

SFT E-FOIL COMPETITION RULEBOOK

2027 Integrated Edition

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Updated from the 2026 SFT E-Foil Competition Rulebook and incorporating operational updates from SFT E-Foil Race World Cup 2026.

1. Format

The SFT E-Foil division will consist of distinctive race formats and courses designed to test different aspects of e-foil racing skill. The competition may take place over a given number of days depending on the event.

The event format may include the following race formats, as stated in the Race Notice and confirmed at the Riders Meeting:

- Timed Laps format: individual timed runs on a marked course.
- Heat Racing format: head to head or group heats on a marked course.
- Elimination ladder system: knock-out format.
- Round Robin system: multiple heats per rider.

For safety reasons and to reduce the risk of rider contact, the Timed Laps format may be used for the main race phase at certain events.

Heat Racing formats may be implemented when course design, safety resources, water conditions, and event logistics allow safe racing. The chosen format shall be specified in the Race Notice and confirmed at the Riders Meeting.

2. Time Trials - Qualification and Seeding

On day one, the event will normally run Time Trials. Time Trials count as qualification and seeding for the first race of the Elimination Series on the same day, unless otherwise stated in the Race Notice.

If a competitor misses the Time Trials, the athlete may still compete in the Elimination Series but will be seeded below riders who participated in the Time Trials, as defined in Section 10, except where protected seeding applies under Section 10.1.1.

2.1 Time Trials structure

- Each participant is entitled to two (2) runs, unless otherwise stated in the Race Notice.
- The best time of the two (2) runs determines the Time Trials ranking and the seeding pecking order for Race 1 of the Elimination Series.

2.2 Interruption or voiding of a run

A run may be declared void, and therefore not counted towards the rider's permitted number of runs, only in the following circumstances and at the sole discretion of the Race Director:

- Collision with an external obstacle not caused by rider error.
- Interruption due to a safety hazard on the course, including but not limited to large floating debris, unauthorised vessels, marine animals, or any other external hazard. This does not include normal venue conditions such as algae, jellyfish, small plastic debris, chop, current, or other minor environmental factors normally present at the race venue.

- Proven malfunction of official event equipment, including but not limited to the timing system, official course markers, or other organiser-controlled race infrastructure.

Technical failures of the rider's own equipment are the sole responsibility of the competitor. This includes, but is not limited to, software failure, firmware failure, battery failure, motor failure, connection loss, remote control malfunction, propeller damage, wiring issues, or any other electrical, mechanical, structural, or system-related problem. Such failures shall not justify voiding a run or granting an additional run.

If a run is declared void under this section, the rider shall be allowed to restart the run as if it had not occurred. The voided run shall not count towards the rider's permitted number of runs and no time shall be recorded for that run. The Race Director shall determine the timing and order of the restart.

If the Race Director declares a run void based on the information available at that moment, and later information reveals that the cause was a rider equipment failure, the original decision shall stand, provided the Race Director acted in good faith with the information available at the time. No retroactive reversal of a voided run shall be made.

2.3 Start order for Time Trials

The start order for Time Trials shall be published in the Race Notice or announced at the Riders Meeting. Typical methods may include reverse ranking, lycra number order, category order, or random draw.

The published start order is the general guideline. However, the Race Director may adjust the start order at any time and for any category, including Pro, Women, Challenger, Youth, Masters, or any other event division, in order to accommodate:

- Shared equipment or battery charging logistics between riders.
- Rapidly changing weather, wind, water, or safety conditions.
- Course management, rescue logistics, or safety boat movement.
- Event flow, broadcast requirements, daylight limits, or time constraints.
- Any other operational requirement necessary for the safe and efficient running of the event.

Adjustments to the start order shall not be grounds for protest. All riders are expected to be ready when called. The Race Director will make reasonable efforts to inform affected riders before any change.

Any rider who is not ready to start within two (2) minutes of being called may, at the Race Director's discretion, be moved to the end of the order or recorded as DNS for that run.

