. Observing what competitors are doing on the waves and assessing the surf condition will provide a frame of reference from which to assess competitors. Judges who start out "cold" increase the possibility of scoring mistakes. When first assuming a judges seat, one should be aware of how the other judges are scoring. Ask the Head Judges for guidance before starting and compare scores with those of other judges to ensure that judging is consistent and fair. The Head Judge is responsible for monitoring scores, answering questions and assisting judges maintain fair judging standards.

## **JUDGING STANDARDS AND SCORING**

A score has four main components. Judges must evaluate a competitor based on performance maneuvers, i.e., how controlled the maneuvers are, the difficulty of the maneuver, the wave the maneuvers are performed on and how well put together on the wave they are. The most heavily weighted component focuses on controlled maneuvers. A competitor who performs the difficult controlled maneuvers with style should consistently outscore a competitor who chooses less difficult, less controlled maneuvers. If two competitors perform the same maneuver, the higher score should go to the one who has chosen the bigger wave and /or in a more critical section and over a longer distance. Judges should pay closer attention to the different components and how to blend them into a consistent scoring philosophy.

## **CONTROLLED MANEUVER AND STYLE**

This is by far the most important part of scoring. Contemporary maneuvers basically constitute change of the direction of the board on the wave and the surfer on the board. Such maneuvers can include cut backs, floaters, cross stepping, hanging five and ten, walking from end to end, tube rides, and cover ups. The amount of control and commitment put into each maneuver determines how high of a score the surfer should receive.

## **MOST CRITICAL SECTION**

To position on the wave where a maneuver is performed must be considered for proper scoring. The critical section of the wave is the “pocket” closest to the curl. The degree of commitment and amount of risk taken to perform a maneuver in the critical section must be rewarded with higher scores.

What about steep sections out of the pocket and moves on top of sections or areas where waves have broken? Degree of difficulty and risk taken must be rewarded accordingly.

## WAVE QUALITY

Wave quality is a very important factor for a surfer in a heat. The wave selected dictates in many ways the maneuvers that may be performed and the potential for the point that can be scored.

There is less emphasis put on wave size in small to medium conditions because the best waves may not necessarily be the biggest wave.

In a contest with big wave conditions an important scoring consideration is the size of the wave ridden. The surfer who catches the biggest wave and shows the ability to ride the wave must be rewarded with a higher score. Note that a surfer does not automatically score higher because of wave size or quality. The surfer must satisfy the first section of the criteria to receive a high score.

## **LONGEST “FUNCTIONAL” DISTANCE**

The functional length of a ride is the longest possible distance ridden in a horizontal plane across the judges “Field of Vision” while performing functional maneuvers. This part of the criteria is frequently over score by inexperienced judges. Unless the surfer is performing functional maneuvers, the length of the ride is unimportant. Length without performance will not receive a higher score.

## STYLE

Style is also a part of the criteria. However, a judge must guard against scoring based upon their own personal preferences. In other words, a judge's scoring should not be influenced by whether the judge likes a surfer's style or not. Style is a subjective part of a judge's scoring of an individual. How much it affects the score on a wave must be carefully considered by every judge.

There are many types of surfing styles. Contrast the different surfing styles of Phil Edwards to Skip Frye to Dewey Weber to Josh Baxter to Joel Tudor to Robert August to Bonga Perkins to David Nuuhiwa to Josh Farbarrow. There are an infinite number ways for waves to be ridden. Style relates directly to control. If a surfer can execute maneuvers with control, that surfer's style works. Scoring should be based more on what the rider does than how it is done. Obviously, the surfer who performs with greater ease will score higher than the surfer who struggles to perform. It is important that each member of a judging panel adhere to the same point of reference/criteria so the competitors know how to maximize his scoring potential.

Judges are not tasked at making clones. Each surfer's style is an individual characteristic. Judges' must be careful to focus on the total picture and not elevate style over the substance of the other scoring criteria.

