



INTERNATIONAL RAFTING FEDERATION

RACE RULES

From March 2015



INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose of Rules

- a. This document provides the rules and regulations that govern the sport of Rafting. Rules are decided by the Sport and Competition Committee (S&C Com) under the authority of Chapter V of the [Bylaws](#) of the International Rafting Federation (IRF).
- b. Race Rules are created to ensure fair play - a universally understood concept which underpins all of sport. Without fairness, sport is devoid of any meaning or purpose. Race Rules are also created to encourage good sportsmanship concepts such as respect, equality, integrity, tolerance and excellence.
Should any Rule in this document appear to conflict with another Rule, or appear to be unclear in its meaning, clause 1.b. (above) shall be used to determine the Rule's basic intent.

2. Authority

- a. The Race Rules represent the ultimate authority in regulating how IRF raft races shall be conducted.
- b. No IRF Official, Race Organiser, or other Event Official can unilaterally supersede this authority. Race Rules may be altered only by the S&C Com or in rare cases by a special session of the IRF Board of Directors.

3. Race Rule Exceptions

- a. All Race Rules must be followed unless an exception is granted by authority of the S&C Com or a race Jury (as detailed below in Rule 3.b), or by a special session of the Board of Directors.
- b. An exception may be granted by the S&C Com if it is clearly demonstrated that the exception is necessary for the good of the sport of Rafting. A Jury may add, change or adjust a Race Rule temporarily for a specific race or Event for the same reason.
- c. If a Race Rule exception is granted, all persons affected by the exception must be made aware of it in a timeous manner.
- d. The granting of an exception does not imply that the exception is permanent or will continue to be allowed in future Events.

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DEFINITIONS

- IRF = International Rafting Federation.
- BOD = IRF Board of Directors.
- S&C Com = IRF Sport & Competition Committee.
- National Federation = An IRF recognised national governing body for the sport of Rafting.
- Member Nation = A nation whose National Federation is a full or provisional member of the IRF in good standing.
- Region = A geographical area used by the IRF to broadly divide and manage National Federations by continent. Regions are currently divided as Europe, Pan-America, Australasia and Africa.
- Event = Any IRF recognised competition.
- Level = Used to distinguish Events by level of importance. Current Levels are; A, B, C, and D.
- Division = Used to divide an Event by age or ability. Current Divisions are: Youth, Junior, Open, and Masters.
- Category = Used to sub-divide a Division by Sex. Current Categories are: Men, Women, and Mixed.
- Development Phase = Phase during which an Event, Division or Category is in development. To encourage growth during the Development Phase, Race Rules that govern participation are allowed additional flexibility.
- Permanent Domicile = The place where a person has his/her permanent principal home, and to which he/she returns or intends to return.
- Competitor = A person who has legally entered, and has been duly registered and accepted, as a race participant in an IRF Event.
- Team = A rafting team that has legally entered, and has been duly registered and accepted, in an IRF Event.
- Team Member = A Competitor who is a member of a Team.
- R6/R4 = Raft normally raced with a 6 person Team / Raft normally raced with a 4 person Team.
- Organiser = Organising body to whom the IRF has awarded the right and responsibility for running an IRF Event.
- Host = The Organiser, National Federation, Member Nation or Region that is hosting or sponsoring an Event.
- WRC = World Rafting Championships.
- National Selection = Event used by a Member Nation to select the Team(s) that shall represent them at a WRC.

All IRF Member Nations in good standing are eligible to compete in any IRF Event provided that they meet the specific requirements of the Event, and the requirements that are detailed in these Race Rules. A-, B- and C-Level Events are restricted to R4 and R6. This applies to all disciplines.

The IRF will support any type of raft race worldwide if a timely request is made, and if the Event is run according to the Declaration and the Statutes of the IRF.

Member Nations are encouraged to contact the IRF Administration if they have questions about eligibility.

A. Race Levels

1. A-Level competitions (World Rafting Championships):

- a. Open Division:
 - i. In R4 and R6. Held in alternating years.
 - ii. Must have at least 3 Regions represented.
 - iii. Must have a minimum of 8 nations competing in the Men's Category, and 4 in the Women's Category.
 - iv. Each Member Nation may enter only one Team in each Category.
 - v. Teams must be fairly selected and nominated by their National Federation by winning fair and credible National Selections.

- b. Youth, Junior and Masters Division (In Development Phase) (Junior Division will no longer be included from 2016 onwards per S&C Com decision June 2015):
 - i. In R4 and R6. Ideally held in alternating years.
 - ii. Events may be held separately or consecutively with the Open Division.
 - iii. Should have at least two Regions represented.
 - iv. Should have a minimum of 6 Member Nations competing in the Men's Category, and 3 Member Nations competing in the Women's Category.
 - v. Event Organisers may allow Member Nations to enter more than one Team in each Category of each Division if approved by the S&C Com. Approval will be decided on an Event-by-Event basis, to be announced ideally no later than one year prior to the Event.
 - vi. All Youth and Junior Division Events should be limited to venues under Class IV in difficulty.
 - vii. All other Race Rules should be applied accordingly for the Youth, Junior and Masters Divisions.
 - viii. Teams should be fairly selected and nominated by their National Federation by winning fair and credible National Selections.
 - ix. If there is only one Team entered in a Category, the Event Organiser may at their option, choose to move the single Team into another Category.
 - x. If any Categories are combined or cancelled, the following guidelines shall apply:
 1. If there is only one Team entered in a Youth or Junior Category, both Categories shall be combined into the Junior Category.(eg one women's team in Youth would then combine with the Junior category)

2. If there is only one Team entered in the Masters Women's Category, then this Team shall be moved into the Masters Men's Category.
 3. If a Member Nation's Team must be moved into a Category where they have already entered a Team, it is then accepted that the Member Nation shall have 2 Teams in that Category.
 4. If any Categories are combined or cancelled, the Event Organiser shall inform Competitors and the S&C Com no later than the closing date for entries for that Event.
- xi. Only overall medals need to be given if there are less than 6 Teams in any Category of a Division.

2. B-Level competitions (Regional Championships and World Cups):

- a. Euro Championships:
 - i. Held at least bi-annually.
 - ii. Europe Region Member Nations may enter two Teams in each Category of each Division. These Teams must be fairly selected and nominated by their National Federation by winning fair and credible National Selections.
 - iii. There must be a minimum of 3 nations competing in a Category for it to be recognised by the IRF.
 - iv. Only Teams from the Europe Region will be scored for regional awards or be awarded regional medals. (Consequently in the H2H discipline, Teams from other Regions should not race against Teams from the Europe Region unless all Member Nations of the Europe Region agree, as this will alter the points for the overall results.)
- b. Pan-American, African and Australasian Championships: (In Development Phase)
 - i. Ideally to be held at least bi-annually.
 - ii. Organisers may allow any number of Teams from a Member Nation in each Category of each Division.
 - iii. Ideally there should be a minimum of 3 Member Nations competing in a Category for it to be recognised by the IRF.
 - iv. Only Regional Teams from the Host Region will be scored for regional awards or be awarded regional medals. (Consequently in the H2H discipline, Teams from other Regions should not race against Teams from the Host Region unless all Member Nations of the Host Region agree, as this will alter the points for the overall results.)
- c. World Cup (In Development Phase)
 - i. In R4 and R6. Ideally consisting of a series of 3-5 races held each year, in a minimum of two Regions.
 - ii. Organisers may allow any number of Teams from Member Nations in each Division.