3. Race Phase - Main Racing

The Race Phase may be conducted using:

1. Timed Laps format, similar to the Time Trials format, with increased distance, additional laps, or increased complexity, as stated in the Race Notice.
2. Heat Racing format, head to head or group heats, as stated in the Race Notice.

The Race Notice shall specify the Race Phase format for the event, including course diagram, number of laps, ladder system, start procedure, and advancement criteria where applicable.

4. Elimination Series

After the Time Trials phase is completed, the event will run the Elimination Series.

The Elimination Series may be run as one or multiple races depending on time, conditions, logistics, and technical limitations, including charging and battery management.

Definition: one race means one complete elimination system is completed from the first round through the final, or one complete Round Robin cycle as defined in the Race Notice.

If multiple races are run, the results of each race count together towards the event ranking, using the points system defined in Section 12.

The Elimination Series may be run using an Elimination ladder system or a Round Robin system. The chosen system shall be stated in the Race Notice and confirmed at the Riders Meeting. The Race Director has final authority to apply the published system and may adjust for safety, conditions, logistics, or event flow.

5. Race Course

5.1 Time Trials and Timed Laps format

- Sprint or multi-lap timed course in individual format.

5.2 Heat Racing format

- Heat racing on a marked course with two or more riders per heat.

5.3 Course diagrams

Draft course diagrams will be published as soon as they are available. Final course selection and final course layout will be confirmed at the Riders Meeting.

Course diagrams are indicative until checked and adapted on site. Although SFT may design the course in advance, the final layout must always be reviewed and adjusted according to the real conditions of the venue, including weather, wind direction, water conditions, tides, current, water depth, buoy availability, buoy anchoring and weight systems, safety requirements, logistics, and any other venue-specific factor.

The Race Director has final authority to adapt the course layout, buoy positions, race direction, number of laps, start and finish areas, or any other course element when required for safety, fairness, logistics, or event flow.

6. Principles of the Race

6.1 Time Trials and Timed Laps format

The E-Foil competition is a timed race on a marked course.

Start procedures

Start procedures A or B may be used:

- A) Participants must be stationary at the start.
- B) Participants may start moving but must not cross the start line prior to the start signal.

The applicable start procedure shall be stated in the Race Notice or announced by the Race Director before the start of the heat or run.

The start is on the command of flag, horn, or vocal countdown: 3, 2, 1, GO, horn, or signal.

Time Trials ranking

The best time of the two (2) runs determines the Time Trials ranking and pecking order.

Falls in Time Trials and Timed Laps

Each participant is entitled to two (2) falls per run.

The third (3rd) fall in a run results in DNF for that run. The rider receives no valid time for that run.

A rider with DNF is ranked below all riders with a valid time for that run, except where protected seeding applies under Section 10.1.1.

For developmental categories, including but not limited to Challenger, Youth, Amateur, or other participation-focused divisions, the Race Director may increase the permitted number of falls per run to three (3). This must be announced before the session.

Any modification to the standard fall limit must be announced before the session begins. Once announced, the modification applies only to the category, division, or session specified by the Race Director.

If a participant interrupts a run for any reason and cannot continue, the rider must clear the racing line as soon as safely possible and follow official instructions.

Even if a rider falls, the rider should try to regain control, continue, and finish the run whenever safely possible in order to obtain a time. A rider should not assume that the run will be voided or dismissed unless the Race Director clearly declares it void under Section 2.2.

6.2 Heat Racing format - Head to head or group

Heat Racing formats may be implemented when specified in the Race Notice or announced at the Riders Meeting.

General principles:

- After a fall, a rider may regain flight and keep racing.
- Riders must try to avoid contact at all times, especially during overtakes.
- The Race Director may stop a heat for safety reasons.
- Advancement criteria shall be defined in the Race Notice or Riders Meeting.

7. Equipment

7.1 Mandatory equipment

- Helmet is mandatory.
- Impact vest or life vest is mandatory.

