

SURFING

Surfing is currently an Exhibition sport in Florida with a State Festival conducted annually.

The Official Special Olympics Florida rules for Surfing shall govern all Special Olympics Competitions. Special Olympics Florida has created these rules based upon International Surfing Association (ISA) rules for Surfing found at [Http://www.isasurf.org/files/ISARulebook2011_000.pdf](http://www.isasurf.org/files/ISARulebook2011_000.pdf) . ISA rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with Special Olympics Florida rules for Surfing or Special Olympics Rules Article 1. In such cases, The Official Special Olympics Florida Rules for Surfing will apply.

Divisioning.

1. All athletes competing in Surfing will be divisioned by the Competition Director based on their determined level of competition.
2. Athletes will be divided by gender.
3. The following age groups will be utilized within each level (additional ages may be used at the discretion of the Competition Director and Vice President of Sports Operations):
 - Junior - 15 years and under
 - Senior - 16 to 21 years
 - Masters- 22 years and over

Note: The age of the competitors will be determined as of the day of competition.

4. If there are less than three (3) competitors in a specific level, age groups may be combined.

Specific Competition Levels and Rules

1. Level 4
 - Participants start the event from the marshalling area in the water.
 - Participants can receive verbal and physical assistance during competition. This can include verbal instructions about which waves to ride, physical assistance getting onto the board, pushing into the wave, riding the wave near the competitor and giving the competitor wave counts.
 - Participants can lie or kneel on the board during the ride.
 - The top two (2) waves from each participant will be used for scoring. A third or fourth wave will be used as a tie-breaker.
 - Soft boards only in Level 4.
2. Level 3
 - Participants start the event from the marshalling area in the water.
 - Participants can receive verbal and physical assistance during competition. This can include verbal instructions about which waves to ride, physical assistance getting onto the board, and giving the competitor wave counts.
 - Participants must kneel or stand on the board during the wave.

- Participants can ride no more than ten (10) waves during the ten (10) minute competition period.
 - The top two (2) waves from each participant will be used for scoring. A third or fourth wave will be used as a tie-breaker.
 - Soft boards only in Level 3.
3. Level 2
- Participants start the event from the marshalling area in the water.
 - Participants can receive verbal and physical assistance during competition. This can include verbal instructions about which waves to ride, physical assistance getting onto the board, and giving the competitor wave counts.
 - Participants must **stand** on the board while riding the wave.
 - Participants can ride no more than ten (10) waves during the fifteen (15) minute competition period.
 - The top two (2) waves from each participant will be used for scoring. A third or fourth wave will be used as a tie-breaker.
 - Should the Level 2 athlete catch the wave using his or her own paddling skills, indicated by the instructor in the water putting his/her hands in the air, the athlete may be scored on a 0.1 to 10 basis. If, however, the athlete catches the wave with the physical assistance of the instructor, then the athlete can only be scored on a 0.1 to 5 basis.
 - Soft boards only in Level 2.
4. Level 1
- Participants start the event from the marshalling area in the water.
 - Participants can receive verbal assistance during competition. This can include verbal instructions about which waves to ride and giving the competitor the wave counts; but does not include physical assistance of any kind. (**Independent**)
 - Participants must **stand** on the board while riding the wave.
 - Participants can ride no more than ten (10) waves during the fifteen (15) minute competition period.
 - The top two (2) waves from each participant will be used for scoring. A third or fourth wave will be used as a tie-breaker.
 - Soft boards OR fiberglass boards for Level 1.

General Competition Rules

1. There must be a minimum of 18 inches of wave height before surf can be deemed contestable.
2. As a risk management precaution, all participants must utilize a leash/leg-rope due to the potential risk to other participants. All participants must use a leash/ leg-rope while competing or practicing within the confines of the competition area or any other area

under the jurisdiction of the competition. Leashes/Leg-ropes can be of any type that is commercially available. ***Level 4** only may forgo the leash/leg rope only if a **Master Instructor** and two **Class A Volunteers** in the water at all times. For example, Master Instructor on the outside break, Class A Volunteer at mid-break, and Class A volunteer at shore break to support one Athlete at a time.

3. Official timing of all heats will be done by the Competition Director.
4. A five (5) second countdown signal must be given at the start and end of each heat which can be signified by voice through a PA system or use of an air-horn.
5. For each level's heat, a verbal signal must be given when there are five (5) minutes remaining in the heat.
6. If a surfer in a heat rides a wave out of the competition area, the judges may score that ride.
7. Waves caught during the dead time between heats will not be scored.
8. Any competitor riding a wave in the designated competition area when it is not in their heat may be disqualified.
9. In any heat, the surfer deemed to have the inside position for a wave has the unconditional right-of-way for the entire duration of that ride.
10. Interference will be called in Level 4, if during a ride, the judge(s) feel that a fellow competitor has hindered the scoring potential of that surfer deemed to have the right-of-way on the wave.
11. In the event of interference during a Level 4 heat, the Head judge may award a replacement wave within the heat time frame period to the surfer who had their scoring potential hindered.

