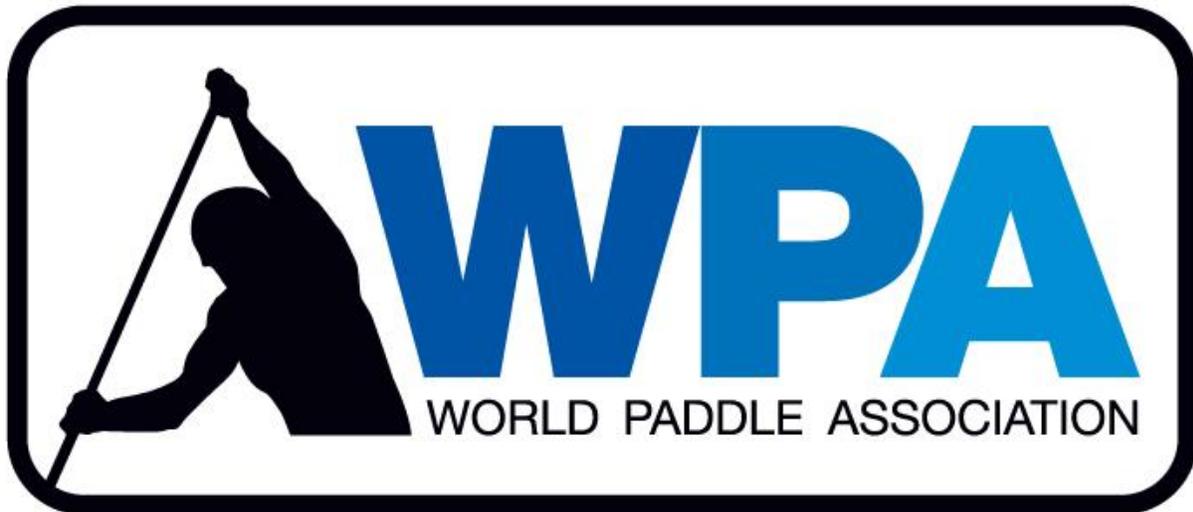


2014 SUP RACING RULEBOOK



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2014 SUP RACING RULEBOOK

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WPA SAFETY STATEMENT

The safety of the participants, spectators, staff and competitions is the number one priority of the WPA and should be treated as such for all races. Race Directors need to post the typical conditions for their venue and also the day of conditions to be expected. Race Directors need to warn the competitors of any dangers that could occur and where all safety personal will be located on the course and venue as well as have a safety plan in place if adverse or dangerous conditions should occur during the race and communicating such during the pre-race competitors meeting. Race Directors need to remind all competitors of the hand signals to be used if someone is injured, danger (paddle in the air, waiving or erect) or in need of help but not injured (hand in the air). All competitors should be mindful with any persons that may be in danger during the course of the race and should assist or help get safety staff attention.

The United States Coast Guard recommends and in many states require wearing approved lifejackets and or PFD while operating personal watercraft (PWC) such as a Stand Up Paddle board. Kids ages 13 and under are required to wear lifejackets at all times on the water while on all watercraft.



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1. SUP Board Sizes Defined

a) **SUP UNLIMITED CLASS:**

No Restrictions except that the craft must be powered by a stand up paddler with a single blade paddle.

b) **SUP 14 Ft CLASS:**

Length - 14' ft maximum
Board Weight - No Weight Restriction.
Board Design - No minimum dimensions.

c) **SUP 12'6" CLASS:**

Length - 12'6" ft maximum
Board Weight - No Weight Restriction.
Board Design - No minimum dimensions.

d) **SUP Surfboard CLASS:**

Length - 12'2" ft maximum
Board Weight - No Weight Restriction.
Board Design – Board must be a surfboard style in shape with the minimum dimensions, Nose 17" wide(12" back from nose),14" tail (12" up from the tail) and maximum thickness of 5".

e) Multi Hull SUP's are NOT allowed except in the SUP Unlimited class.

f) Center Fin(s) must have only have two surfaces that are symmetrical and may NOT have one or multiple points protruding from any of the surfaces. Side fins may have two different shape surfaces.

g) Rudder(s) are only allowed when specified in selected races.

h) Foil(s) are only allowed in the SUP Unlimited class.

