



TGSA Competition Rules – 2024-2025 Season

I. EVENTS

A. District contests, Open Contests and the Texas State Surfing Championships (TSSC)

Age divisions for all District contests, Open contests and TSSC are determined by the surfer's age as of Jan. 1 of the current competition season (for 2024-2025 age as of January 1, 2025). Proof age is required upon the request of TGSA officials. All divisions listed below are points divisions for all purposes, with the exception of the Open divisions and Micro-Groms which will count for rankings and overall season points, but will not count for team points.

1. Micro-Groms (boys and girls 8 years & under, push-in allowed) No board size restrictions
2. Menehune Boys (12 and under) Short Board Only - (18" maximum above competitor height)
3. Boys (14 & under) Short Board Only - (18" maximum above competitor height)
4. Junior Men (17 & under) Short Board Only -18" maximum above competitor height
5. Men (29 & under) Short Board Only - (18" maximum above competitor height)
6. Masters (ages 30+) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
7. Senior Women (age 30+) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
8. Senior Men (ages 40+) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
9. Legends (ages 50+) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
10. Grand Legends (ages 60+) -(18" maximum above competitor height)
11. Menehune Girls (12 and Under) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
12. Girls (14 and under) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
13. Junior Women (17 & under) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
14. Women (all ages) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
15. Menehune Long Board (males and females ages 12 and under) – (board must be 3' above height)
16. Junior Long Board (males and females ages 13-17) – (board must be 3' above height)
17. Men Long Board (ages 18-39) – (boards must be a minimum of 9')
18. Senior Long Board (ages 40+) – (boards must be a minimum of 9')
19. Women Long Board (all ages) – (boards must be a minimum of 9')
20. Grand Legends Long Board (ages 60+) -(boards must be a minimum of 9')
21. Open Shortboard (all ages/genders) Short Board Only – (18" maximum above competitor height)
22. Open Long Board (all ages/genders) – (boards must be a minimum of 9')
23. Open Air (all ages/genders) – Short Board Only – 18" maximum above height – only completed airs scored
24. Open Standup Paddle Board (all ages/genders)

B. Surfing in Multiple Age Divisions

Competitors are allowed to surf in divisions that are more competitive than their primary age/gender division, subject to certain restrictions.

CAUTION: SURFING IN MULTIPLE DIVISIONS MAY CAUSE BACK-TO-BACK HEATS. SURFERS SHOULD CONSIDER THIS IN DECIDING HOW MANY DIVISIONS TO SURF IN.

NOTE: Open Divisions (shortboard, longboard, air and SUP) are open to all ages and genders and are not included below. Competitors are allowed to surf in any division listed to the right of their primary division in the grid below.

<u>Female Competitors - Shortboard Divisions</u>					
Age	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division
8 & under	Micro-Groms	Menehune Girls	Menehune Boys	all other 13+ divisions	
9-12	Menehune Girls	Girls	Menehune Boys	Boys	all other 9+ divisions
13-14	Girls	Junior Women	Boys	Junior Men	all other 13+ divisions
15-17	Junior Women	Women	Junior Men	Men	all other 15+ divisions
18-29	Women	Men	all other 18+ divisions		
30+	Women	Senior Women	all other 30+ divisions		
<u>Female Competitors - Longboard Divisions</u>					
Age	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division
12 & under	Menehune LB	Junior LB	Women LB	Men LB	all other 12+ LB divisions
13-17	Junior LB	Women LB	Men LB	all other 13+ LB divisions	
18+	Women LB	Men LB	all other 18+ LB divisions		
<u>Male Competitors – Short board Divisions</u>					
Age	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division
8 & under	Micro-Groms	Menehune Boys	all other male 8+ divisions		
9-12	Menehune Boys	Boys	Junior Men	all other male 9+ divisions	
13-14	Boys	Junior Men	all other male 13+ divisions		
15-17	Junior Men	Men	all other male 15+ divisions		
18-29	Men	all other male 18+ divisions			
30-39	Masters	all other male 30+ divisions			
40-49	Senior Men	all other male 40+ divisions			
50+	Legends	all other male 50+ divisions			
60+	Grand Legends				
<u>Male Competitors - Longboard Divisions</u>					
Age	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division	Eligible Division
12 & under	Menehune LB	Junior LB	Men LB	all other male 12+ LB divisions	
13-17	Junior LB	Men LB	all other male 13+ LB divisions		
18-39	Men LB	all other male 18+ LB divisions			
40+	Senior LB	all other male 40+ LB divisions			
60+	Grand Legends LB				