- iii. World Cup Events may be combined with other B-Level Events that are in Development Phase (Pan-American, African and Australasian Championships). In the case of combined Events, separate medals should be awarded.

3. C-Level competitions (International Rafting Festivals, WRC Pre-Events and similar):

- a. Includes any international raft race held according to the Race Rules.
- b. Competitors may be of any nationality, country of residence, or Sex.
- c. Competitors and Teams are not required to be members of a National Federation, but it is highly recommended.
- d. A Team carries the nationality of the majority of its Team Members. In the case of no majority, the Team Captain shall decide on the nationality.
- e. WRC Pre-Events:
 - i. Teams must be members of their National Federation, and their National Federation must be a Member Nation of the IRF
 - ii. If the Organiser sets any specific conditions or limits on participation (e.g. Limits on number of Teams per nation), the conditions or limits must be published at least 3 months in advance of the Event.

4. D-level competitions (National Events):

- a. Includes any national raft race held according to the IRF Race Rules.
- b. Competitors and Teams should be members of their National Federation.
- c. If the Event is to be a National Selection, all Teams must be given a fair chance to enter and win, and the Event must be run in a fair and credible manner.
- d. It is highly recommended (but not mandatory) that national raft races follow IRF Race Rules in order to ensure a high standard of racing.

B. Teams and Competitors

1. For A- and B-Level Events:
 - a. Only a Competitor who is a member of their National Federation, who in turn is a Member Nation of the IRF, is eligible to compete in an IRF A- or B-Level Event.
 - b. A Competitor may not compete for more than one National Federation in any one calendar year. This rule does not apply in the case of changing residency or citizenship by marriage. In all cases of a change in residency or citizenship, once confirmed, the former National Federation has no right to prevent a Competitor from racing in an Event.
 - c. If a Competitor wishes to compete for a Member Nation at an A- or B-Level Event and they do not hold a passport or official permanent residency in that nation, they must:
 - i. provide proof that they are permanently domiciled in that foreign nation to the satisfaction of the S&C Com.
 - ii. Provide authorisation from their Federation of origin unless he/she has domiciled for 2 years or more in this foreign nation or has married a citizen from that foreign nation.
 - iii. Have competed in the national selections of the foreign nation.
 - iv. Bring such cases to the attention of the IRF before the announced deadline date for Team entries.
 - d. If demanded by the Organiser, Jury, S&C Com, or their designees, Competitors must provide proof of one of the following:
 - i. they are a legal citizen of the nation that they represent
 - ii. they are a legal permanent resident of the nation they represent
 - iii. the S&C Com has recognised that they have established a permanent domicile in the nation they represent
to the Organiser, Jury, S&C Com, or their designees.
2. Competitors are allowed to race in both the R4 and the R6 in a single Event if both are offered.
3. Competitors are permitted to race in more than one Division during a single Event if they qualify. In every instance, the Competitor must comply with all race requirements. No races will be delayed or rescheduled to accommodate the Competitor.
4. Team Members and Reserves:
 - a. Each R6 Team or R4 Team is permitted one Reserve, who must be registered as a Team Member prior to the start of the Event.
 - b. The final 7 (R6) or 5 (R4) Team Members cannot be changed after they are officially registered at the Event.
 - c. ONLY the registered Team Members are allowed to compete for a Team. Multiple substitutions are allowed during the Event, however substitutions are not permitted during a single discipline.

- d. Infractions of any part of this rule will result in a disqualification from the Event.
5. Mixed Teams must compete under the Men's Category unless a Mixed Team Category exists.
6. Competitors may participate in an IRF Event in the calendar year in which they turn 15 years old, but not earlier.
7. A Competitor who is legally defined as a Minor (usually defined as a person under the age of 18), must comply with all domestic laws and regulations applicable to Minors at the Event. Similarly, the Event's Organiser shall comply with all laws and regulations for Minors (e.g. the Organiser shall arrange that all required waivers etc. are signed in advance), and National Federations shall oversee that their Competitors comply with the laws and regulations that govern Minors in their home nation.
8. Youth (U19) Division: A Competitor is eligible to compete in the Youth Division beginning the calendar year when he/she turns 15 (as in rule B.6) until the calendar year when he/she turns 19. All Competitors shall be of the prescribed age in order to compete in the Youth Division.
9. Junior (U23) Division (**Junior Division will no longer be included from 2016 onwards per S&C Com decision June 2015**): A Competitor is eligible to compete in the Junior Division beginning the calendar year when he/she turns 15 (as in rule B.6) until the calendar year when he/she turns 23. All Competitors shall be of the prescribed age in order to compete in the Junior Division.
10. Masters Division: A Competitor is eligible to compete in the Masters Division beginning the calendar year when he/she turns 40. All Competitors shall be of the prescribed age in order to compete in the Masters Division.
11. Open Division: A Competitor is eligible to compete in the Open Division beginning the calendar year when he/she turns 15 (as in rule B.6). No other age restrictions apply, however younger Competitors may be asked to demonstrate their skills proficiency to the Safety Director before being allowed to compete in the Open Division.
12. WRC Team selections and eligibility:
 - a. A Team that wins their nation's National Selections (which are not necessarily their National Championships) is eligible to compete as their nation's National Team in a WRC.
 - b. To remain eligible, the National Team cannot replace more than 2 Team Members of the original Team that won the National Selections (unless selections are more than 1 Event).
 - c. If the winning Team is unable to attend the WRC, the National Selections 2nd place Team is to be offered the spot, and so on down the order. This decision must be made timeously (at least 6 weeks ahead of the WRC) so that the alternate Team has sufficient time to prepare for attending the WRC.
 - d. Where possible, Open and Masters National Selections should be run on venues with white water no less than Class IV in difficulty and Youth and Junior National Selections on Class III. The IRF must be confident that WRC National Teams are capable of paddling the Class of white water found at the venue on which that WRC is to be held. The IRF S&C Com, the Event Organiser, or the Safety Director may refuse a Team's entry if their paddling capabilities are in doubt.

- e. Any deviations from point a, b, c and d above by a National Federation should be in the interest of the Competitors, and if queried, deviations must be explained to, and accepted by, the IRF S&C Com.

C. IRF Competition Calendar

1. General

- a. The IRF will maintain a competition calendar to the best of its ability on the IRF website (www.internationalrafting.com).
- b. Events must be scheduled on the IRF competition calendar in order to be recognised by the IRF.
- c. Event Organisers or National Federations must ensure that the details for their Event are submitted to the IRF Administration well in advance. These details should include contact information, dates, venue location, disciplines, class of white water for each discipline, type of race (R4, R6), accommodation options, transport options, entry fees, training possibilities and other relevant information.

2. A- and B-Level Events

- a. A- and B-Level Events require that an Organiser submit a competitive bid.
- b. WRC Bids must be received 2 years in advance of the first day of the calendar year of the Event. (e.g. WRC 2017 bids must be received by 1-1-2015).
- c. Bidding requirements may be found on the IRF website or requested from the IRF Administration.

D. Minimum Entries

- 1. If the number of Teams or Member Nations entered in an Event are less than the required minimum number, an Organiser may apply for an exception to the S&C Com to have the Event recognised.
- 2. It is not necessary that the required minimum number of Teams or Member Nations finish in all of the disciplines of the Event for the results to be valid.