2. Definitions of SUP Board attachments and Paddle

a) Fin: Fins may be of any length, width or shape, provided the Fin design does not promote the upward lift characteristics of a Foil and with the center fin always to be in line with the length of the board. Side fins may not be angled greater than 30 degrees from perpendicular to the bottom of the board (90 degrees). Fins are fixed to the bottom of the board, do not pivot, do not have controls for steering and must be in a fixed position throughout a stated race or format.

b) Foil: Foils are defined as any Fin that is angled greater than 30 degrees from perpendicular to the bottom of the board (90 degrees), or any Fin with appendages, or any Fin designed to promote an upward lift. Foils may be of any design and shall only be allowed in the SUP Unlimited Class.



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- c) Rudder: Rudders are defined as any Fin or Foil that pivots in order to steer the board. The paddler will usually have a device on the deck that controls the angle of the Rudder in order to steer the board.
- d) Multi Hulls: Multi Hulls are defined as two or more separate hulls attached together in any manner, or any board with a concave bottom greater than two inches (2" or 5 cm) deep measured at any cross section on the bottom of the board.
- e) Length: The board length is measured from nose to tail at ninety (90) degree angles from the boards natural flat laying position with the deck facing up.
- f) Paddle- A paddle shall be a single blade design, with one blade on one end and a handle on the other end. The length of a paddle may be adjustable. A double ended blade paddle may be used while racing however will be scored as their own division based on board size and gender. A replacement paddle may be fixed to the board.

3. Competitor Rules and Safety

- a) A competitor must be standing while paddling once a race has started until crossing over the finish line. A competitor is allowed to sit, lay or kneel to rest without making forward progress. If a competitor takes more than five strokes while sitting, laying or kneeling once a race has started the competitor may be disqualified (DNF). The exception with this would be for safety reasons where a competitor needs to avoid or may be put into a potentially dangerous situation that would put them or others at risk of injury and or property damage.
- b) A competitor shall only use the paddle, waves and wind to propel the board forward during a race. No outside assistance drafting a vessel not in the race, form of a sail, clothing designed to catch wind, or any other speed device not considered the norm to SUP racing is allowed. Boat wakes are considered natural conditions unless a competitor is deemed as getting an unfair advantage over other competitors as with drafting (see drafting rule 4b).
- c) The safety of all participants and competitions is the number one priority of the race director and the WPA. Participants shall attend all competitor meetings and race postings to keep themselves informed with the typical conditions for the race and also the day of conditions to be expected. Race Directors need to warn the competitors of any dangers that could occur and where all safety personal will be located on the course during the pre-race competitors meeting. Competitors shall be mindful of the hand signals to be used if someone is injured, danger (paddle in the air, waiving or erect) or in need of help but not injured (hand in the air). All competitors should be mindful with any persons that may be in danger during the course of the race and should assist or help get safety staff attention. **The United States Coast Guard recommends and many states require wearing lifejackets while operating personal watercraft (PWC) such as a Stand Up Paddle board.**



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4. Definition of Participant skill level by Race

- a) Short Course (2-4 miles) Participant: A person that does not race on a regular basis or is just beginning to race in the sport and is also not interested in competing at a high level of competition. The racer most likely has not placed in the top 10 of their division in a race.
- b) Long Course (5+ miles) Participant: A person that races frequently and maybe interested in competing at a higher level with better paddlers. This person can also manage and adapt to various water conditions like with waves, current and more difficult conditions on the open ocean.
- c) Elite or Experienced Participant: It is recommended that a paddler must have proven their paddling abilities as follows: 1) Proven themselves in prior long course races. 2) Placed in the top 3 in a Short course division. 3) Consistently placed in the top 10 places in a long course division.

5. Race Directors Obligations and Safety Guidelines

- a) Every race director must adhere to the current years WPA SUP Racing Rulebook that includes: complying to all the requirements listed on the WPA sanctioning application and submitting details through the WPA website to be posted, obtain and use liability insurance through the WPA insurance company (unless approval has been granted to accept other means of insurance equal or better), provide and have every participant sign a liability release before competing in a WPA sanctioned race, submit results on the required WPA results format that includes all competitors place, time, age or age division, gender and board division.
- b) Race directors are required to communicate and post the following items at the Paddlers meeting before the start of any type of race:
 - Post all start times, course, and awards time.
 - Have a copy of the WPA SUP Racing Rulebook onsite for participants to review.
 - Drafting rules and any other local rules.
 - Conduct a Paddlers meeting at least 10 minutes before the first race.
 - Safety, to include PFD/Lifejacket requirements, leash requirements, location and description of all safety boats.
 - Start sequence and finish areas.
 - Location and time results will be posted.
 - Provide all participant information with results to include age, gender, board size with Sup Surf, 12'6, 14' and Unlimited).
- c) **Communicate the following Lifejacket requirements from the United States Coast Guard:**



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The Coast Guard recommends and many states require wearing approved lifejackets and or PFD:

- While operating personal watercraft (PWC) such as a Stand Up Paddle board.
- During white water boating activities.
- Kids ages 13 and under are required to wear a lifejacket at all times on the water while on any type of watercraft.