C. Texas State Surfing Championships (TSSC)

In order to qualify to surf in a division in the Texas State Surfing Championships (TSSC), you must have surfed in that division in at least one points-rated District or Open event during the same season. TSSC will count for 1.5 times the points awarded in Opens. Your lowest score of the season will be dropped to determine season points winner.

D. Pro/Am Competitions and Specialty Events

Pro/Am competitions and specialty events are “non-points rated” and do not count for team points or overall season points. Qualifications to enter and other rules will be established per event.

II. EQUIPMENT (All boards are measured from end to end, using a straight edge along the deck) If a competitor is found to be riding equipment in a heat, that does not meet the requirements, all scores will revert to a 0 and the competitor will automatically receive last place in the heat.

A. Short boards

In short board divisions, surfboards must not exceed 18 inches above the competitor’s height, except in Micro-Groms where there is no restriction on board size. Micro-Groms will, however, be judged as a short board heat using short board criteria, regardless of board size.

B. Longboards

Long boards must be a minimum of 9 ft. in length for all longboard divisions, except Menehune LB and Junior LB where the board must be 3’ over competitor’s height.

C. Additional Equipment

Additional equipment, such as leashes and helmets may be used.

III. HEAT PREPARATION AND STRUCTURE

A. Reporting for Heats

All contestants must report to the ready area 15 minutes prior to the start of their heat to be checked in and receive their instructions and colored jersey. When possible, the competition area will be defined by the use of flags, barriers, points, piers, jetty’s and/or buoys. If a competitor does not check in by the 5-minute warning prior to their heat, they may be replaced by the next highest ranked alternate.

B. Heat Duration and Wave Counts

All heats, except finals, will last 15 minutes. Finals will last 20 minutes. Open Divisions finals will last 30 minutes. The officials’ time clock will be deemed the “official time.” In preliminary heats a competitor’s best 2 rides will count toward their placing and the competitor must not catch more than the maximum of 15 rides. In final heats a competitor’s best 2 rides will count towards their placing and the competitor must not catch more than the maximum of 15 rides. Open Division competitor’s best 2 rides will count toward their placing and the competitor must not catch more than the maximum of 15 rides.

Competitors must exit the water after the fifteenth wave in the preliminaries or finals. Any wave ridden after the maximum will not be counted in the scoreline. If the competitor interferes with any other competitor in the heat by paddling, positioning or some other reason after his wave maximum has been reached, he will receive an interference.

C. Water Starts

Most heats in TGSA contests are water start heats. However, the TGSA reserves the option of running beach start heats and/or buoy start heats.

All heats will begin with the blast of the horn and/or the raising of the green flag. The raising of the yellow flag will indicate the five-minute warning (five minutes remain in the heat in progress). At the five-minute warning, the next heat of competitors may start paddling to the designated standby area, being careful not to interfere with the heat in progress. It is recommended that all competitors paddle out together and wait together for their heat to begin, as this will aid the judges in starting their heat. When the horn sounds and the red flag is raised, ending the heat in progress, the standby heat may paddle into the take-off zone, but not catch any waves until the horn sounds again, and the green flag is raised, starting their heat. ***Any wave caught before the start of the heat will not be scored by the judges.***

D. Beach Starts

All competitors in the “standby” heat will gather at the water’s edge anytime between the five minute warning for the “heat in progress” (raising of the yellow flag) and the start of their heat. The “heat in progress” will end with one horn blast and the raising of the red flag. The “on deck” heat will begin with one horn blast and/or the raising of the green flag.