7.2 Boards and systems

- Participants must bring their own E-Foil board.
- Demo boards might be available for racing but are not guaranteed.
- All brands and systems are allowed, including commercial and custom equipment, unless otherwise stated in the Race Notice.
- Equipment may be changed between heats or runs.

7.3 Batteries and charging

- Battery and charging logistics may vary by event and will be stated in the Race Notice or Riders Meeting.
- Riders may borrow equipment from other riders.

7.4 Technical responsibility

Each competitor is solely responsible for the proper functioning, maintenance, preparation, safety, and compliance of their own equipment.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Board.
- Mast, fuselage, wings, propeller, motor, and controller unit.
- Battery, battery management system, and charging system.
- Remote control, trigger, connection system, software, firmware, and control systems.
- Wiring, connectors, seals, screws, structural parts, and any other component used by the rider.
- Any equipment supplied, borrowed, shared, modified, or maintained by the rider, their team, or another competitor.

The event organisers, Race Director, officials, local organiser, sponsors, equipment brands, and SFT accept no liability for rider equipment failures.

A technical failure does not entitle a competitor to a restart, a voided run, an additional run, a schedule change, a protest remedy, or any form of compensation, except where explicitly provided elsewhere in these rules.

7.5 Shared equipment

Riders may share equipment with other competitors. This includes boards, batteries, propellers, remote controls, chargers, or any other component. Shared equipment is permitted and may be common in e-foil racing due to charging constraints and travel logistics.

If two or more riders share equipment, the Race Director may, at their discretion:

- Adjust start order or heat schedules to allow reasonable time for battery charging or equipment transfer.
- Grant reasonable flexibility in call-up times, provided this does not disrupt the overall event flow.
- Apply modified fall limits or restart allowances under Section 6.1.
- Modify the running order of one or more categories when necessary for safety, fairness, logistics, or event timing.

Shared equipment does not exempt any rider from the technical responsibility rule. A failure of shared equipment remains a technical failure attributable to the rider using it at that moment.

Riders sharing equipment must inform the Race Director or race office before the start of the relevant session. Failure to do so may result in denial of flexibility requests.

8. Training Phase

Training is under the responsibility of each participant.

All riders must follow Race Director instructions and all mandatory safety equipment requirements at all times during official event windows.

9. Elimination Ladder and Round Robin Systems

9.1 Elimination ladder - Knock-out format

In an elimination ladder, multiple athletes compete against each other in heats. The best competitors of a single heat advance into the next round until the final.

Different elimination ladder systems can be applied depending on the total number of participants and the number of competitors per heat.

The exact ladder structure, heat sizes, and number of advancing riders shall be stated in the Race Notice or confirmed at the Riders Meeting.

9.2 Round Robin system

In a Round Robin system, all athletes have the chance to compete in multiple heats. This format is suitable when participation numbers are lower or when the focus is on maximizing competition time and fairness.

The Round Robin structure and scoring method shall be stated in the Race Notice or Riders Meeting.

10. Seeding

10.1 Seeding for Race 1 of the Elimination Series

For the first race of the Elimination Series, competitors are seeded according to the Time Trials ranking.

If a competitor does not have a valid Time Trials time, the following seeding order applies:

3. Riders with a valid time, seeded by Time Trials ranking.
4. Protected top three (3) Pro riders under Section 10.1.1, if applicable.
5. Riders who started but have no valid time, DNF, seeded below valid times and protected riders.
6. Riders who did not start, DNS, seeded below DNF.

Within the DNF and DNS groups, positions may be determined by current season ranking, event ranking, or draw, at the discretion of the Race Director, unless otherwise stated in the Race Notice.

10.1.1 Protected seeding for top-ranked Pro riders

For the Pro Division, the top three (3) riders in the current SFT season ranking shall receive protected seeding.

If any of these top three (3) ranked riders fails to record a valid Time Trials result, either due to two (2) non-valid runs, DNF, DNS, or not taking part in the Time Trials, they shall still be seeded inside the top twelve (12) of the Pro Division.

