

SFT Downwind SUP Foil Race Competition Rules

1. Downwind SUP Foil Discipline Overview

SFT Downwind SUP Foil competitions are designed to test the athlete's ability to paddle into foil flight, connect ocean bumps, maintain efficient foil glide, read wind and swell conditions, manage long-distance race strategy, and complete a defined course safely and correctly.

Downwind SUP Foil races may include:

- Long-distance downwind courses.
- Coastal downwind courses.
- Open-ocean downwind courses.
- Multi-segment courses.
- Mass start races.
- Individual or group interval starts, where competitors start at fixed time intervals and are ranked by elapsed time.
- Point-to-point courses.
- Courses with alternative finish locations for safety or logistics.

The final race course, start format, finish location, safety requirements, and race distance will be defined in the SFT Race Notice and confirmed at the mandatory Riders' Briefing.

Athlete safety is the top priority. The Competition Director, Race Committee, Safety Officer, or Event Organizer may modify, shorten, postpone, relocate, or cancel the race if conditions are considered unsafe, unsuitable, or not appropriate for a fair and valid competition.

2. Future Evolution of Downwind Foiling Formats

Downwind foiling is an evolving discipline, and SFT recognizes that the sport may develop into an array of different race formats and entry methods in the future.

While this rule section focuses on Downwind SUP Foil racing, future SFT Downwind Foil competitions may include additional formats such as reverse prone downwind, where an athlete catches a wave in prone position and then completes a defined downwind course; prone downwind starts using appropriate boards without the use of a paddle; Wing Foil downwind divisions; Parawing downwind divisions; Foil Assist downwind divisions; or other downwind foil formats approved by SFT.

Each format may require specific rules, equipment requirements, start procedures, safety protocols, and scoring systems, which must be defined in the relevant SFT Race Notice or discipline-specific appendix.

3. Race Course

The race course will be defined by the Competition Director and Race Committee according to:

- Wind direction.
- Swell direction.

- Ocean conditions.
- Current.
- Visibility.
- Safety boat access.
- Emergency evacuation options.
- Local maritime regulations.
- Event logistics.
- Available daylight.
- Athlete level and category.

The race may be run as a point-to-point course, coastal course, offshore course, loop course, or multi-segment course.

The course may include:

- Start line.
- Finish line.
- Mandatory waypoints.
- GPS gates.
- Turning marks.
- Safety checkpoints.
- Exclusion zones.
- Alternative finish locations.

The final race course and any required waypoints, gates, marks, or navigation instructions will be communicated at the mandatory Riders' Briefing.

4. Start Format

The start format will be defined in the SFT Race Notice or at the Riders' Briefing.

Possible start formats may include:

- Mass start.
- Individual or group interval start.
- Beach start.
- Water start.
- Boat line start.
- Rolling start.
- Category start.
- Time trial start.

The Competition Director may choose or modify the start format depending on conditions, safety, fleet size, race area, and logistics.

All competitors must follow the official start procedure.

A false start, early start, or failure to follow the start procedure may result in a warning, time penalty, restart, or disqualification.

5. Finish Procedure

The finish line location will be defined in the SFT Race Notice or confirmed at the Riders' Briefing.

The Event Organizer, Race Committee, or Competition Director may change the finish line location for safety, weather, sea state, maritime traffic, or logistical

reasons.

Any finish line change, alternative finish location, shortened course, or safety update will be communicated to competitors before the race whenever reasonably possible.

A competitor must cross the finish line correctly and follow all instructions given by the Race Committee.

6. Equipment

All competitors must use equipment suitable for Downwind SUP Foil racing. Specific board, foil, paddle, safety equipment, or category restrictions may be defined in the SFT Race Notice.

Equipment rules may include:

- GPS tracking equipment.
- Communication equipment.

No equipment changes are allowed during the race unless specifically authorized by the Race Committee or required for safety reasons.

If equipment replacement or external assistance is required, the competitor may be penalized, disqualified, or classified according to the decision of the Race Committee.

7. Mandatory Leash

All competitors must be leashed to their boards during the entire race.

The leash must be suitable for the conditions, board type, and race format.

A competitor who starts or races without a leash may be disqualified.

A competitor who intentionally removes the leash during the race may be disqualified.