E. Buoy Starts

In the instance of exceptionally large surf or an extremely long or difficult paddle to the line-up, a buoy technique may be employed with the competitors in the standby heat paddling to a marker buoy, located some distance from the line-up. The rest of the procedures for heats with buoy starts are the same as the heats with water starts.

F. End of Heat

At the end of the heat, as marked by the horn blast and/or the red flag, all competitors are required to paddle, ride prone, or ride on their knees to the beach. If a ride has begun, as indicated by a competitor standing up with his/her hands leaving the rails of the surfboard, before the horn and red flag, the ride may be completed and will be scored by the judges. In circumstances where there is uncertainty as to if the competitor was up prior to the end of the heat, the Head Judge of the judging panel will have the final decision as to if the ride will be scored. ***Any competitor that stands up after the end of their heat and is still standing at the start of the next heat may receive a 2.5 point penalty to their scores.***

In the event of danger or a problem, a long horn blast will sound and the red flag will be raised. All competitors must leave the water immediately under this circumstance.

All heat jerseys must be worn with the imprint clearly showing and not inside out. At the conclusion of a heat, all heat jerseys are to be worn onto the beach and all the way to the officials' area, just as they were used going out, and returned in a sportsmanlike manner. ***Any competitor who removes their jersey in the water or prior to returning to the officials' area will be subject to a 2.5 point penalty to their heat score at the discretion of the Competition Director.***

IV. Sportsmanship and Behavior at Events

A. Good Sportsmanship

All competitors, friends and family of competitors, spectators, volunteers and TGSA officials and judges are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times. Good Sportsmanship is defined as appropriate conduct for one participating in a sport, such as fairness, respect for one's opponent, respect for the rules of the organization and for the organization's officials, and graciousness in winning or losing. This definition of Good Sportsmanship will be strictly applied and enforced at all TGSA competitions and events.

B. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. A competitor may receive one warning for displaying unsportsmanlike conduct in the discretion of the Competition Director. If further unsportsmanlike conduct is displayed after the warning, or if the conduct is extreme enough to not merit a warning, that competitor will be suspended for the remainder of that TGSA event and will lose all individual and team points that may have been accumulated by that competitor at that event, and may be subject to further penalty as set forth below. Examples of behavior that are considered to be unsportsmanlike conduct, by either competitors or others, include but are not limited to the following:

- *Rude gestures to contest officials or judges
- *Yelling or swearing at contest officials or judges or in the officials' area
- *Spitting at contest officials or judges
- *Ripping up judge's sheets
- *Writing on judge's sheets
- *Use of illegal drugs in or near the official competition area
- *Any and all behavior deemed to be unsportsmanlike conduct by any two TGSA officials

Any competitor who assaults a TGSA official or crew member in any way will be suspended from the association for the remainder of the competition year and will lose all individual points that may have been accumulated up to the point of the infraction. Any competitor that causes destruction or damage to property will be subject to immediate suspension from the TGSA event and will lose all individual and team points that have been accumulated at that event. This does preclude the imposition of additional penalties by the Board of Directors for such infractions.

Parents and representatives of competitors are subject to the same Good Sportsmanship code as competitors at TGSA events, and issues arising from unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a parent or representative of a competitor will be referred by the Competition Director to the President of the TGSA for further consideration.

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated by any member of the TGSA Board of Directors. The Board is held to the highest standard of conduct as they represent the organization. Any board member displaying unsportsmanlike conduct will be reprimanded, which may include but is not limited to a written warning and probationary period, removal from the board, removal from membership in the organization, or exclusion from a number of events as determined by a vote of the Board of Directors.

C. Free surfing in the contest zone

Free surfing in the contest zone is considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Any competitor free surfing in a designated contest area or causing any other interference with competitors when it is not his/her heat, will be disqualified from the contest, or the next contest, and lose any rating points and team points from that contest, in the discretion of the Competition Director. Warnings may be issued to competitors free surfing in the contest zone before a penalty is assessed, but are not required. It is the responsibility of each competitor to determine the boundaries of the contest zone and to remain outside that zone when not participating in a heat (except for permissible paddle out and return to the beach before and after the heat).