Judging

1. Criteria to be used in Judging: The surfer must perform controlled maneuvers in the critical sections of the wave with speed, power and flow.
2. Multiple judges should be used for each heat (minimum of 3). Judges must judge multiple heats to ensure consistency in judging.
3. Judges must score every wave attempted by each competitor.
4. Judges will determine when a surfer is "up" based on their competition level.
5. Waver scoring will be from 0.1 to 10 broken into one-tenth (1/10) increments.

6. Judges should be visually separated and should not discuss wave scores.
7. Judges must take part in the pre-event meeting to establish criteria and rules to be used.
8. The zero (0) to ten (10) scoring system is broken up into the following categories:
 - 0.1 to 1.9 Poor
 - 2.0 to 3.9 Fair
 - 4.0 to 5.9 Average
 - 6.0 to 7.9 Good
 - 8.0 to 10 Excellent
9. The first wave scored sets the scale for the heat and becomes the benchmark for that level of performance and wave comparisons. Judges will determine when a surfer is “up” based on their competition level.

**Special Olympics Florida Best Practices and Ron Jon Surf Shop Sponsorship Agreements
for Programs with or Considering Surfing Programs**

Surfing is a unique sport with much to offer Special Olympics athletes. To ensure a safe and fun experience for all participants, Special Olympics Florida recommends the following best practices:

- Consult with Special Olympics Florida prior to planning any surfing activities or programs. This is to ensure that the surf instruction meets Special Olympics standards for safety and knowledge, that activities are sanctioned by Special Olympics Florida, and that the appropriate insurance coverage and waivers have been reviewed and approved by Special Olympics Florida prior to commencing activities.
- Forward any proposed contracts, agreements or waivers to Director, Executive Services/HR Administration at: michelelbraxton@sofl.org or fax to 352-243-9568 prior to planning surfing activities.
- Special Olympics Florida has generated a permission slip, annually, that all athletes or their legal guardians must complete prior to participation. Also, please send your exact practice/competition dates and times to Sports and Training through the Registered Training Program Form (akinjoseph@sofl.org).
- The reason the permission slip and the specific dates and times are requested is to avoid any confusion surrounding exactly when surfing activities are sanctioned Special Olympics events, versus recreational surfing on their own.
- Receive proof from the instructional entity/surf school that Special Olympics Florida, Inc. and Special Olympics, Inc. have been added as additional insured's on the other party's insurance policy, prior to commencing surfing activities. Forward a copy of the insurance to Special Olympics Florida.

- Training sessions to be operated by professional surf instructors. Ensure that there is a 1:1 or 2:1 ratio of athletes to instructors.
- All VOLUNTEER instructors must be approved as a Class A Volunteer, by Special Olympics Florida, prior to commencing athlete instruction and/or volunteerism. Like all Class A Volunteers, they must also complete the Protective Behaviors training.
- Instructors who are compensated for their surfing instruction of Special Olympics Florida athletes are not volunteering and, therefore, do not need to fill out a Class A form.
- Confirm if an adequate number of lifeguards will be on duty.
- Determine the swimming/first aid/CPR credentials of the instructors.
- At least one certified Special Olympics aquatics coach should be present at all sanctioned surfing practices and competitions.
- As swimming strength is crucial in a surfing environment, all athletes should be current and proficient Special Olympics swimmers or coaches discretion, capable of swimming a minimum of 25 meters, unassisted.
- Good balance skills and basic strength are important: athletes will need to be able to go from a lying down position on the board to standing, no assistance.
- All athletes with Down Syndrome should have a completed Atlanto-axial stability form on file.
- Recommended practice time: 90 minutes, including on-shore/classroom instruction and in-water instruction.
- Special Olympics programs should work in conjunction with surf instructors to gauge safety based on weather conditions such as riptides, excessive waves, marine life threats, thunderstorms/lightning, extreme water temperatures, etc.
- Have bottled water on hand for athletes: hydration, even while surrounded by water, is important!
- Have water-resistant/proof sun screen on hand for athletes.
- Foam surfboards (not fiberglass) are to be used at training sessions for beginners.
- All individuals and third party organizations who instruct/volunteer with Special Olympics Florida's surfing program are expected to abide by the Volunteer Code of Conduct, and uphold the spirit of Special Olympics by displaying proper conduct, respect for others, and sportsmanship at all times.



Special Olympics Florida Surfing Opportunity

Permission - Parental/Guardian Consent

(This form must be fully completed prior to participation)

I agree and understand that I/my minor child/ward will be participating in surfing lessons, as part of a Special Olympics Florida surfing program.

I/my minor child/guard will participate in weekly lessons and competitions, scheduled to be held between July 11, 2011 and September 17, 2011.

I/my minor child/guard further understands that only those scheduled, sanctioned surfing practices and/or competitions conducted under the supervision of approved Special Olympics representatives, held during the Special Olympics Florida surfing season of July 11, 2011 through September 17, 2011, are considered official Special Olympics events and therefore are subject to the rules and coverages of Special Olympics Florida. No additional (outside of Special Olympics) or personal surfing activities during the season are covered or considered sanctioned Special Olympics Florida activities.

By signing this form, I give my consent to participate/allow my minor child/ward to participate.

If athlete is 18 years of age or older and can sign for themselves:

Athlete Name (print clearly): _____

Athlete Signature: _____

Date: _____

If athlete is under 18 years of age or cannot sign for themselves:

Athlete Name (print clearly): _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print clearly): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____