Check with your state boating safety officials and local laws.

- d) The race director must adhere to the minimum safety guidelines to insure that the competitors overall safety is not compromised during the race with the following: 2 water safety crafts and one boat (minimum of one boat), 6 water safety personal of which there needs to be one certified lifeguard for every 50 participants, safety meeting during the pre-race meeting, plan of action for adverse weather and abandon course procedure.
- e) The race director agrees that the safety of the participants and competitions is the number one priority of the race director and the WPA and should be treated as such for all races. Race Directors need to post the typical conditions for their venue and also the day of conditions to be expected. Race Directors need to warn the competitors of any dangers that could occur and where all safety personal will be located on the course during the pre-race meeting. Race Directors need to remind all competitors of the hand signals to be used if someone is injured, danger (paddle in the air, waiving or erect) or in need of help but not injured (hand in the air). All competitors should be mindful with any persons that may be in danger during the course of the race and should assist or help get safety staff attention.
- f) All race directors and race organizers must keep in mind the forecast and conditions of the day with all races to be conducted on a safe and manageable course for the safety of all participants and staff.
- g) Race directors should keep entry fees at a value and based on what the participant is being offered with their entry fee (permits, insurance, race timing, product, food, drinks, etc). The WPA recommends the following entry fees to get the best participation for all sanctioned events. Entry fees may be less as the WPA is trying to suggest lower entry fees to grow participation.
- Kids race- 12 under free.
 - Short course race- \$30-\$50.
 - Long race- \$50 - \$75.
 - Prize Money race- \$75 - \$125.00.
 - Offer two levels of entry fees in a prize money race, one for a competitor who just wants to race against the best paddlers and one for the paddlers who want to race for prize money.



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- h) Prize money should only come from sponsor money and not entry fees that would otherwise increase entry fees for all competitors.

6. Race/Courses Defined

- a) Short Course – it is recommended that short course races should be conducted on a safe and manageable course free from going in and out of the surf. The course should be set at 2-4 miles in distance and no more than 4 miles.
- b) Long Course: it is recommended that long course races should be no less than 4 miles. The exceptions for less than 4 miles would be for conditions that would be considered unsafe, time deadline or multiple heats or races.
- c) Typical conditions- each race shall also define their race based on typical conditions for the venue and to consider the following factors: length of race, current, technical aspects (buoy turns or other), wind, chop, waves, and boat traffic. Each race shall use this as the general guideline for a person to select and enter the proper race based on their ability and skill level.
- d) Course name- it is required that the length (listed in miles or meters) of each race shall be communicated for each course in your race information like : “Shelter Bay 6 mile Challenge”.

7. Race Distance/Board size Guidelines for Long Course- it is recommended that if a race is conducted on one board size in a division on a long course that the following guidelines should be used. The exceptions would be for races conducted downwind, down current or in adverse conditions that would need to shorten the length of the course for safety and the best experience for all competitors:

- a) SUP 12’6” : 4-6 miles.
- b) SUP 14’ : 6-9 miles.
- c) SUP Unlimited- 6-9 + miles.

8. Race Types Defined

- a) Out & Back- Generally an Out & Back course will be set up to head either into the wind or downwind and then back in the opposite direction.
- b) Triangle- Generally a Triangle course will be set up to have upwind, side or off the wind and downwind conditions in the shape of a triangle. A Triangle course can be set up as multiple loops depending on the length of race and the race venue.
- c) Surf Slalom- A Surf Slalom is a race course that would be set up to go through the breaking waves or surf zone of a particular area with buoys placed outside of the surf area and inside the surf area.



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- d) There may be multiply buoys for the racers or competitors to go around both outside and inside the surf area.
- e) Downwind- A downwind course is set up to run from point A to point B and to have participants race with the wind at their back the entire race with the starting line set at a location upwind from the finish. Distances will vary depending on the conditions of the location and typically downwind races are 30 – 40% longer in length than a typical race.
- f) A race director may choose to mix the combination of stated courses to give their event the best competition for racers, spectators and the safety for all attending their event. The race director also has the right to change or amend the course the day of the race given the conditions. Upon any change of course the race director must give all competitors advance warning and or announce their intentions at least 30 minutes before the race has started and before the competitors left the launch area.