D. Appeals Process

Any competitor who suffers a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct as set forth above may appeal to the Board of Directors. Upon review, the Board's decision will be final.

V. Competition Scoring

A. Judging System

A subjective judging system will be used (0-10 points). Points awarded are based on the judging criteria, detailed below, with a range of 0-2 points for a "poor" ride, 2-4 points for a "fair" ride, 4-6 points for an "average" ride, 6-8 points for a "good" ride and 8-10 points for an "excellent" ride. Judging panels will contain 3 judges, a spotter and a Head Judge, with the Head Judge approving all scores for the panel.

B. Start of Ride

When judging standup surfing, a ride will begin to be scored when a surfer's hands leave the rails of his or her surfboard. When judging body boarding, there is no limitation as to body position on the board and the ride will be scored after the head judge designates the body boarder has caught the wave and executed a maneuver.

C. Judging Criteria

The judging criteria shall be: "The surfer must perform radical controlled maneuvers in the critical sections of a wave with speed, power, and flow to maximize scoring potential. Innovative/ progressive surfing as well as the variety of repertoire (maneuvers) will be taken into consideration when rewarding points for waves ridden.

The surfer who executes these criteria with the maximum degree of difficulty and commitment on the waves shall be rewarded with the highest scores."

Each judge's scores should be consistent with the other judges' scores on the judging panel. If a judge's scores are repeatedly inconsistent with the other judges' scores, he/she may be replaced. Please refer to TGSA Judges Course for detailed policy, instructions and guidelines for judging.

D. Head Judge's Responsibilities

- The Head Judge of each panel shall be responsible for:
- Determining which riders and rides are to be scored
- Determining wave possession
- Maintaining an accurate wave count
- Notifying judges of missed rides
- Assisting judges in making accurate scores for the missed rides.
- Approving all judges scores recorded in LiveHeats.

The Head Judge cannot call interference or a paddling interference for a panel as a unit but can approve through the electronic scoring system. The Head Judge can call for the panel:

- a. Up after the commencement of the next heat penalty
- b. Removal of jersey penalty

All missed rides should be averaged by the Head Judge according to the individual's scoring scale. This should be done at or before the end of the heat, as time allows.

E. Wave Counts and Tabulation of Heat Results

Wave counts to be used for tabulation of results are top 2 rides for preliminary rounds and top 2 rides for final heats. The Competition Director, after consultation with the Head Judge, may determine a different number of high waves per heat to be tabulated and this shall be posted and announced prior to the start of the contest.

Upon completion of the heat the Head Judge will finalize approving all scores and the Beach Marshall will double check before ending the heat in the electronic scoring system and starting the next heat. If needed the Head Judge or beach Marshall will consult the Competition Director regarding any penalties or interference calls.

If a ride has been missed, an attempt will be made to identify the missing rides by referring to the electronic scoring system. If the ride is identified to the satisfaction of the head judge, a score will be given the missed ride by:

AVERAGING THE MISSED WAVE ACCORDING TO THE SCORING LEVEL THAT THE JUDGE IN QUESTION USES (INTERPOLATION).

Upon completion of these formalities, the heat may be completed in the electronic scoring system. The scoring waves shall be totaled, and interference penalties deducted. The total shall be placed in the total column. The heat places are then determined by the criteria in the electronics scoring system.

PLEASE NOTE: The head judge, along with a majority of the judging panel will determine the "official" wave count. When no further calculations are required, the results will be finalized in the electronic scoring system.

***All ties will be broken by our electronic scoring system unless we are using judged sheets and tabulation then the below rules apply.**

If, at this point, a tie situation occurs, the tabulator will proceed to break the tie as follows:

1. Compare the relative position of the tied competitors on the tabulator sheet using the plus/minus system. If not broken, then see #2.
2. Tabulate the top one (two for finals) highest wave on the **TIED** judge's sheet **ONLY**.
3. Go to the third, fourth, etc. until all waves are exhausted.