## HOW TO SCORE

Competitors are scored on waves which they have been considered to have stood up on. A competitor is considered to be “up” on a wave when they have risen to their feet and hands have left the rails of the surfboard. A rider whose hands do not leave the rails of the surfboard should not be scored. This means both hands. The competitor who makes a late take off must not be scored on the wave until both hands have been taken off the rails. On close calls, defer to the Head Judge on whether or not to score a wave.

Coalition of Surfing Club contests generally require the use of a zero to twenty scoring system. Only whole numbers are to be recorded during the heat. An average wave is benchmarked at 10 points. Judges must use a score of 10 to frame their scoring. The scoring range in a 20 point scoring system is as follows:

- 1 – 4 Poor;
- 4 – 8: Under Average;
- 9 – 11: Average;
- 12 – 16: Above Average;
- 16 – 20: Excellent.

To achieve an average score a competitor must catch a set wave, drop-in ride the wave in a controlled manner and complete the ride without wiping out. This sets a benchmark and should constitute a 10 point average wave.

Occasionally a judge may be asked to judge a contest using a 10 point scale. A ten point scale is essentially the same as a 20 point scale divided in half. The scoring range for a 10 point scale is as follows:

- 0 – 2: Bad;
- 2 – 4: Poor;
- 4 – 6: Average;
- 6 – 7: Good;
- 8 – 10: Excellent.

Using a 10 point system, Judges needing to distinguish between nearly equal waves may do so by adding or deducting half point to or from a wave. Nothing less than a half point should be used for this purpose as this poses difficulty during the tally process and will impact the speed of reporting heat results. Avoid scoring changes as the heat continues. Bear in mind previous scoring waves. The final wave SCORING exchange in a heat should be CONSISTENT with how the first waves were scored in the heat. Each heat is a Final for some of the competitors.

Judges must concentrate on scoring individual waves and ignore final outcome of the heat with one exception: Judges must be sensitive to scoring so as to not avoid ties.

Tie score should be avoided since they are perceived as a failure by the judges to correctly score a heat. At the same time, judges must be impartial and not show favoritism. JUDGES NEED TO BE AWARE OF

HOW THEY ARE SCORING AND AVOID CREATING TIE SCORES. No rides are identical, so try to score wave so that there is a variety of fair scoring rides.

Do not lobby for a high score or talk about scores until after you have recorded your point score for a wave. Put the pencil to the paper before discussing a score. If a judge misses a wave that judge should place an "M" in the TOP RIGHT CORNER of the square on the judge's sheet and notify the Head Judge that a wave was missed. The Head Judge may initiate some conversation to encourage fairness, consistency and/or to make sure judges sheets represent a job well done.

Judges may be asked to rewrite their scoring sheet to avoid having competitors reviewing any changes during the judges recording of points. A clean sheet also makes the tabulators jobs more efficient. A clean sheet reduces the chance of error. Judges need to make clear recording of their scores in as neat as possible manner.

After the judges heat sheets are turned in, judges may not change scores or interference calls. In the event a mistake has been made, the judge must notify the Head Judge who, together with the judge shall make any change and initial it.

## WAVE COUNT

Heats contain multiple competitors. Coalition of Surfing Clubs team events typically have upwards of 6 competitors in a heat, heats may contain 7 although this is frowned upon. This often means there are multiple competitors riding waves simultaneously. The concern from a judges' perspective is ensuring each judge score the same number of waves for each competitor.

The accepted method of tacking the number of waves for each competitor is for judges to periodically during a heat to call out the competitor wave count. This is typically done during a time when no competitor is up on a wave, giving judges an opportunity to reconcile the wave count across each judges' heat sheet.

Any judge can and should periodically call out the wave count to ensure accuracy, however, it is the job of the Head Judge to rectify any discrepancies.

If a discrepancy is noted during a wave count, immediately bring this to the Head Judge's attention. The Head Judge is tasked with correcting wave count issues.

## **JUDICIAL INTEGRITY**

It is the responsibility of a judge to avoid being influenced by the spectators, commentators, friendships, relationships, and other outside influences. Have the confidence and integrity to stand by your own decisions.