E. Race Format

1. General:

- a. Rafting competitions consist of 4 disciplines: - Sprint, Head to Head (H2H), Slalom and Downriver.
- b. The Start and Finish Lines in all disciplines must be clearly marked, preferably at least 24 hours before the race. Acceptable methods include:
 - i. An overhead line across the water. The line should be flagged, or marked with “Start” or “Finish” banners for maximum visibility.
 - ii. Highly visible buoys, poles or flags placed on both sides of the race course which clearly indicate the Start or Finish Line.
 - iii. Any other method approved by the S&C Com.
- c. The Race Director has a right to change the Start or Finish Lines due to unusual circumstances (e.g. changes in water level).
- d. In A- and B-Level Events:
 - i. All disciplines must be raced.
 - ii. The order of the disciplines should be: Sprint-H2H-Slalom-Downriver.
 - iii. The Downriver race for Open and Masters Divisions must include at least one Class IV or Class V rapid. Open and Masters Teams that are selected to compete in A- and B-Levels must be competent in Class IV or higher white water.
 - iv. The Downriver race for Youth and Junior Divisions should not include rapids higher than Class III.
- e. In C- and D-Level Events:
 - i. There is no obligation to race every discipline.
 - ii. It is preferred, but not obligatory, for the Open and Masters Downriver race to include a Class IV or V rapid.
 - iii. The Downriver race for Youth and Junior Divisions must not include rapids higher than Class III.

2. Sprint

- a. Every rafting competition should start with the Sprint.
- b. The starting order of the Sprint has to be drawn out of a hat.
- c. The start interval between Teams may not exceed 3 minutes and the duration of a single run should be from 1 minute to 3 minutes.
- d. Training runs in the Sprint are not mandatory.

3. Head-to-Head (H2H)

- a. Teams race in pairs, head to head in a “knock-out” elimination format. It is recommended that the H2H immediately follow the Sprint.
- b. The H2H should be held on a venue where scouting the course is viable.
- c. All Teams qualify for the H2H, nevertheless only a limited number of Teams will proceed to Stage 2 of the competition. Based on results of the Sprint, some Teams will proceed directly to Stage 2, while other Teams must first compete in Stage 1 in order to proceed further. The H2H System Form (Addendum 1) defines which Teams shall proceed directly, and which Teams need to compete in Stage 1 ([see the form, and other additional relevant information that is included in the same document](#)). Stage 1 consists of a regular knock-out format of the last 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 etc. The race order is specified in the H2H Race Order Form (see the form/forms).
- d. In Stage 1 and the first round of Stage 2, the Team with the faster time in the Sprint is awarded lane choice. Thereafter the Team with the faster time in the previous round is awarded lane choice.
- e. The winners of the semi-finals shall race in the “A Final” to determine first and second positions. The losers of the semi-finals shall race in the “B Final” to determine third and fourth positions. The final ranking of all other Teams is determined by their time compared against the time of the other Teams that were eliminated in the same round. For example -- the 4 Teams eliminated in the quarter finals are ranked by their times in that round; and based on their time, they will take the positions 5th to 8th.
- f. Race intervals in a single round should not exceed 3 minutes and the duration of a single run should be between 1 and 2 minutes.
- g. Teams late for their start may forfeit their run.
- h. Practice runs in the H2H are mandatory.
- i. Starting positions and lanes:
 - i. The Start Lane is defined as the unobstructed section of the course leading from the starting position to the first constricting course feature (such as a rapid, rock, bend or other common obstacle) where H2H opponents are most likely to have first physical contact. It is the duty of the Jury to ensure that the two starting positions and the Start Lanes are as equal as humanly possible. .
 - ii. At A-level Events, “Test Teams” must be used to test the Start Lanes. When possible, the Test Teams will be timed in each Start Lane for comparison. If timing is not possible, then two Teams who are evenly matched shall race each other twice, with the matched Teams testing each Start Lane for comparison. Testing will need to be repeated until the Jury is satisfied that the Start Lanes are as equal as humanly possible. On venues where the water levels fluctuate, testing will need to be conducted as near to the race time as possible.
 - iii. The Race Director shall decide on the method for selecting the Teams needed for testing, however no Team will be forced to participate against their will. The selection methods may include, but are not limited to:
 1. Selected from suitable local teams that are not competing;

2. Selected from evenly matched competing Teams;
 3. Selected from random Teams drawn out of a hat;
 4. Selected from Teams that are available at the time of testing
- iv. Teams chosen for these test runs are to cooperate with the Jury and race to the best of their ability so that the best test results are achieved.
 - v. The Race Director or Jury may choose to divide the Start Lanes with a clearly marked line of buoys. Crossing the marked line after the race start by any part of boat, body or equipment will result in a 10 second penalty. When no dividing line exists, Teams may engage in legal contact at any time after the start signal is given.

4. Slalom

a. Scoring

- i. Each Team is allowed two runs. The faster run is used to determine a Team's score.
- ii. In the case of a tie, the times of the slower runs are compared to determine the winner.

b. Start and Finish

- i. On A- and B- level Events, the Start and Finish shall use an electronic timing system.
- ii. If possible, the starting order should be in reverse order according to the total previous achieved points, so the highest ranked Team will start last.
- iii. The start intervals between Teams should be between 1 and 4 minutes.
- iv. The finish line is also judged.
- v. Training runs in the raft slalom are not mandatory.

c. Slalom Course Design

- i. The length of the course should allow the duration of a single run to be between 3 and 4 minutes.
- ii. The course should be constructed on a section of river or waterway where scouting is viable.
- iii. There should be a minimum of 8 gates and a maximum of 14 gates of which a minimum of two and a maximum of six should be upstream gates, distributed equally for left and right approach.
- iv. For A- and B-Level Events, the final positioning of the gates is to be decided by 3 persons – the course designer and two non-local, suitable persons appointed by the S&C Com or the Jury.
- v. The course should be ready for inspection by the Jury, ideally 24 hours but no less than 2 hours, prior to the first run.
- vi. The course may be changed by a vote from the Jury.

d. Gate Construction and Marking

- i. Gates are constructed using two poles or a single pole.
- ii. Gates should hang so that the bottom of the pole is between 50 cm and 1 meter above the water (considering pulsing of water and type of raft and with respect to fair and easy judging).

- iii. The minimum distance between two poles should be 2.50 meters.
- iv. Single pole gates must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 1. They may be used for upstream gates only.
 - 2. They must use a second pole as a visual reference for fair and easy judging of the gate line. A visual reference pole is not part of the gate, is not subject to penalization and must not interfere with gate negotiation.
 - 3. The visual reference pole must be secluded/confined from the public to prevent disturbance, and cannot be changed or disturbed during or between the two slalom runs.
- v. Downstream and upstream gates must be easily distinguished from each other. Downstream gates should be painted with green and white rings, and upstream gates painted with red and white rings.
- vi. The minimum length of gate poles is 2 meters. The recommended pole diameter is 70 mm but must be no less than 50 mm, and of sufficient weight that motion caused by wind is not excessive.
- vii. Each gate must be clearly numbered with black paint against a white or yellow background. The number plate, which should be fastened inside the top of each gate, must have the number inscribed on both sides. The plate should measure a minimum of 30 cm x 30 cm, and the number should measure 20 cm in height. On the side of the plate opposite the direction of correct negotiation, a diagonal red line must be painted across the number.

e. **Gate Negotiation**

- i. The 'gate line' is defined as the two dimensional area delineated by a slalom gate and the water's surface. This area may vary in size and angle, depending upon whether a gate pole is static or in motion.
 - 1. When a gate has two poles, the gate line area is located between the two poles.
 - 2. When a gate has a single pole, the gate line area is projected horizontally from the gate pole towards the visual reference pole. The side of the gate without a pole is not delineated.
 - 3. In all circumstances, whether a pole is static or in motion, the gate line area is projected vertically from outside edge of the bottom of a pole to the water's surface.
- ii. A gate is considered entered the moment that a Team Member's whole head has crossed the gate line.
- iii. The negotiation of a gate begins when the gate is entered or a pole is touched.
- iv. The negotiation of a gate ends when a higher numbered gate is negotiated (entered or touched), or the finish line is crossed.