9. Starting and Finishing Procedures/Moving Mark

- a) Starting Sequence- A start of a race should provide a start timing sequence that is announced at the paddlers meeting that would give the paddlers a 3 minute warning before the start and then start the fastest craft first with a one minute interval between craft starts so it will help eliminate congestion on the start line and drafting off a faster craft (out of class).
- g) Water Start- To form a straight line perpendicular to the first buoy rounding and between two points like with two buoy's, start boat and a buoy or two start boats in the water.
- h) Beach Start- To form a straight line perpendicular to the first buoy rounding and between two points like with flags or other points of reference to determine the starting line in which racers will start.
- b) Beach Finish- Where racers will exit the water and cross a point for reference like with two flags or other points of reference to determine the finish line. Paddlers must carry their paddle with them across the stated finish line unless it is determined that it may be unsafe to racers.
- c) Moving Mark or Buoy- A race director must notify competitors of a moved mark or moving mark and either anchor the mark before the first competitor has reached the stated mark or replace the moved or moving mark so all competitors are racing the similar distance and or shape of course.

10. Drafting

- a) It is up to each race director to decide whether they want to allow drafting in their race based on the type of race. The WPA recommends that if a race director allows drafting that a racer may only draft off another competitor in the same board class, gender and number of competitors per



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board. In other words, if you are racing on a SUP 12'6" board and a female competitor you may only draft off another female competitor on a SUP 12'6" board. A racer may NOT draft off any other board class, vessel or opposite gender. A competitor is allowed time to pass another competitor without a rules infraction however a competitor must make an effort to pass or move out away from the draft of the other craft to not incur a penalty or disqualification. The maximum time allowed without making progress to pass another craft is one minute. Penalty should be time added for each infraction or disqualification for a rules breach of drafting as determined by the race committee.

- b) It is suggested to have all 14' class competitors apply a piece of colored tape to the tail of the board so the craft size can be more easily identified. This needs to be announced in the Paddlers meeting.
- c) Drafting distance: a competitor is declared drafting when they are inside 3 meters (10 feet) behind another racer and 2 meters (6.5 feet) on the side of another competitor without making an effort to pass. A competitor does have 500 meter (546 yards) from the start of the race to let competitors to get sorted out. After 500 meters it is up to the racers and the race committee to police drafting. Please see rule 9a to help eliminate drafting out of class.

11. Violations/Penalties/Protest

- a) It is the competitor's responsibility to act in a sportsman like fashion, avoid a collision at all times and obey the rules as listed in the WPA rulebook and or listed by the race director. If there is contact or un-sportsmen like conduct during the time of a race that effects the outcome for any racer and they feel they have been penalized or interfered with that has caused the racer to lose position and or time beyond just giving a 360 penalty, the competitor that was deemed penalized must file a written protest within 15 minutes of the last person to finish the race in question. In doing so the competitor must inform the other party(s) that they may have fouled them during the course of the race and also bring in any witness's to attest to their claim and or protest to the race committee. All protest decisions are final upon the committee's review and the protest committee may rule in favor or overrule the protest.
- b) Violations of the rules and or unsportsmanlike conduct by a competitor that is listed in the rulebook or that is posted by the race director but not limited to: purposely obstructing or interfering with another competitor, causing damage or bodily harm to another competitor, use of profane language toward any persons or competitor while at a race, not rounding a mark, competing on the proper course, over the start line early, avoiding a collision and adhering to the drafting rules. A witness(s) are mandatory to back one's violation claim for all parties affected.



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- c) Penalties for any violation of the rules by a competitor shall be: one 360' turn at the earliest and safest opportunity, major infraction- two 360' turns at the earliest and safest opportunity. Once a competitor has completed their penalty turns they have cleared themselves of the stated penalty.
- d) If a competitor does not feel that they were in the wrong they must declare to the other party that they feel they are not in violation and will continue on racing however they must be able to bring witnesses to the protest committee to state their case or they risk being given a Disqualification (DQ).

12. Race Board Divisions and Categories

Men

SUP Surfboard 12'2" & under(short course only)
12'6" (Stock)
14'
Unlimited
Juniors (13-16) on a 12'6" and under
Kids (12 Under) on a 12'6" and under

Women

SUP Surfboard 12'2" & under(short course only)
12'6" (Stock)
14'
Unlimited
Juniors (13-16) on a 12'6" and under
Kids (12 Under) on a 12'6" and under

- a) Race Directors should offer all of the stated categories however you have the option to omit any of the categories if you so choose depending on regional challenges such as number of entrants, conditions, length of race, etc. These are only recommended categories from the WPA.