IF A JUDGE HAS A RELATIVE, RELATIONSHIP OR POSSIBLE BIASED SITUATION, THAT JUDGE MUST STEP OFF THE PANEL UNTIL THE HEAT WITH THE CONFLICT IS COMPLETE.

Judges must avoid providing any information to competitors while on break or when finished judging.

Judges must also avoid talking with anyone who may appear on the judge's stand other than the other judges or Head Judges while judging.

## **JUDGING PHILOSOPHY**

It is important to score the initial wave exchanges in a heat correctly. That will set the scale for the rest of the heat. Try to develop a consistent point between your first two scoring rides. Then, if the next wave falls in between your first two you have a good spread. Maintain the point spread thru the entire heat.

View waves in terms of scoring potential. While the competitor is riding the wave, allocate base points cumulatively to develop your score. This is called cumulative scoring. At the end of the ride, or in the case of a fall, you will have a base score which can be either supplemented or reduced depending on performance. If a competitor has a good wave but fails to complete the wave because of a mistake, only a base score will be given. This contrasts with a competitor who finishes a good wave without making a mistake and will be scored higher. Do not forget to compare this score with previous scores and remember: never deduct points already earned during a ride because a surfer fell. There is no penalty for falling other than to not gain additional points.

Each judge must give 100% effort. "MAXIMUM CONCENTRATION" is essential to ensure your contribution to the panel of judges is significant and personal bias is eliminated.

## JUDGING TIPS

- Judges should arrive at least 30 minutes before being scheduled to begin judging to check the conditions and establish a scoring range.
- Judges should be punctual when reporting for their judging rotation.
- Judges should maintain concentration during every heat.
- Judges should minimize conversation.
- The judging panel should maintain the wave count.
- Judges should be open minded and contribute at judges meetings.
- Judges should be friendly and open minded with competitors.
- Judges should try to spend time in the water during and event.
- Plan your breaks to get wet if possible

The beginning of a wave is critical, it sets up the rest of the wave.

When two surfers are riding, concentration must be apportioned according to each surfer's scoring potential for the perspective waves.

A surfer's scoring potential at the end of a wave may be much lower but this is not always true. Do not stop watching a surfer until they are done with the wave. They may surprise you with last minute maneuver.

No other area in the contest is more heavily scrutinized than that of the judges. Remember to stay professional and business like at all times, especially off of the beach or rotation. Do not discuss your scores or opinions to anyone outside the judge's panel, Head Judge or Contest Director. Never discuss wave scores with competitors, their friends or family. Never reveal other judge's opinions expressed during heats. If a problem comes up, take it to the Head Judge or the Contest Director. Save some grief and direct all questions and issues to the Head Judge and Contest Director.

Record scores as quickly as possible, first impressions are usually the most accurate.

Call out the wave counts when there are no competitors riding.

If unsure about a score, NEVER ask a fellow judge. They may have missed something or be on a different scale. Ask the Head Judge for assistance, that is what the Head Judge is for.

## BAD JUDGES

What makes a judge not worthy of judging and justifies the removal of a judge from the judging panel?

- Sleeping during a heat.
- Repeatedly missing waves.
- Talking excessively.
- Not giving full attention to a heat.
- Poor judging exhibited by inconsistent High/Low wave scores when compared to other judges on the panel. Remember, scores must be compared using the particular judge's scale.
- Giving favoritism to contestants.
- Judging while intoxicated.
- Showing up with a hangover
- Not returning from break in a timely manner.
- Discussing scores with competitors during a break.
- Making up rules or interpretations of rules.

The above are some examples of behavior that may be construed as not conducive to good judging, the list should be considered comprehensive.

## **JUDGING IN POOR SURF CONDIONS**

Many events take place in marginal conditions. Even events held at world class venues such as Trestles, Steamer Lane and Malibu can suffer from poor quality surf.

Judges must adjust to the condition. I poor surf judges must totally concentrate on surfers who are utilizing the mini pockets on the wave with maneuvers that are appropriate for the wave.