- v. **To negotiate a gate correctly:**
 - 1. The gate must be negotiated in the correct numerical order.
 - 2. All Team Members must be in the raft.

3. The whole head of every Team Member must cross the gate line during a single attempt.
4. No head may cross the gate line in the wrong direction.
5. A Team Member cannot touch a pole with any part of the body, equipment, paddle or raft.

f. **Slalom Penalties**

A Team may be penalised a maximum of 50 points for each gate. A gate that is negotiated correctly as defined in Rule E.4.e.v, will not be penalized. Teams late for the start may forfeit their run.

i. **Five (5) Point Penalty**

1. If a gate pole is touched with any part of the body, equipment, paddle or raft. Repeated touching of the same (or both) gate pole(s) is only penalised once.

ii. **Fifty (50) Point Penalty**

1. If the finish line is crossed without all Team Members in the raft.
2. For each gate that is negotiated without all Team Members in the raft.
3. For each gate the raft passes upside down through the gate.
4. For each gate where the whole head of each Team Member does not cross the gate line during a negotiation attempt.
5. For each gate where a Team Member's whole head crosses the gate line in the wrong direction.
6. For each gate that is not negotiated before a higher numbered gate is negotiated or the finish line is crossed.
7. For the intentional displacement of a pole to allow the negotiation of a gate. Intentional displacement is defined as pushing a pole with an abnormal or unexpected action (for example with a paddle or body motion), so that a Team Member is able to negotiate the gate when they are not in a position to do so.

5. Downriver race

- a. The Downriver race is the most demanding of all disciplines and therefore highest ranked in the point system. Training runs in the Downriver race are mandatory!
- b. The total duration of a Downriver race should be between 20 to 60 minutes depending on the rapids and access to the river (the duration of the Downriver race should be submitted at the time of proposal to the IRF).
- c. The race should be started in groups of between 4 and 8 rafts depending on the venue conditions. However, if the possibility exists for more than 8 rafts to start simultaneously, then this configuration should be chosen.
- d. The Start Line should be as fair as possible for every Team. If venue conditions do not permit this, Teams will be allowed to select their starting position in order from highest ranked to lowest ranked according to the total previous achieved points.
- e. If multiple groups are raced one immediately after the other, the highest ranked Teams will race in the first heat, the next ranked Teams in the second, and so on.
- f. Intervals between the groups should be a minimum of one minute.

- g. The results of the Downriver race are determined by the final racing times irrespective of starting position or group.
- h. Le Mans starts can be used if there is a beach at the venue with sufficient space for Competitors to run towards the lined up rafts at the shore. Rafts shall be lined up according to each Teams ranking. All Competitors must stand behind a clearly marked line before the start signal is given.
- i. Yachting starts are allowed where the venue has sufficient space for all rafts in a start group to cross the Start Line side-by-side. Slalom poles or buoys should be used to mark the Start Lanes. Teams are allowed to approach the Start Line at any speed they desire, but if a Team crosses the Start Line before the start signal is given, a False Start will be called against the Team.
- j. To prevent False Starts (except in the case of a Yachting Start), each raft should be held back by a Pre-Starter (water starts).
- k. Teams late for the start may forfeit the race.
- l. If a Team is penalised for illegally blocking another Team (Rule F.3), the Team that was illegally blocked shall have 10 seconds subtracted from their total time for each blocking infraction.

F. General Rules for Competition

1. A raft must be upright and all Team Members must be inside the raft (with feet outside of the water) when crossing the finish line. Penalty for infringement: 50 seconds.
2. When an organiser issues competitors a raft for a discipline, it then becomes the responsibility of the team to ensure that the raft is in race-ready condition at the start. If a raft is discovered to be defective, the team must advise race officials as soon as the problem is discovered so that a replacement can be issued. Teams that do not advise race officials of a defect within 5 minutes of their start, will receive a DNS if they are unable to start. The organizer is not responsible if a raft deflates or is damaged during the run. No re run will be allowed.
3. Intentional contact between paddle to paddle, paddle to person, paddle to raft, or person to person is illegal. Intentional raft to raft contact (ramming) is allowed. Penalty per infringement: 10 seconds.
4. Intentional blocking of a Team wishing to pass is illegal. Intentional blocking is defined as the intentional changing of direction more than once, with the intended aim of impeding the progress of another raft. Penalty per infringement: 10 seconds.
5. Should a Team Member be unable to continue racing due to injury, the Team may only continue once the injured Team Member has been handed over to the care of Event safety/medical personnel.
6. Outside assistance (by persons other than Team Members) is prohibited during the competition with the exception of dangerous situations. Penalty for infringement: disqualification from the run.
7. After runs, Teams must, if requested, assist Event personnel in carrying rafts back to the start or loading the trailers for transport. Arrangements will be stated at the previous Captains Meeting.
8. Captains Meetings for A- and B-Level Events:
 - a. The first Captains Meeting must be held the night before the first official day of the Event. The Event program/schedule is to be provided to all Team Captains at that time.
 - b. Subsequent Captains Meetings should be held the day prior to each competitive discipline.
 - c. Event Organisers are to provide written minutes to all Captains at the end of all Captains Meetings, or as soon after the meeting as possible. Minutes should highlight any important Event details that were discussed during the Captains Meeting, and any deviations or changes from earlier decisions.
 - d. The Captains Meeting room should be separate and isolated, with no unrelated activities or distractions occurring during the meetings.
 - e. Only Captains, Managers/Coaches, and where needed, their interpreters, are allowed into the Captains Meetings. Exceptions are to be applied for to the Chief Judge.
 - f. Captains are to sign off on the meetings minutes (as per Rule F.7.c).
9. Captains Meetings for C- and D-Level Events:
 - a. Should be held the day prior to each competitive discipline.
 - b. During National Selections or other important Events. Event Organisers should provide written minutes to all Captains at the end of all Captains Meetings (as per Rule F.7.c).

10. In every discipline, the timing begins when the Chief Starter gives the command "GO" and the Pre-Starter(s) simultaneously release the raft(s) OR when first part of raft crosses the Start Line. Where the start is not measured electronically, the Chief Starter can ask for paddles to be out of the water until he/she gives the command "GO".
11. The timing stops when any part of the raft first crosses the Finish Line.
12. Electronic timing is mandatory for A- and B-Level Events. Timing and scoring systems must be integrated, so that minimum manual entry is required.
13. Attempting to cheat the start or finish signals, photo cells, or timing systems is illegal. Penalty for infringement: 50 seconds.
14. If a false start occurs, the start must be repeated. If a Team makes two false starts, they are automatically disqualified from the discipline. The vacant starting position will not be filled by another Team.
15. In a case where there is a tie in points and time, Teams will select their starting positions by drawing from a hat or by flipping a coin. If Teams are tied for positions in the Downriver race, they are to be started in the same group where possible.
16. At the end of the competition, in the unlikely case of two Teams having equal overall points, the Slalom score will be used to break the tie.
17. Gate Judges and Section Judges are to be provided with an isolated or roped-off area. Competitors can be penalised for not moving out of this area when requested to do so by any Judge.
18. The Jury reserves the right, and is responsible for, correcting technical judging mistakes before the next discipline starts.
19. For A- and B-Level Events (and suggested for C- and D-Events), the Event Organiser must have a reliable system in place to quickly transfer all penalty sheets to the scoring Team. If there is a failure in this system, the Jury may choose to delay the release of the official results until the penalty sheets have been recovered and examined to ensure that no technical mistakes or unspecific errors have occurred that would affect the scoring.
20. Should any Team or Competitor at an IRF Event be found guilty of bringing the sport of rafting into disrepute, that Team or Competitor or their National Federation may be sanctioned. Such behaviour could include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Indisputable bad sportsmanship or behaviour.
 - b. Flagrant disregard of IRF Race Rules or Event Rules.
 - c. Flagrant disregard of requests made by Race Officials or Event Staff.
 - d. Disrespect of Judges, Jury, Event Staff, or other official personal.
 - e. Behaviour that is disrespectful of the IRF, the sport of rafting, the Event Organisers, Event spectators and/or participants.
21. The Jury at the Event can be advised, by anyone in writing within 24 hours, of an occurrence believed to have brought the sport into disrepute. It should then meet as soon as possible thereafter to hear, separately or jointly, evidence in mitigation and aggravation. The sanction should be appropriate to, and dependent upon, the severity of the offence; and may include but not be limited to:

- a. time penalties
 - b. no points for the discipline
 - c. no points for the entire competition
 - d. expulsion of a Team or Competitor from a discipline or the Event without refund of any entry fees paid
 - e. prohibition from racing a defined number of years at IRF Events
22. If a Team is disqualified from a discipline, the Team will receive no points in that discipline. If a Team is disqualified from the Event, the Team loses the right to compete in the remaining disciplines.

G. Scoring System

1. Teams are awarded points in each discipline according to their finishing position.
2. The overall results are determined by ranking Teams according to the total points they have achieved over the duration of the competition.
3. The maximum points awarded are:

Discipline	Maximum Points
Sprint	100
H2H	200
Slalom	300
Downriver	400
TOTAL	1000

4. The points awarded to each Team are calculated as a percentage of the maximum points available as follows:
 - 1st place - 100%, 2nd place - 88%, 3rd place - 79%, 4th place - 72%
 - 5th to 18th place - less 3% each place, 19th to 32nd place - less 2% for each place. (32nd place will therefore receive 2% of points.)
5. A Team that does not start a race, will receive no score and no points for the race.
6. A Team that does not finish a race, will receive no score and no points for the race.

H. Rafts and Equipment

1. Rafts used in IRF Events are the basic symmetric river raft design used worldwide by various outfitters and whitewater enthusiasts, or rafts provided by the Organisers and approved by the S&C Com.
2. In A- and B-Level Events:
 - a. Event Organisers are to provide identical rafts.

- b. The number of rafts provided should equal at least half of the total number of Teams present, plus one or two spare rafts.
 - c. Rafts used for an individual discipline must be identical in length, width, weight, tube diameter, material construction, and design unless an exception is permitted by the S&C Com.
3. Ideally, all rafts should be self-bailing and meet the following specific requirements:

Type	4-person	6-person
Minimum length	365 cm (12 foot)	425 cm (14 foot)
Minimum width	170 cm	200 cm
Thwarts	2	3
Foot cones	4 - 6	6 - 8
Min. tube diameter	45 cm	50 cm
Minimum weight	40 kg	50 kg

- 4. All rafts must provide a safety line fixed around the outside of the inflated outer tubes. Bow and stern lines are permitted, however any other ropes and rigging are, for safety reasons, strictly prohibited. Spare paddles are allowed to be rigged in the raft if done in a safe manner.
- 5. All rafts must be equipped with foot cones or other acceptable devices for allowing each paddler to stabilise their paddling position. Fixed inflatable thwarts may be used for this purpose unless expressly forbidden by the Safety Director. Ideally, if foot cones are to be fitted they should be fixed by the manufacturer in advance. Open foot loops, straps or ropes are NOT acceptable.
- 6. The inflated floor should be of standard drop stitch or I-beam construction using raft fabric material. Pressure release valves in floors are recommended.
- 7. Every Competitor is free to use his/her own single blade C1 paddle. Oars are prohibited.
- 8. At A-Level Events, and preferably at B-Level Events, the rafts must be checked before each race with a pressure gauge to ensure all rafts are equally inflated. The check should be done once the raft has entered the water.
- 9. Any Competitor found tampering with a raft will receive a time penalty on their Team's next discipline and possibly sanctioning. The time penalty will be decided by the Race Jury and will be in accordance to the severity and type of tampering, and the time length of the next discipline. Tampering entails, but is not limited to:
 - a. Inflating the raft above the specified pressure after it has been checked.
 - b. Blocking release valves.
 - c. Changing the design or structure of a raft in any way to give the Team an advantage.
 - d. Altering the pressure or configuration of another Teams raft without their consent.

I. Bibs and Flags

- 1. A-, and B-Level Events:
 - a. Every Competitor must wear a bib to identify his/her Team's nationality. Bibs must have the national flag with the abbreviation of the nation printed on the front – minimum size must be 15 x 23 cm (e.g. USA-1, GER-2, RUS-1, ITA-2, NZL-1, ZIM-2, BRA-1, etc.). The back side and the lower front side is reserved for sponsor logos only.

- b. Each Team Member is fully responsible for his/her bib. A deposit may be required from each Team when bibs are issued. If a Competitor is not wearing their bib while racing, their Team will be fined a \$50 fee, or given a 10 second penalty.
 - c. At A-Level Events and Euro Champs, the front of each raft must display the national flag of the participating Team. The flag must be at least 30 x 40 cm, be fixed securely to the front of the raft, and be displayed correctly (right side up). At Pan-American, Australasian and African Champs the above is preferred but not compulsory.
 - d. The IRF flag must be present at the race site.
2. C-, and D-Level Event requirements for bibs and flags are optional.

J. Event Safety

1. Every Competitor must provide his/her own personal safety equipment. This equipment must be used during the entire Event at all times while on the water. The required minimum personal safety equipment consists of the following:
 - a. A personal flotation device (PFD) designed specifically for whitewater use. The PFD must have a minimum buoyancy rating of 60N (13.5lbs/6.12kg) and must be labeled as ISO approved, or labeled with an equivalent widely recognized national or international standard approved by the IRF. The IRF recommends the use of PFDs equipped with reinforced shoulder straps and an adjustable cinching system that permits the PFD to be tightly fitted..
 - b. A safety whitewater helmet that conforms to National and International standards
 - c. Appropriate protective footwear. Being barefoot is not allowed.
2. Prior to the start of a race, an IRF judge or a member of the Event Staff may test PFDs to determine their buoyancy value. A 6.12kg counter-weight will be used for testing purposes. PFDs that do not meet the minimum buoyancy of 60N are banned from use in the competition. For safety reasons, Organisers may increase the minimum buoyancy of PFDs up to 100N (10kg).
3. When water temperatures are low, the Organiser may require the use of a wet or dry suit, or other cold water protection. The IRF recommends wearing cold water protection for water temperatures below 15 degrees Celsius.
4. On artificial course venues, Team safety equipment will be defined by the Safety Director. On natural river venues, it is compulsory in all disciplines that at least one Team Member carry the following minimum Team safety equipment:
 - a. Flip line.
 - b. River knife. River knives should be accessible with one hand.
 - c. Throw bag. Throw bags must be stored safely, and must be a minimum of 15 meters in length unless otherwise specified by the Event Organisers.
5. Event Organisers must announce in the program at least three months in advance, information about the following:
 - a. required minimum person safety equipment (as per Rule J.1)
 - b. any increase in the minimum PFD buoyancy requirement (as per Rule J.2)
 - c. required cold water protective clothing specifications (as per Rule J.3)
 - d. required minimum Team safety equipment (as per rule J.4)
 - e. required length of the throw bag (as per rule J.4)
6. Prior to the start of the first race, the Safety Director or a delegated member of the Safety Team may check a Team's safety equipment. The Chief Starter or a delegated assistant may do the same. Any Team not complying with the safety equipment requirements will not be allowed to continue until the

requirements are met. A Team's run may be forfeited if they do not satisfy the safety equipment requirements by their allocated start time.