If the tie is not broken by these methods, go back to #2 and repeat for **ALL** judge's sheets. Go to #3, #4, etc.

In the case of three or more athletes tied, repeat this procedure with the goal of deriving one individual who will be the highest placing tied athlete. Once this individual has therefore been eliminated from the procedure, repeat the formulae for the remaining athletes until a clear order of finish for the heat is obtained. If the tie is still not broken by these methods, there will be a ten-minute surf off (top 2 waves) if one or more of the competitors could advance.

F. Checking Results

Competitors may check scores for errors for up to thirty minutes after their heat results are made public. This applies to all heats, including finals. If an error is found, the Competition Director should be notified to have the error corrected. Unless there is an unresolved protest, all results become final after the thirty- minute time period.

VI. WAVE POSSESSION AND INTERFERENCE

It is the intent of this rule to encourage all competitors to strive toward situations where there is only one competitor at a time in the wave shoulder. The judges will strictly enforce this rule. Competitors are hereby alerted to the severity of the penalty and the strictness with which it will be enforced.

A. Basic Rule

1. The competitor deemed to have inside position for a wave has unconditional right of way for the entire duration of the ride. Interference will be called if during the ride a majority of the judges feel that a fellow competitor has possibly hindered the scoring potential of the competitor deemed to have right of way on the wave.
2. Anyone, who catches a wave in front of the competitor that has the right of way, has a chance to ride or kick out of the wave without being called for interference, unless he/she hinders the scoring potential of the competitor with right of way by any means including excessive hassling, leash pulling, or breaking down a wave section.

B. Right of way

Wave possession or right of way will vary slightly under the following categories as determined by the nature of the contest venue but basically it is the responsibility of each individual judge to determine which competitor has the inside position based on whether the wave is a superior right or left. If at the initial point of take-off neither the right or the left can be deemed superior, then the right of way will go to the first competitor who makes a definite turn in their chosen direction.

1. Point Break - 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.
2. One Peak Break (reef or beach) – If there is a single well defined peak with both a right and a left available at the initial point of take-off and neither the right or the left can be deemed superior then the right of way will go to the first competitor who makes a definite turn in their chosen direction (by making an obvious right or left turn). A second competitor may go in the opposite direction on the same wave without incurring a penalty provided they do not interfere with the first competitor who has established right of way (i.e., second competitor may not cross the path of the first competitor to gain the opposite side of the peak unless he/she does so without possibly hindering in the opinion of the majority of the judges, the first competitor).
3. Beach Break – With multiple random peaks. In these conditions wave possession may vary slightly according to the nature of the individual wave.
 - a. With two peaks there will be cases where one swell will have two separate defines peaks far apart that eventually meet at the same point. Although two competitors may each have inside position on their respective peaks the competitor who first gains wave possession shall be deemed to have right of way and the second competitor must give way by cutting back or kicking out before hindering the right of way competitor.
 - b. If two competitors gain wave possession at the same time on separate peaks of the same wave and eventually meet, then
 1. If they both give way by cutting back or kicking out so neither is hindered there will be no penalty.
 2. If they cross paths and collide or hinder one another the judges will penalize the competitor who has been the aggressor at the point of contact.
 3. If neither competitor gives way by cutting back or kicking out and both share responsibility for the confrontation then a double interference will be called.

C. The right of way criteria

The choice of right of way criteria for each of the above possible situations is the responsibility of the event director and the head judge.

D. Snaking

1. The competitor who is the farthest inside at the initial point of take-off and has established wave possession is entitled to that wave for the duration of his ride, even though another competitor may subsequently take off in the white water behind him/her. The judges will not penalize the competitor because he/she has right of way even though he/she is in front.
2. If the second competitor has not hindered the original competitor with right of way, then the judges may choose not to penalize him/her and will score both competitors rides.
3. If in the opinion of the majority of the judges, the second competitor interfered with the first competitor, who has right of way by causing him/her to pull out or lose the wave or to damage the scoring potential of the

wave, then interference may be called on the second competitor even though he/she is behind the original competitor when the penalty was called.