Observe each maneuver, make sure it links directly to another without groveling the turns through the flat sections. Establish if the surfer is completing each wave flawlessly with significant, executed maneuvers.

Sometimes, particularly with long interval ground swells, there may not be many waves ridden in a heat. In such conditions, judges must pay particular attention to the low scoring waves as they will be counted in the final tabulation.

Late afternoon and early morning heats often face severe light conditions. Clare from the sun can prevent judges from seeing the color of a rider's jersey. It is essential that judges let the Head Judge know if they cannot see colors. The Head Judge will request spotters be provided by the Contest Director.

## JUDGING TOUGH HEATS

Difficult heats, with surfers of equal abilities, are a challenge and must be accepted as such. A conscientious judge should methodically watch every detail and picture the whole wave. In every contest there will always be one or more heats that are more difficult than others. The morning heats usually have better light conditions compared to late afternoon heats on the West Coast where the glare from the afternoon sun makes determining jersey colors difficult.

Sometimes the level of competition makes a heat extremely close. Good judges will rise to the occasion and stand out. A quality judge will score even the most difficult heats with integrity and consistency. The following factors should guide a judge when analyzing competitor rides in difficult or challenging heats:

- Where was the first maneuver performed?
- How well was the first maneuver executed?
- How well were the maneuvers connected together?
- Compare outside maneuvers to the inside maneuvers.
- Compare take off areas and how deep the surfer was at the time of the initial point of take-off.
- Consider how the surfer utilized the wave.
- Consider the ability of the surfer to make sections and whether the maneuvers were functional in doing so.
- Did the surfer actually complete the maneuver and have control?
- What did the surfer complete before falling?

Comparison between the first scoring wave and the last scoring wave is extremely important. Inexperience judges tends to over score the last wave as forget or ignore what has taken place during the heat. This will more often than not affect the results of the heat. This is an area where the inexperienced judge can learn a lot from the more experienced one. The experienced judge has the ability to concentrate on the broad picture of what is happening in each heat as well as the minor details such as the paddling contests which can result in interference calls, snaking, and other issues which may arise.

## 4, 5, and 6 SURFERS ON WAVES

The key is 100% concentration! It is NOT just to have each score down correctly, but to assist the Head Judge with wave and interference calls. In such heats, the ability to score the wave instinctively in your mind and allocate the score automatically at the end of each ride is of the utmost importance. When several competitors are riding at the same time, the judges must watch everyone. It is essential to focus on the most critical areas. For example: the take off point, the first maneuver and the outside maneuvers.

## INTERFERENCE

There are few things as difficult for a judge as the interference call. Rarely can a contestant advance if called for interference. Interference calls during the later heats of a contest are often controversial and emotional. It is essential that judges understand and consistently apply the Interference Rules.

Interference is defined as any action which hinders or prevents a surfer with the right-of-way from achieving the highest scoring potential on a wave. There are two basic forms of interference: Wave Interference and Paddling Interference.

Interference Rules provide guidance in determining which surfer has the right-of-way in a particular situation. Each judge must first determine whether the surfer with the right-of-way has been hindered or prevented from a higher scoring potential. The key to understanding interference is to ask the question: "But for the action of the surfer without the right-of-way, would the surfer with the right-of-way been able to obtain a higher score on the given wave?"

Judges must keep in mind that interference calls can be very subjective and reasonable minds can differ. There may be and often there is no right or wrong answer. Each judge must call it as he or she sees it.

- Here are some factors to consider when evaluating a potential Interference Call:
- Did the surfer clearly have the right-of-way? In almost every situation the surfer with inside position will have the right-of-way. Exceptions apply, see below.
- Did the surfer with the right-of-way have his or her scoring potential hindered?
- What Interference Rule applies? See below.

Enforcement is generally dependent on the call being made by a majority of the judges.

## **GENERAL WAVE INTERFERENCE RULES**

The surfer with the inside position on a wave has the right-of-way subject to the Snaking Rule.