If a leash breaks or fails during the race, the competitor must take all reasonable action to secure their board and avoid creating danger for themselves, other competitors, support boats, or third parties.

8. GPS Tracking, Communication, and Safety Support

If available, all competitors must carry the official GPS tracker or approved tracking device required by the Race Committee during the entire race.

GPS tracking may be used for:

- Timing.
- Course compliance.
- Safety monitoring.
- Position tracking.
- Emergency response.
- Verification of waypoints or gates.
- Race result validation.

A competitor who does not carry the required GPS tracker, disables it, loses it, or fails to keep it active during the race may receive a time penalty, be ranked according to available evidence, or be disqualified.

If GPS data is incomplete, corrupted, or unavailable, the Race Committee may use alternative evidence to determine the competitor's position, course

compliance, and result.

Alternative evidence may include:

- Official boat observations.
- Finish line records.
- Manual timing.
- Video or photo evidence.
- Witness reports.
- Safety team reports.
- Other approved tracking data.

Depending on the race location, distance, sea conditions, local regulations, and safety plan, competitors may also be required to carry communication equipment, such as a VHF radio, waterproof radio box, mobile phone in waterproof case, or another communication device defined in the SFT Race Notice or at the Riders' Briefing.

The official communication procedure, including the main official boat contact, VHF channel if used, emergency contact, and withdrawal procedure, will be confirmed at the mandatory Riders' Briefing.

SFT official races will have a safety team on the water according to the event safety plan. Support boats and/or official boats may be positioned along the race route for safety monitoring, race supervision, emergency response, and withdrawal management.

Competitors must follow instructions from official boats, safety boats, the Race Committee, and rescue personnel at all times.

Additional safety requirements may be added with reasonable notice if required by local authorities, race distance, ocean conditions, or the official event safety plan.

9. Official Race Jersey and Race Numbers

All competitors must wear the official race jersey during the entire race when required by the Event Organizer or SFT.

Failure to wear the official race jersey may result in disqualification.

Boards must display official race number stickers when required by the Event Organizer or SFT.

Race number stickers must be placed according to the instructions given at registration or at the Riders' Briefing.

Race packets may include:

- Official race jersey.
- Race number stickers.
- Race rules.
- Event shirt.
- GPS tracker.
- Safety instructions.
- Additional event materials.

10. Riders' Briefing

All competitors must attend the mandatory pre-race Riders' Briefing.

The Riders' Briefing may include:

- Final course confirmation.
- Start procedure.
- Finish procedure.
- Weather forecast.
- Ocean conditions.
- Safety instructions.
- GPS tracker instructions.
- Communication procedures.
- Withdrawal procedure.
- Emergency procedure.
- Support boat information.
- Course changes.
- Penalty rules.
- Time limits.
- Local navigation hazards.
- Environmental or local authority instructions.

A competitor who does not attend the mandatory Riders' Briefing may be refused permission to start or may receive a penalty.

11. Safety Boats and Official Boats

Support boats may be positioned along the race route according to the safety plan.

Official boats may be used for:

- Safety monitoring.
- Race supervision.
- Emergency response.
- Course control.
- Withdrawal management.
- Communication with competitors.
- Result verification.
- Assistance in dangerous situations.

Competitors must follow instructions from official boats, safety boats, Race Committee members, and rescue personnel.

External assistance from boats, jet skis, or other support craft is not allowed unless it is provided for safety reasons or authorized by the Race Committee.

A competitor receiving unauthorized assistance may be penalized or disqualified.

12. Withdrawal from the Race

If a competitor withdraws from the race, the competitor must notify the Race Committee immediately.

The withdrawal procedure will be defined at the Riders' Briefing.

If VHF communication is used, competitors must notify the main official boat on the official race channel.

The Race Committee may define a specific call sign, channel, phone number, or

communication method for withdrawals.

A competitor who withdraws must confirm their status and location to the Race Committee.

Failure to notify withdrawal may result in penalties, disqualification from the event.

13. Course Compliance

Competitors must complete the official course correctly.

Competitors must:

- Follow the defined race route.
- Pass all mandatory waypoints.
- Respect all GPS gates.
- Pass all marks on the correct side.
- Avoid exclusion zones.
- Cross the finish line correctly.
- Follow all course instructions given at the Riders' Briefing.