13. WPA Rankings & Divisions

- a) All WPA members will receive points from WPA sanctioned points races they have competed and finished by the ranked age divisions and overall ranking will be determined by board size and gender. Points will be given by region in the Long and Short courses for WPA sanctioned races unless otherwise noted.
- b) Ranked board classes will be offered for Sup Surf (short course only), 12'6, 14' and Unlimited for Men and Women. Sup Surf and 12'6 board classes must be provided as two separate divisions to be ranked properly in each region.
- c) Ranked age divisions: 17 under, 18-49, 50+ and overall by board class and gender (overall and age division ranking for each competitor).



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- d) All ages are based on the age of the competitor at the start of a region series and or the day of a championship race.
- e) Any competitor that has a change of age in the middle of a year can begin accumulating points in the new age division however cannot carry over points from the previous age division.
- f) Final region points for rankings will be determined after the last race in each region for the year.
- g) A race director may include additional or omit age divisions if they choose as long as they collect the AGE for every competitor in their event and races. The age is required to sort competitors with the age divisions needed for rankings based on the results format sheet.

14. Participants to Support a Class

- a) Trophy- A minimum of 3 participants is recommended to make a class in any division to trophy.
- b) Men Ranking- A minimum of 3 participants is required for Men's for all age or board divisions to receive full points for rankings.
- c) Women/17 Under- A minimum of 3 participants is required for Women and 17 Under for all age or board divisions to receive full points for rankings.
- d) Money- A minimum of 10 participants is recommended in any division to receive money.
- e) If the minimum number of participants in 14b and 14c are not met in any one division the participants in the stated division will receive half of the stated points offered.

15. Ranking Points System

Points will be given to all finishers who are WPA members in each division meeting the minimum participant requirements stated in rule 14.b in all sanctioned points races in each region. The top six races for each participant will be totaled for final yearend rankings in each region by division. Points will also be earned for current year WPA Championship race qualifying. Points will be offered for both Short and Long course participants in sanctioned events based on the following points scale:

- a) Points breakdown
 - 1st = 1,000
 - 2nd = 750
 - 3rd = 550
 - 4th = 400
 - 5th = 325
 - 6th = 250
 - 7th = 200
 - 8th = 150
 - 9th = 125
 - 10th = 100
 - 11th = 99, 12th = 98, 13th = 97, 14th = 96 and so on with one less point for each place to 90th with each place after receiving a minimum of 10 points.



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- b) **Double points will be offered for National and Regional Championship races that are within a region and calculated into the participant's region points total. All other National race points will also be calculated for the National Race Series that includes points from National races.**
- c) If only one length of race is offered at any one sanctioned event the race level to be ranked for points with either Short or Long course will be communicated by the race director prior to the start of the race.
- d) Final region points for rankings will be determined after the last race in each region for the year.

16. WPA Championships Qualifying Criteria

Qualifying Criteria:

- a) Finish in the top 30% of your board division in the prior year Hennessey's-WPA World Championships (Championship race only).
- b) Finish in the top 30% of your board division in the prior Hennessey's-WPA U.S. Paddle Championships (Long course only).
- c) Finish in the top 20% of your board division in a WPA National Race in the current year. Must be a ranked division and have a minimum of 5 participants.
- d) Finish in the top 10% of your board division in a WPA State Championship race (Long course only).
- e) Finished in the top 20% of the selected international events to be announced.
- f) The WPA reserves the right to hold spots open to invite selected paddlers to participate in the WPA Championship race that may not have access or the ability to participate in any or limited points races and events listed.
- g) All qualifying spots will be determined from a person's highest qualifying option as listed in a, b, or c. If a person qualifies from a and b their spot in option b would be passed to the next person not qualified and so on.
- h) Participants do not need to be current WPA member if you have qualified under options a & b.
- i) If the WPA Championship race is conducted prior to the finish of any regional race series, points for qualifying will be determined by the totals in each division 3 weeks prior to the WPA Championship date.
- j) Any qualifying spots earned at a National race that is run after the WPA Championship in a given year, the qualifying spots will transfer to the next year's WPA Championship.

***Open/short course participants do not need to qualify to compete in the Open race at the WPA Championships.**

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