7. The Safety Director has the right to stop the competition immediately if any hazards to the Competitors and/or Officials arise. No race shall start without approval from the Safety Director.
8. In safety issues, the Safety Team has the final say. All Teams/Competitors must follow the orders of the Safety Team. If the Safety Team requires a Competitor or Team to stop or help with a safety situation, they will give a specified signal and this signal must be obeyed. This signal will be described at the Captains Meeting prior to that discipline. Any Competitor or Team ignoring safety instructions given by a Race Official, or who displays a disregard for their own or other's safety, may receive penalties or be disqualified from a discipline or the Event.
9. In any Event, Competitors take part at their own risk. Neither the IRF, nor Event sponsors, nor Organisers or Race Officials assume responsibility for accidents or damage that may occur during a competition. Every participant, including the Event Staff and Competitors, is obliged to act in a safety conscious manner at all times so as to minimise the risk of an accident or damage.
10. Under no circumstances will the IRF endorse a competition held on Class VI white water. If there is a Class VI or other potentially hazardous river feature at, or downriver from, the race venue, Competitors must be informed and safe stopping above the hazard must be guaranteed.
11. Organisers registering Competitors for the Event may require proof that the registered Competitors have the ability to perform self-rescue. Competitors and/or Teams must have the following minimum self-rescue knowledge and demonstrative skills:
 - a. Re-righting a flipped raft quickly and unaided.
 - b. Climbing onto/into a raft unaided.
 - c. Passive and aggressive swimming techniques in white water.
 - d. Passive and aggressive use of a throw bag.
 - e. Awareness and understanding of all risks involved in raft racing.
12. Competitors are responsible for their actions on the shore and on the water regarding safety. Each Competitor is required to act in a safe manner, conscious of their own safety as well as that of their Team and other Event participants. Competitors are required to safely maintain their personal equipment, their position in the raft, and their set-up in the raft (e.g. eliminating potential dangers around them such as sharp edges, loose ropes, loops, open carabineers, etc.).
13. The Safety Team is entitled to require adjustments on a Competitors personal equipment, their position in the raft and their set-up to meet safety requirements. Failure to follow the Safety Team's instructions or requirements may result in penalties or disqualification from a discipline or the Event.

14. The Race Director and Safety Director have the right to change the above stated rules where it is deemed necessary for improved safety. Such changes must be announced in advance.

K. Officials and Duties

1. Head of the Organising Committee / Event Director:

- a. The Event Director is responsible for overseeing the running of the Event and coordinating all local preparations.
- b. Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to, Team registration, coordinating with local authorities, Event staff management, media coordination, arranging for technical and raft equipment, prize giving, arranging lodging and meeting facilities for Event officials, Judges and Competitors, and fulfillment of bid agreements and contracts with the IRF.

2. Race Director

- a. The Race Director, in concert with the Jury, is responsible for running the Event races according to the IRF Race Rules.

3. Safety Director

- a. The Safety Director reports to the Race Director and is in charge of safety during the competition.
- b. The Safety Director is able to call for an immediate stop to the competition if he/she considers that any dangerous or potentially dangerous situation arises or the river level reaches a pre-determined unsafe level.
- c. The Safety Director, together with the Organising Committee, is responsible for the delivery of the Risk Assessment and the Safety & Rescue Plan as detailed in the IRF Safety Document (Addendum 2.) ([All documents can be seen on our website.](#))
- d. The Safety Director has the right to check the self-rescue abilities of any Competitor, and may disqualify a Competitor that is unable to comply with the minimum expectations as defined in Rule J.11.
- e. The Safety Director may test the paddling skills of any Competitor, and can disqualify Competitors who do not possess the minimum skills needed to paddle the Class of white water required for the venue. If after testing, the Safety Director is in doubt of a Competitors skills, the Competitor may request a second test.
- f. The Safety Director, together with the Race Director, has the right to change the Start and Finish positions due to safety reasons.

4. IRF Safety Representative (for A- and B-Level Events)

- a. The IRF Safety Representative is an IRF GT&E Assessor responsible for ensuring that a Safety & Rescue Plan (SRP) is approved and followed ([see Addendum 2](#)). The IRF Safety Representative works closely with the Event Safety Director and may halt the race or the Event if the SRP is flagrantly disregarded and/or unacceptable safety risk(s) are evident.
- b. If the Event Safety Director is a certified IRF GT&E Assessor, he/she may assume the role of IRF Safety Representative.

5. Jury and Head Judge

- a. The Jury is a 3 person panel made up of three Judges, including one that is the Head Judge. For a WRC or Euro Championship, the Head Judge must be a certified Assessor and the two remaining Jury members should be certified Chief Judges or Assessors.
- b. The Jury ensures that the entire competition is run correctly in accordance with the Race Rules, and is responsible for overseeing all judging and Judges.
- c. The Jury receives protests concerning penalties and non-observance of the Race Rules and issues decisions on these protests.
- d. The Jury may grant a re-run if a protest is successful (although they are under no obligation to do so). The Jury may also disqualify a Competitor or a Team for reasons detailed in the Race Rules.
- e. The Jury is responsible for ensuring that a Judges Workshop is conducted prior to the event, and that a [Judges Workshop Form](#) is completed by the Workshop Assessor(s) and submitted to the IRF Administration.
- f. Specific duties of the Head Judge:
 - i. Serves as primary contact between Judges and the Organiser and Event Directors.
 - ii. Represents the Jury at all Captains meetings.
 - iii. Oversees the general work of the Judging team.
 - iv. Schedules and heads all Judges' meetings.
 - v. Heads the Protest procedure.
 - vi. Decides matters not covered by the Race Rules, and decides tie votes.
 - vii. Signs off on all race results before they are termed Official.
 - viii. Provides a full report to the S&C Com within one month of the Event.
 - ix. Sends a complete list of all Event Judges to the IRF Administration.
- g. Specific duties of the 2nd member of the Jury:
 - i. Oversees the timing.
 - ii. Sets the start and the finish.
 - iii. Double checks all results and timing.
- h. Specific duties of the 3rd member of the Jury:
 - i. Assigns Judge's positions and tasks for the Event.
 - ii. Ensures that all Judges have the equipment and the information that they need.
 - iii. Reviews the Judges' work for quality control.
 - iv. Collects and secures all Judge score sheets after each race.
 - v. Double checks all Judge's sheets (e.g. compares Gate Judge and Section Judge score sheets with the final results).