The first to reach their feet and execute a maneuver has the right-of-way.

A surfer who stand up in front of another surfer with the right-of-way has opportunity to immediately rode or kick out of the wave without being called for interference (the so called 'no harm, no foul' situation) unless that surfer has already hindered the scoring potential of the surfer with the right-of-way. This any verbal hassling, leash pulling and breaking down the section in front of the competitor with the right-of-way.

## **SPECIFIC WAVE INTERFERENCE RULES**

### **Rule 1: Establishing the right-of-way.**

In every potential interference situation, each judge must first determine which surfer first established right-of-way.

On Peak Breaks, this involves determining whether the wave selected is a right or left. If, at take-off, neither the right nor the left can be deemed superior, the first surfer who makes a definite turn in a chosen direction is given the right-of-way for that direction. A second surfer may take off in the opposite direction without incurring an interference call provide the take-off is executed behind the first surfer up. See below.

On Point Breaks, where the direction of travel is generally pre-determined and agreed upon, the surfer taking off and riding closest to the curl is generally determined to have the right-of-way. See below.

Rule2: Once established a competitor cannot be deprived of the right-of-way.

This principle is always enforced except under very specific situations. For example if two surfers take off together on a Peak, the first one up chooses a direction and the other surfer recognized this choice and goes in the other direction, the respective right-of-way for each has been established. If the first surfer changes his or her mind and switched direction, no interference should be called on the second surfer as that competitor has an established right-of-way to that direction on the peak.

### **Rule 3: Point Break Priority Rule.**

When there is only one available and agreed upon direction of travel on the wave at a given break, the surfer on the inside, closest to the curl, or break of the wave, has the unconditional right-of-way for the entire duration of that wave. The only exception to this is the Snaking Rule, see below.

### **Rule 4: Peak Break Priority Rule.**

Where there is a single, well defined peak, with both a left and right break available at the initial point of take-off, the right-of-way is established by the first surfer who makes a definite turn in a chosen direction. A second surfer may, after the first has made the initial decision and turn, choose to go in the opposite direction on the same wave without incurring an interference penalty provided there is no hindering or reducing of the scoring potential of the first surfer.

### **Rule 5: Beach Break Priority Rules.**

If a contest venue is held at a beach break where multiple establishment of right-of-way potential exists, the following factors should apply:

1. With multiple peaks, there will be case where on swell will have two separately defined peaks that eventually meet at the same place. Although two surfers may each have right-of-way on their respective peaks, the surfer who is first to his feet shall be deemed to have the overall right-of-way and the second surfer must avoid depriving that surfer of right-of-way or incur an Interference Penalty.
2. If two surfers stand at the same time and surf separate peaks that eventually join:
  - a. If both give way by cutting back or kicking out, there is no interference.
  - b. If they cross paths and collide or hinder one another, the judges may call interference on the surfer who is the aggressor at the point of contact in the form of an unsportsmanlike conduct interference.
  - c. If neither surfer gives way to the other and they collide or hinder one another, the judges may call a double interference.

#### Rule 6: Paddling Interference.

A surfer who has the inside position shall not be hindered by another surfer paddling out or for the same wave. Paddling Interference will be called if:

1. The offending surfer makes contact with or forces the inside surfer to change his line while paddling to catch a wave, causing possible loss of scoring potential.
2. The offending surfer intentionally or negligently causes a section of a wave to break down in front of the inside surfer, causing the loss of scoring potential.
3. The offending surfer, while paddling out, causes a surfer on a wave to significantly alter the line the surfer wishes to travel in order to avoid a collision, thereby the surfer with right-of-way the loss of scoring potential. Under these circumstances, it is up to the majority of the judges to call interference based on whether or not it is felt the paddling surfer could have avoided the situation.

General indicators to look for in a Paddling Interference call:

1. Physical Contact.
2. The surfer with the right-of-way (inside position) is forced to change a paddling line or direction.
3. The breakdown of a section causing the loss of scoring potential
4. The surfer on the wave with right-of-way being hindered or force off of an established course.