GPS tracking may be used to verify course compliance.

A competitor who misses a mandatory waypoint, cuts the course, enters an exclusion zone, or does not complete the course correctly may receive a time penalty or be disqualified.

14. Time Limits and Cut-Offs

The Race Committee may define time limits or safety cut-offs.

Time limits may be used for:

- Safety.
- Daylight management.
- Weather windows.
- Support boat planning.
- Emergency response.
- Event schedule.
- Fair competition.

A competitor who does not reach a defined checkpoint, waypoint, or finish line within the required time limit may be stopped, ranked according to the rules, or classified as DNF.

Time limits and cut-offs must be communicated in the SFT Race Notice or at the Riders' Briefing.

15. Race Cancellation, Postponement, Shortening, or Modification

The race may be cancelled, postponed, shortened, relocated, or modified if the conditions are considered unsafe, unsuitable, or not appropriate for a fair and valid race.

Reasons may include:

- Dangerous ocean conditions.
- Excessive wind or stormy weather.
- Insufficient wind or swell.

- Poor visibility.
- Lightning.
- Heavy rain.
- Strong current.
- Maritime traffic.
- Safety boat limitations.
- Emergency situations.
- Local authority restrictions.
- Conditions that are too mild to complete a valid downwind race.

The Competition Director, Race Committee, Safety Officer, or Event Organizer may make this decision.

16. Scoring and Results

The race result is normally determined by the order in which competitors correctly complete the course and cross the finish line.

GPS tracking may be used for accurate timing, course adherence, and result validation.

Manual timing, finish line records, official observations, video evidence, and safety boat reports may also be used.

If the race uses an individual or group interval start, the final ranking may be determined by elapsed time rather than finish order.

If the race uses a mass start, the final ranking is normally determined by finish order, unless penalties are applied.

17. Penalties

Any violation of the race rules may result in penalties or disqualification at the Race Committee's discretion.

Penalties may be applied for:

- Failure to wear the official race jersey.
- Missing or incorrect race number placement.
- Failure to carry the required GPS tracker.
- Failure to carry required communication equipment, if applicable.
- Starting without a leash.
- Removing the leash during the race.
- False start / Over early.
- Course violation.
- Missing a waypoint or GPS gate.
- Entering an exclusion zone.
- Receiving unauthorized assistance.
- Equipment changes during the race.
- Failure to follow official instructions.
- Unsafe behavior.
- Failure to notify withdrawal.
- Interference with another competitor.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct.

Penalty types may include:

- Warning.
- Time penalty.
- Position penalty.
- Disqualification.
- DNF classification.

18. National Points

If national team or country points are used, the SFT Race Notice will define the scoring system.

A possible format may include the top 2 competitors from each country determining the national points in the Downwind SUP Foil category.

The exact national points system, eligible competitors, categories, and ranking method must be defined before the race starts.

19. Result Validation

Results are validated by the Race Committee.

The Race Committee may review:

- GPS tracking data.
- Finish line order.
- Manual timing.
- Official boat observations.
- Course compliance.
- Penalties.
- Safety reports.
- Video or photo evidence.
- Competitor reports.

The Race Committee's decision will determine the official result.

Final results may remain provisional until all GPS data, penalties, protests, and safety reports have been reviewed.

20. Protests and Review

If a protest or result review system is used, the process must be defined in the SFT Race Notice or at the Riders' Briefing.

The Race Committee may review incidents involving:

- Course compliance.
- Finish order.
- GPS data.
- Unauthorized assistance.
- Interference.
- Unsafe behavior.
- Equipment violations.
- Penalties.
- Disqualification.

Protests must be submitted within the time limit defined by the Race Committee.

If no protest system is used, the event may operate under a no-protest race

format, with decisions made by the Race Committee and Competition Director.

21. Categories and Divisions

Official categories and divisions will be defined in the SFT Race Notice.

Categories may include:

- Open Men.
- Open Women.
- Youth.
- Masters.
- Pro.
- Amateur.
- National team ranking.
- Other divisions approved by SFT.

Category eligibility, minimum age, equipment restrictions, and scoring rules must be defined in the SFT Race Notice.