6. Chief Starter

- a. The Chief Starter ensures that Teams are in the correct race order and gives permission to start.
- b. The Chief Starter will be assisted by Starters/Pre-Starters for each raft to ensure that the start is as fair as possible and to prevent a false start. Rafts are always held from the stern at the start, preferably by the outside line, rear handle or a stern rope.
- c. The Chief Starter can refuse to start a Team if the Team or a Team Member:
 - i. Fails to respect the safety rules.
 - ii. Is late for the start.
 - iii. Is not wearing the issued bib(s).
 - iv. Does not follow the Starter's orders.
- d. In the case of a false start, the Chief Starter will stop the race immediately and give the Team responsible an official warning. In the case of a second false start caused by the same Team the Chief Starter must disqualify the Team from this particular race.
- e. The Chief Starter announces a countdown to the Teams at the start according to the start interval: 5 minutes, 1 minute, 30 sec., 20 sec., 10 sec., "paddles out of the water" (at 5 seconds before start). At "0" the start signal is sounded. The start signal must be loud and clear.

7. Section Judge

- a. The Section Judge is in charge of a section of the Slalom race venue, and is responsible for the Gate Judges in that section, and collecting score sheets from these Judges.
- b. The Section Judge will transmit the scores from the score sheets to the Chief of Scoring as soon as possible by radio, phone or running personnel.
- c. If a Section Judge sees evident discrepancy in the gate scoring of their section, they can overrule immediately.

8. Gate Judge

- a. A Gate Judge is responsible for scoring a Team's performance at Slalom gates in accordance with the Race Rules described in section D.4.
- b. A minimum of two Gate Judges are required to monitor each gate of the Slalom course.
- c. Gate Judges must have a clear and unobstructed view of the gates that they are scoring, and should be positioned on river left and river right when necessary.
- d. Each Team must be scored on each gate. Penalties must be clearly marked on official score sheets and a reason for each penalty must be given.
- e. Gate Judges are responsible for keeping their score sheets secure until handed over to the Section Judge or the Chief of Scoring.

9. Finish Judge

- a. The Finish Judge determines when the Teams have crossed the Finish Line and in what order.
- b. The Finish Judge will be assisted by, and will work closely with, the Time Keeper, and will coordinate with the Chief Starter.
- c. The Finish Judge must have a clear and unobstructed view of the Finish Line.

10. Time Keeper

- a. The Time Keeper is responsible for keeping the official time and transmitting it to the Chief of Scoring. The Time Keeper works closely with the Chief Starter and the Finish Judge.
- b. The Time Keeper must keep independent back-up timing must be in place in case the official timing system fails.

11. Chief of Scoring

The Chief of Scoring is responsible for calculating the results according to the IRF scoring system, and to ensure they are given to the Media Liaison or to an IRF appointed media representative immediately after the results are termed official. Official results must be generated in a format that is easily posted and publishable on the internet.

12. Course Designer

- a. The Course Designer is responsible for designing the Slalom course and assisting in the other disciplines. For A- and B-Level Events, the final positioning of the Slalom gates must be agreed by the Course Designer and the two other non-local, suitable persons appointed by the S&C Com.
- b. The Course Designer is responsible for proper hanging of the Slalom gates and ensures that the Slalom course is maintained in its original design during the Slalom race. He may interrupt the ongoing Slalom race if a gate has changed position for any reason.

13. Media Liaison

- a. The Media Liaison is responsible for ensuring that the daily results of A- and B-Level Events are published on the IRF website as soon as possible.
- b. The Media Liaison is responsible for collecting and collating as much Event media as possible, and ensuring it is made available to Teams and IRF members through the IRF website.

NOTE: - Officials 2 and 5-11 must be certified IRF judges for WRC and Euro Championships. For all other IRF events this requirement is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged whenever possible.

L. Judges

1. IRF Judges are under the control and supervision of the Judges sub-Committee of the S&C Com. All official IRF Judges must successfully complete a certification process.
2. There are 4 types of IRF Judge certifications - Assistant, General, Chief and Assessor. They are defined as:
 - a. **Assistant Judges** (specifically trained for judging at C- or D-Level Events):
 - i. Judging - can judge at C- or D-Level Events. At A- or B-Level Events, an Assistant Judge can only assist a General, Chief or Assessor Judge. (Can judge at Pan Am, Australasian or African Champs until such time as sufficient General Judges are available in those areas.)
 - ii. Assessment – Must pass an exam on sections E, F, G of the Race Rules and have a working knowledge of J, K, L and M sections.
 - iii. Expiry – Must judge at a minimum of 1 Event over a 2 year period to remain current.

- iv. Renewal if expired – Must be re-assessed.
- b. **General Judges** (anyone who wishes to judge long term):
- i. Judging - Can judge at any Level Event.
 - ii. Assessment – Must pass an exam on thorough knowledge of sections E to M and working knowledge of the rest of the rules. A General Judge will have provisional status until they have judged at 2 Events.
 - iii. Expiry – Must judge at a minimum of 1 Event over a 2 year period to remain current.
 - iv. Renewal if expired – Must be re-assessed or at discretion of S&C Com
- c. **Chief Judges:**
- i. Judging – Can judge at any Level Event. Cannot be Head Judge at A-Level Events.
 - ii. Assessment – Must complete a Chief Judge Assessment Form and submit it to the IRF Administration and the Judge Committee. Must assist an Assessor at a minimum of one Judges Workshop, who will then assess pass/fail their ability to teach and examine Assistant Judges.
 - iii. Training and Assessing – Can train and assess Assistant Judges.
 - iv. IRF Representative – When a Chief Judge is the Head Judge on the Jury at an Event (B-, C- or D-Level) they also serve as the IRF representative. They are to be involved in medal ceremonies, and for B-Level Events, are also to ensure there is one meeting held for all IRF representatives to attend to discuss any issues for that region.
 - v. Expiry – Must judge at a minimum of 1 Event over a 3 year period. If not, will revert to General Judge status.
 - vi. Renewal if expired – At discretion of S&C Com.
- d. **Assessors:**
- i. Judging – Can judge at any Level Event. Can be Head Judge of Jury at any Event.
 - ii. Assessment – Potential Assessor candidates are proposed to the Judges sub-Committee by an Assessor. Candidates must be a Chief Judge in good standing and must submit an application detailing their judging history.
 - iii. Training and Assessing – Assessors can train and assess Assistant, General and Chief Judges.
 - iv. IRF Representatives – Assessors are representatives of the IRF. When serving as Head Judge at an Event, they are to be involved in medal ceremonies and are responsible for ensuring that a meeting is held for IRF representatives to discuss any issues.
 - v. Expiry – Must judge at a minimum of 1 Event over a 3 year period. If not, will revert to Chief Judge status.
 - vi. Renewal if expired – At discretion of S&C Com.

3. Judge Education and Certification

- a. Education and certification of IRF Judges must be done in a workshop format following the criteria established by the Judges sub-Committee. These criteria are detailed and kept continually updated in the IRF Judge Workbook.

- b. All IRF Assessors and Chief Judges are required to exactly follow the requirements and recommendations in the IRF Judge Workbook when conducting an IRF Judge Workshop.
- c. At A- or B-Level Events, Workshops must be run immediately prior to the Event to train new Judges and to educate certified Judges of any recent changes in the Rules. Attendance is mandatory for any Judge wanting to judge at the Event. Event Competitors, Event Officials, and interested participants should be strongly encouraged to attend Judge Workshops to grow the number of certified IRF Judges.
- d. Examination of Judges will consist of a theoretical and a practical section. The examination will vary on the depth of knowledge of the Race Rules that Judges need to know, according to the type of certification that the Judge candidate wishes to obtain.
- e. The education and certification of Judges can be done regionally if done by an Assessor.
- f. After every Judges Workshop, a Judges Workshop Form must be completed and returned to the IRF Administration by the Judge responsible for running the workshop.