In such case, the protected rider shall be placed at the bottom of the top twelve (12) seeding group, below all Pro riders who recorded a valid Time Trials result within the top twelve.

If more than one protected rider has no valid Time Trials result, their order within the protected seeding positions shall be determined by their current SFT season ranking.

This protection applies only to the top three (3) riders in the current SFT season ranking and only for the purpose of Pro Division seeding. It does not grant any additional run, restart, score, time, result, or advantage in the event ranking.

10.2 Seeding for Race 2 and following races of the Elimination Series

For the second and any following race of the Elimination Series, the result of the previous elimination race counts for seeding of the next race.

Shared positions are split for the allocation in the elimination system by the result from the Time Trials ranking. If no Time Trials ranking exists for the riders involved, a draw is used.

If multiple races are completed and no Time Trials are available or applicable, the last completed race result acts as the seeding pecking order for the next race.

11. Event Ranking

If the Elimination Series runs one race only, the result of that one race stands as the final event ranking.

If the Elimination Series runs multiple races, the results of each race count towards the final event ranking. A competitor collects points for every result of a single race according to the position the athlete finishes within that race.

12. Event Ranking Points

Points are awarded according to finishing position in each race:

- 1st place receives 0.7 points.
- 2nd place receives 2 points.
- 3rd place receives 3 points.
- 4th place receives 4 points.
- 5th place receives 5 points, and so on.

If two or more competitors share finishing positions in a race, for example if eliminated in the same round and recorded with shared positions, each of those competitors shall be awarded the same race points, equal to the average of the points for the finishing positions they occupy.

The competitor with the lowest accumulated points is in first position of the event ranking, the competitor with the second lowest accumulated points is in second position, and so on.

13. Discards

- If four (4) or more races are completed in the Elimination Series, every competitor may discard one (1) result. This means the highest points collected in a single race will not count towards the event ranking.
- If seven (7) or more races are completed in the Elimination Series, every competitor may discard two (2) results.
- If ten (10) or more races are completed in the Elimination Series, every competitor may discard three (3) results.

14. Penalties and Result Codes

14.1 Result codes

- DNS: Did Not Start.
- DNF: Did Not Finish, or no valid time recorded, including third fall in a timed run.
- DSQ: Disqualified.

14.2 Standard penalties

- False start: first false start may result in a warning and restart. A second false start by the same rider in the same heat or run results in DSQ from that heat or run.
- Dangerous riding: DSQ from the heat or run, at the decision of the Race Director.
- Missed buoy or course infringement without correcting the course properly: DSQ from the heat or run.
- Outside assistance inside the course: DSQ.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct: DSQ, at the decision of the Race Director.
- Contact between riders: DSQ, at the decision of the Race Director. The chasing rider must ride safely and avoid contact until a clear and safe overtaking opportunity exists.

- Failure to wear mandatory equipment, helmet and vest: may result in a warning or DSQ if repeated after warning.

14.3 External electronic communication

No rider shall use any electronic device capable of receiving live verbal, non-verbal, audio, visual, tactical, or performance-related communication from a coach, trainer, team member, or any external person during an official run, heat, or race.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- In-ear monitors or earphones.
- Two-way radios or walkie-talkies.
- Bluetooth headsets.
- Bone-conduction devices.
- Smart watches, phones, screens, displays, or other devices used to receive live race instructions.
- Any other device that receives real-time instructions, tactical information, performance data, or guidance from off the water.

Violation of this rule shall result in DSQ from that heat or run.

A second violation in the same event may result in disqualification from the entire event, at the discretion of the Race Director.

Exception: The Race Director may permit external communication for safety purposes, including emergency instructions to riders or event-wide communication using event-provided equipment. This exception does not apply to coach-rider or team-rider communication.

14.4 Educational penalties for development categories

For developmental categories, including but not limited to Challenger, Youth, Amateur, or other participation-focused divisions, the Race Director may replace a DSQ with an educational penalty when appropriate.