#### Rule 7: Snaking.

Snaking is defined as waiting for the surfer who has established right-of-way on a wave to surf past and then dropping in behind that competitor with the intention of stealing the right-of-way from that surfer.

All competitive surfers have the skills and are capable of snaking the other competitors. It is considered unsportsmanlike and rude. Most surfers compete in events at world class breaks like Malibu 1<sup>st</sup> Point, Steamer Lane and Church, just to have the opportunity to ride a few waves in a 15 minute heat with only 5 others out. Half of them will not advance so these waves are what they get for supporting the event with their entry fees. Again, it is unsportsmanlike and rude to snake them. Competitors should catch their own waves and allow others the opportunity to ride their waves unhindered.

If a surfer furthers inside takes off and establishes right-of-way for the ride even though another surfer may take off in the white water behind the initial competitor. The judges will not penalize the first surfer simply because that surfer is now in front of the second surfer.

If the second surfer has not hindered the original surfer with right-of-way, the judges may choose not to call interference and score both surfers' rides. If, in the opinion of the judges, the second surfer has interfered, or snaked, the first surfer to gain position and steal the right-of-way, interference may be called on the second surfer, even though that surfer is inside (behind) the first surfer when the penalty is assessed.

## ETHICS FOR SURF CONTEST JUDGES

### STATEMENT OF THE GENERAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR SURF CONTEST JUDGES:

- General Ethics Rule #1:  
Judges shall at all times act with honesty and wood sportsmanship. A judge shall score impartially and must never “cheat” or give a higher score to a competitor based on factors other than how a wave was ridden.
- General Ethics Rule #2:  
A judges conduct during a contest shall at all times reflect the high standards of honor and integrity that characterize participation in a competitive sporting event.
- General Ethics Rule #3:  
Every judge must conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and avoid any conduct that might be perceived as unsportsmanlike.
- General Ethics Rule #4:  
A judge must not engage in fighting, verbal abuse or other negative behavior during a contest.
- General Ethics Rule #5:  
No judge will participate in or tolerate any attempt to improperly influence the outcome of a heat or contest.
- General Ethics Rule #6:  
No judge will participate in a surf contest that is being improperly conducted or in which the results of heats are being improperly determined. Any contest that departs from previously announced contest rules without good justification may be considered to be improper.

#### Specific Ethics Rules.

Contest judges must be aware of how their conduct is perceived. Judges must avoid conduct that carries any suggestion of partiality or bias. Even the most innocent of acts can cause suspicion. Contest judges must constantly be aware of how their conduct will be perceived. The following are examples of inappropriate conduct:

- Specific Ethics Rule #1:  
Public criticism during a contest of the way it is being run or how other judges scored a heat. Any critical comments should be made to the Head Judge and/or the Contest Director in private. Such criticism should not come from an active judge during a heat.
- Specific Ethics Rule #2:  
Making predictions on how a club or contestant will finish by a judge will in the judging rotation. Such conduct gives the impression that the judge is prejudging a heat or competitor and undermines confidence that each competitor will be judged solely on how they perform in a heat.
- Specific Ethics Rule #3:  
Leaving the judges stand immediately after a heat and congratulating a heat winner. This creates the appearance that a judge had a stake in how the heat was scored and creates the perception the judge was biased.

- Specific Ethics Rule #4:  
Displaying an unfavorable reaction toward a competitor's performance during a heat. One bad wave does not determine the outcome of a heat or contest. Showing displeasure will be perceived as bias.
- Specific Ethics Rule #5:  
Any conduct that creates the impression that club affiliation is a priority over impartial judging. We are all members of a surf club. As judges we must rise above club affiliation and judge without regard to that affiliation.
- Specific Ethics Rule #6:  
Expressing personal dislike or bias toward a competitor. If a judge is perceived to dislike or be an enemy of a competitor, the judge should refrain from judging any heat in which that person surfs.
- Specific Ethics Rule #7:  
A judge not waiting until a heat is tabulated before checking the tally sheets for results. This creates the impression that a judge has a vested interest in the outcome of a heat.
- Specific Ethics Rule #8:  
Judges must not score a heat in which a family member, significant other, or roommate is surfing. The inherent conflict of interest is obvious.