Notes:

- a. All Judges are to keep a log book with the following details: Date, name, location and Level of Event; name of Head Judge; and position held at Event.
- b. Judges must comply with specific criteria (e.g. language and literary skills, agility, etc.) before they will be appointed as a Judge at any specific Event, in particular for A- and B-Level Events. (This is to ensure that all Judges are able to communicate clearly with the Jury as well as being physically capable of carrying out their duties.)
- c. Any Judge who fails to keep within the IRF requirements, or brings the IRF into disrepute, or for any reason that the BOD or S&C Com feels is valid, may have their certification downgraded or revoked.

M. Protests

1. For the Sprint discipline, protests must be lodged with the Finish Judge or Jury within 5 minutes after the provisional results have been posted.
2. For the H2H discipline, protests must be lodged with the Jury within 10 minutes after the provisional results have been posted.
3. For the Downriver discipline, protests must be lodged with the Jury within 5 minutes after the provisional results have been posted.
4. Protests in Slalom must be lodged by the Team Captain to a Jury Member within 15 minutes of the posting of provisional Slalom results.
5. The Jury may change the time limit for a protest if they determine that the allotted time is not long enough to give Teams a fair chance to protest. The time limit should be posted on the Jury tent so that Teams are aware of it.
6. Official Protests must be made in writing on protest forms that will be supplied by the Finish Judge or Jury and may only be lodged by a Team Member or their coach or manager.
7. Protests are to be heard in a secluded area, and attended only by the Jury and the Team Captain (or the Team Member lodging the protest). This enclosed area should have technical facilities to view video or other relevant material if possible. Attendance by other Team Members or witnesses are only allowed by express permission of the Jury.
8. The protest fee is USD or EURO 100.00, and must be paid as a deposit with the written protest before the protest will be heard. No cash, no protest!
9. Video/TV evidence is accepted.
10. If the protest is successful the deposit will be returned.
11. During an Event, a National Federation's official representative may inquire against another National Federation one (1) time without a fee. The inquiry must be made in writing within one hour after the final results of the discipline having been posted. The Head Judge will review all of the available information for the processing of the inquiry. If the inquiry culminates in a changed race result, the National Federation making the inquiry will not lose their one (1) inquiry and all Teams affected by the result must be informed. The decision of the Head Judge will thereafter be a matter of fact and cannot be protested further.
12. If after an Event has ended, a National Federation wishes the IRF to investigate any part of the race because they believe a judging, procedural or technical error was made, the request must meet the following conditions:
 1. Must be requested by an official representative of the National Federation
 2. Must be received by the IRF Administration within one week after the Official Race Results are posted.
 3. Must be made in writing and specify the exact area of concern.
 4. Must be accompanied by a \$300 inquiry fee.

Procedure:

- a. Post-Event investigations will be conducted by the Head Judge and/or other IRF officials under the direction of the IRF Administration using all available information. If the investigation reveals

that an error occurred that affected the Official Race Results, the details and conclusions of the investigation must be passed to the IRF Board of Directors.

- b. Only the IRF Board of Directors, after careful deliberation, will have the power to change a post-Event Official Race Result.
- c. After the process has concluded, the decision thereafter will be a matter of fact and cannot be protested further. If the decision requires a change in the Official Race Results, all teams and National Federations affected by the changed result will be informed, and the inquiry fee will be returned.

N. Doping

1. Doping is strictly prohibited and the IRF works in full accordance with the guidelines laid down by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
2. Doping tests are always welcome in both training and competition.
3. Any doping tests carried out must be organised and supervised by the hosting federation or official sport authorities of that country.
4. If a Competitor tests positive, his/her Team must be disqualified from the Event.
5. Person(s) testing positive will be dealt with by the IRF Doping Control Panel as described in the [IRF Bylaws 30.6](#).
6. In the case of disqualification after the prize giving, the medals will be handed over to the next placed Team. All other Teams move one position forward.
7. The medals and prizes must be returned to the Race Officials and if possible handed over to the winning Teams in a new prize giving.

O. Prize Giving and Awards

1. Titles are awarded for each discipline and overall.
2. The prize giving for each discipline should be held the same day as the race where possible.
3. The overall prize giving should be held immediately after the prize giving for the last race.
4. Prize giving activities may be arranged in accordance with the requirements of the main sponsor. The decision will be made by the S&C Com.
5. For A- and B-Level Events:
 - a. Medals must be provided in gold, silver and bronze for the three top placed Teams in each Division and Category.
 - b. In each discipline, medals must be awarded to each Competitor - 4 medals for R4 and 6 medals for R6.
 - c. For the overall titles, medals must be awarded to all Team Members – 5 medals for R4 and 7 medals for R6.

- d. Medals can be provided by the IRF or the host organisation. The host is required to cover the costs of the medals as well as getting the medals transported to them.
 - e. The host organisation must let the IRF know at least 3 months ahead of the Event as to whether they wish to have the IRF provide medals.
 - f. Medals that are provided by the host need to first be approved by the IRF BOD. The majority of the front side must be the IRF logo as provided by the IRF, and the back side may be designed according to the feel of the Event and culture the host is representing.
 - g. Medals must include the place (1st, 2nd, or 3rd), the venue/location, the year, the discipline, the Category (Women or Men) and the division (Open, Youth, Junior or Masters)
 - h. All Team Members must be called to the podium.
 - i. Only overall medals need to be given if there are less than 6 Teams in any Category. (As stated in Rule A.1.b.xi)
6. At prize giving in A- and B-Level Events, the national anthem of the winning Team must be played after the medals are awarded to each of the athletes.
 7. Medals are to be awarded by a member of the IRF BOD, S&C Com, Jury, Event Officials or by Sponsors/VIPs.
 8. Only the medal winners and a maximum of one manager/ coach are permitted on the podium.
 9. All Team athletes must either wear their Team or national uniforms. If the prize giving is held immediately after the race finish, Teams may wear their national water gear. Paddles are allowed to be carried onto the podium.
 10. Teams are to note Rule F.19 with regard to behaviour at the Prize Giving.

P. Invitations, Entries and Confirmations

1. All IRF Member Nations have the right to compete in any IRF Event. Invitations to an Event may be sent electronically or physically to the National Federation of the Member Nation, or published on the IRF Website and Social Media webpages.
2. All Events will typically have specific requirements and restrictions and Member Nations should familiarise themselves with these details before attempting to register for the Event.
3. A- and B-Level Events:
 - a. Organisers must define their requirements for Event registration and entry fee payment at least 8 months prior to the start of the Event.
 - b. Organisers must coordinate these requirements with the IRF Administration, and immediately communicate the requirements to all IRF National Federations.
 - c. Organisers must confirm each Event entry within one week of receipt, and the registering party must be informed of the status of the registration.
 - d. If a registration is rejected, the Organiser must inform the registering party of the reason for the rejection, and (if possible) what may be done to remedy the rejection.
4. C- and D-Level Events

- a. Organisers may determine all entries and deadlines at their discretion.

Composed by the IRF Board of Directors and the IRF Sport and Competition Committee in Costa Rica, 23rd of September 1998.

Modified by the IRF Board of Directors and the IRF Sport and Competition Committee in Futaleufú, Chile February 2000, and by email discussions and vote in March 2000.

Modified by the IRF Congress through email discussions and vote in September 2002.

Modified by the IRF Board of Directors through email discussions and vote in June 2004.

Modified by the IRF Congress through Extraordinary Session and email vote in July 2010.

Modified by the IRF Sport & Competition Committee through email discussions and vote in July 2005, Feb 2007, March 2008, Feb 2009, March 2010, March 2011, Dec 2012, May 2014, and February 2015.