E. Paddling Interference

1. A competitor who has the inside position should not be excessively hindered by another competitor paddling for the same wave. Paddling interference may be called if:
 - a. The offending competitor makes contact with or forces the inside competitor to change his/her line while paddling to catch the wave causing possible loss of scoring potential.
 - b. The offending competitor obviously causes a section to break down in front of the inside competitor which would not normally have done so causing possible loss of scoring potential.
 - c. When a competitor is put in a situation while paddling out that he/she cannot get out of the way and a collision occurs due to this, it is up to the judges to call interference based on whether it is felt to be accidental or not.

F. Board Caddying/Competitor Assistance

Board caddying is not allowed. This includes losing your board and having someone retrieve it for you for the specific reason of helping you in your heat. Saving a board from damage is allowed so long as the board isn't paddled, handed, carried or pushed to the competitor. *Penalty DQ (automatic disqualification).*

Other than the micro-grom division, there will be no in-water assistance or in-water coaching allowed. Competitors receiving the assistance of another individual, parent, or coach during any heat will receive a *Penalty DQ (automatic disqualification).*

G. Penalties

1. If a judge thinks interference has taken place, the judge shall enter the interference in the electronic system unless judging on sheets then the following applies, place a triangle around the ride of the offending competitor and draw an arrow to the ride of the competitor who was interfered with. In the case of a paddling interference, the triangle shall be placed on the line between the appropriate rides for the offending competitor and filled with P. I. (no ride/no score) and the arrow still drawn. *P.I. will be counted as a score of 0 and that score will count as one of the rides tabulated for the offending competitor.*
2. If a majority of scoring judges, 2 of 3 or 3 of 5 scoring judges rule interference, the electronic scoring system will automatically tabulate the penalty unless we are using judging sheets then the following applies, the tabulators shall give the offending competitor a score of zero for the ride on each of the judge's sheets and that score will count as one of the rides tabulated for the offending competitor.

VII. AWARDS

Trophies will be awarded to first through fourth places in all divisions in points-rated contests, except Open divisions. Open division winners may receive trophies and/or cash prizes, as established by the Board or Directors. Awards in non-points-rated events will be as determined by the Board of Directors. Other awards may be Men and Women Iron Surfer, top judge, and sportsmanship awards. The Iron Surfer Award, when presented, is awarded to the competitor with the highest placing in at least 3 divisions. Various prizes donated by sponsors, when available, may be awarded to finalists, in drawings at random or by other methods.

VIII. PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS

All protests and complaints by competitors must be in writing and handed to the TGSA Competition Director to be considered for possible action. Only a competitor entered in the division may file a protest. The protest must be filed within 30 minutes of the incident being protested. The Surfer Representative may be consulted to help present the protest or complaint. All written protests will be handled by the TGSA Competition Director and one of the following: First the Head Judge, second the TGSA District Director, third any TGSA official. The decision of the officials will be final. No heat that involves a competitor whose advancement is under protest will take place prior to the resolution of the protest. There will be no re-runs of protested heats. Heats may only be re-run for weather related incidents and only at the discretion of the Head Judge and the Competition Director. All rulings by the Head Judge and Competition Director with regard to heat re-runs are final.

IX. TEAM COMPETITION RULES

1. All Teams must complete a Team Entry Form and submit it to the contest officials prior to the start of the first heat of the contest. No changes may be made to a Team Entry form after the contests starts.
2. Teams may consist of no more than 6 and no less than 4 individuals.

3. No individual can be entered in more than 2 divisions for one team but can be entered on more than one team. For example, Joe Shred could enter Junior Men and Men for Big Bad Surf Shop – Team A and Senior LB and Men’s LB for Big Bad Surf Shop Team B.
4. Team points are earned only when a team member makes a final (places 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th but not 5th in the case of a 5-person final). The larger the number of competitors in a division the larger the possible points a competitor can earn for his or her team.
5. Micro-Grom (assisted) Divisions are **not eligible** for team competition points.