Educational penalties may only be applied when the infringement is minor, non-dangerous, and not unsportsmanlike.

Dangerous riding, intentional contact, reckless behaviour, unsportsmanlike conduct, abuse of officials, deliberate course infringement, or any action creating a safety risk shall always result in DSQ, regardless of category.

Any use of educational penalties must be announced before the session begins.

15. Tie Breaks

If multiple competitors end up with the same total points in the event ranking, a competitor is ranked on top of another competitor by the following order:

7. In favour of the competitor with the better result from the Time Trials.
8. In favour of the competitor with lower points discarded, if any discards have been applied.
9. In favour of the competitor who has finished more often on top of the other one throughout all races, including discarded races. This applies primarily to two-rider ties.
10. In favour of the competitor with the higher number of first, second, third, and following place finishes throughout all races, including discarded races.
11. In favour of the competitor who finished better in the last race.

If all of the above rules fail to determine who is finishing on top of the other competitor, the final event ranking shall stand with a shared position between these competitors.

16. Glossary of Terms

Fall

Loss of control resulting in the rider's body making contact with the water, regardless of whether the board remains on foil. A light touch with a hand or foot does not necessarily constitute a fall. The Race Director has final discretion.

External obstacle

Any object or hazard not part of the rider's equipment that significantly interferes with the run. This includes submerged buoys, large floating debris, unauthorised watercraft, marine animals, fixed structures, or any other external obstruction. Normal venue conditions such as algae, jellyfish, small debris, chop, current, wind variation, tide, or minor contact with floating material are not automatically considered external obstacles unless the Race Director determines that they created an abnormal safety hazard or materially affected the run.

Technical failure

Any malfunction, failure, breakage, disconnection, or performance loss of the rider's own equipment. This includes software, firmware, battery, motor, remote control, connectors, wiring, propellers, mast, fuselage, wings, board, telemetry, or any other component supplied, maintained, modified, borrowed, or used by the rider or their team.

Voided run

A run that is not counted towards the rider's permitted number of runs. A voided run has no time recorded and does not count as a completed attempt.

Shared equipment

Any board, battery, remote control, propeller, charger, foil component, or other equipment used by more than one competitor during the same event, whether by formal arrangement or informal borrowing.

DNS

Did Not Start. The rider was eligible and called to start but did not cross the start line within the allowed time.

DNF

Did Not Finish. The rider started but did not complete the course or did not record a valid time for any reason not resulting in a voided run.

DSQ

Disqualified. The rider is excluded from the results of that heat, run, race, or event due to a rules infringement.

17. Summary of 2027 Updates

| Section | Change Type | Summary |
|---------|-------------|--|
| 2 | New 2.2 | Defines when a run may be voided and separates external obstacles from rider |

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| | | technical failures. |
| 2 | New 2.3 | Gives the Race Director flexibility to adjust Time Trials start order across all categories. |
| 5.3 | Amendment | Clarifies that course diagrams are indicative and must be adapted on site according to venue conditions. |
| 6.1 | Amendment | Keeps the two-fall rule but allows modified fall limits for development categories. |
| 7 | New 7.4 | Establishes competitor responsibility for all technical equipment failures. |
| 7 | New 7.5 | Allows shared equipment and defines how the Race Director may manage related logistics. |
| 10 | New 10.1.1 | Protects the top three ranked Pro riders by keeping them within the top twelve Pro seeds if they have no valid Time Trials result. |
| 14 | Amendment | Updates false start, missed buoy, contact, mandatory equipment, and standard penalty wording. |
| 14 | New 14.3 | Prohibits external electronic communication during official runs, heats, or races. |
| 14 | New 14.4 | Allows educational penalties in development categories for minor, non-dangerous infringements. |
| 16 | New section | Defines key terms including fall, external obstacle, technical failure, voided run, shared equipment, DNS, DNF, and DSQ. |