“Surfing is the dance and wave always leads” – Jack Sutter.

“I would much rather surf the ocean than the net” – Ward Smith.

“The gods do not subtract the time from one’s Life spent surfing” – Mike Spence

“The Best Surfer is the on having the most fun” – Skip Frye.

## APENDIX

### PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED COALITION OF SURFING CLUBS SUGGESTED GUIDELINE RULES FOR SURF CONTESTS.

#### (Provided courtesy of Bruce King)

- Whenever possible and unless otherwise specified, preliminary and semi-final heats will last 15 minutes. Final heats will last 20 minutes.
- Each heat begins and ends with one horn blast and display of a green flag.
- A five minute warning will be given in the form of two horn blasts and the changing of the flag from green to yellow. At the conclusion of the heat, competitors must immediately return to the beach as the next heat commences. If a competitor stands up before the beginning of their or after the end of their heat, at the discretion of the judges, an interference penalty may be assessed resulting in the loss of a scoring wave.
- Unless otherwise specified, all heat starts are water starts. Competitors may enter the water at the five minute warning (two horn blasts, flag changes from green yellow) and paddle out to the contest area. Competitors waiting for their heat to start must stay clear of the heat in progress. Failure to do so will result in a paddling interference and result in the loss of a scoring wave.
- Surfboards used for Longboard Divisions must be a minimum of 9 feet in length or no shorter than 3 feet longer than the height of the competitor. No paddling gloves are permitted. The use of a leash is subject to the specific contest rules.
- Maximum wave count and the number of scoring waves will be set based on conditions at the beginning of the contest. Competitors will be advised of the maximum number of waves they may catch at check-in prior to their heat. Upon reaching the maximum wave total, competitors must immediately exit the water.
- Interference:
- At point breaks, standard point break rules are in effect. The first rider up closest to the curl has right-of-way.
- At reef or beach breaks, if two riders take off on an unbroken wave, the first up will have right-of-way for the direction of travel chosen. The other surfer may take off in the opposite direction. To take right-of-way the surfer must be on his feet and in front of or in the furl after the 1<sup>st</sup> turn.
- Any action which impedes a contestant's right-of-way resulting in the loss of scoring potential for the ride will result in an interference penalty against the offending surfer. That penalty will result in the loss of a scoring wave for that competitor.
- Snake Rule: Paddling in front of or around and behind a competitor to impede them and steal position. This action may result in an interference penalty and the loss of a scoring wave.
- Judging will be on a 20 point system or 10 points with half points. With 5 judges on the judging stand, on the judges' tally sheet the high and low placing judge for each contestant is dropped tallying the remaining 3 to determine the low (first place) to high heat ranking.
- Competitors will be judged on style, wave selection, length of ride and controlled functional maneuvers. Shuffling or hopping back and forth on the surfboard may be considered poor style and may not be scored as high and controlled walking and cross-stepping.

- Protests must be filed in writing, within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the heat in question. File with the Contest Director only. Only the Team Captain will be allowed to speak with the Contest Director or Head Judge regarding any protest. Failure to comply could result in disqualification.
- Competitors must check-in 15 minutes before their heat to obtain a jersey and, for first round heats, sign a contest specific waiver.
- Competitors must return jerseys immediately after exiting the water at the end of their heat.
- Judges must check in 30 minutes before the start of the contest or their scheduled judging time. Judges may surf in the contest as long as they do not judge their own division. Clubs hosting a contest may determine that in the event of a scoring dispute if it wishes to afford R.Q.R (Ride Quality Recorder) judges decisions more weight than that of other judges.
- Contestants identified as surfing in the contest area may, at the discretion of the Contest Director, be disqualified. Multiple infractions by any given club may be grounds for the entire club's disqualification.

These Guidelines may be adjusted based upon local conditions.