TABLE OF TEAM POINTS AWARDED:

	Number of Competitors in the Division								
	<u>1-6</u>	<u>7-12</u>	<u>13-18</u>	<u>19-24</u>	<u>25-30</u>	<u>31-36</u>	<u>37-42</u>	<u>43-48</u>	<u>49 +</u>
1st Place	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
2nd Place	9	14	19	24	29	34	39	44	49
3rd Place	8	13	18	23	28	33	38	43	48
4th Place	7	12	17	22	27	32	37	42	47

X. Stand Up Paddle Judging Criteria

A. Introduction:

SUP surfing is unique and can be done in many ways but for competition it is important to establish criteria that sets it apart from just longboarding. The paddle is a tool and a big part of the sport therefore it is not just used to help catch a wave, but is necessary as a tool [aid] for riding the waves [similar to a Ski pole when skiing]. Too many times we see great SUP longboarders just catching the wave using the paddle, then ripping into their maneuvers without using the paddle any further in any practical [beneficial to performance] way. Often it is just “held”.

B. Judging Criteria:

A surfer must demonstrate board handling skills in the transition phase [description below] and the surfing phase [description below] of their performance, for it to be considered complete. **A surfer must perform radical controlled maneuvers, using the paddle as a key tool, in the critical sections of a wave with speed, power and flow to maximize scoring potential. Innovative / progressive surfing as well as variety of repertoire [maneuvers], wave negotiation and use of the paddle to increase the intensity of the maneuvers, will all be taken into account when awarding points for SUP surfing. The SUP surfer who executes these criteria with the maximum degree of difficulty and commitment on the waves will be rewarded with the higher scores.** For Stand-Up Paddle Surfing [SUP] a wave is deemed to be begun, when in the opinion of the judges, the rider is no longer solely under paddle power but rather has harnessed and begun to be carried along by the power of the wave.

C. SUP Scoring Considerations:

1. The judging scale will be 10 points with normal TGSA contest rules applying.
2. **The aggregate of the two best rides will decide the final score for each surfer** and interference calls adjudicated according to the TGSA Surfing Rule book.
3. Good SUP transition time [end of one wave to paddle-in to next one] should be spent standing and paddling with good technique and stable wave negotiation. Kneeling, lying or sitting whilst paddling, unless necessary for safety is regarded as bad SUP form. Note the critical element: To the best of a rider’s ability he / she are expected to stand up on the board at all times throughout the heat, unless the situation of safety dictates otherwise.
4. Entry into the wave should be by paddling in the standing position to enable the maximum score.

D. SUP Competition

1. **Average scores for all maneuvers will be allocated unless the paddle is used as a pivot or tool in maneuvers**, then power, radical moves, critical sections and degree of difficulty are the deciding factors.
2. Competitors will start from the beach unless instructed otherwise by the Competition Director.

3. "Using the paddle": The paddle is correctly used in SUP surfing to do three main things: it is used in turns as a brace, a pivot, and a force multiplier. **A surfer will be scored higher when he uses the paddle in some or all of these three ways to achieve sharper or more powerful turns.** Tricks such as twirling or otherwise using the paddle in a non-functional manner will earn little or no extra score for the surfer.

4. Traditional long board surfing compared to progressive SUP surfing techniques: Because the paddle allows large SUP boards to be turned with high rates of speed and power, stand-up paddle surfing is deemed to be, at the competition level, a performance centered branch of surfing, much like conventional short boarding. Footwork, nose riding and style points will be scored, but this will be done in their relationship to the criteria of degree of difficulty and critical nature of wave positioning.

5. Officials Responsibility: As SUP is a new discipline of surfing in terms of competition, it is the responsibility of every Competition Director and Judge to promote the above ideas and criteria, to ensure all competitors develop a standard approach and understanding of what is expected from an elite performer in SUP.