



# International Rafting Federation

## Race Rules

Taking effect from 1 January 2013

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### DEFINITIONS USED:

- IRF = International Rafting Federation
- BOD = IRF Board of Directors
- S & C Comm = Sport & Competition Committee
- Event = Any IRF recognized competition
- Development Phase = rules are set to be more flexible at this stage
- Level = Used to distinguish Events by level of importance - A, B, C, D
- Open = for our adult open division (16yrs +)
- Division = Used to distinguish an Event by age or ability - Youth, Junior, Open, Master
- Category = Used to distinguish a Division by gender - Men, Women, Mixed

## A. Race Classifications

### 1. A-Level competitions:

- a. World Championships:
  - i. In R4 and R6 held in alternating years:
  - ii. Must have at least 3 continents represented.
  - iii. Must be a minimum of 8 nations competing in the men's category, and 4 in the women's category.
  - iv. Each member federation may enter only one team in each of the men's and women's categories.
  - v. These teams must be fairly selected and nominated by their member federation by winning fair and credible national selections.
  - vi. The member federation must be an up-to-date member of the IRF.

- b. Youth, Junior and Masters World Championships (still in Development Stages):
  - i. In R4 and R6, ideally held in alternating years.
  - ii. May be held at A and B levels if prior approval of the S & C Committee is obtained. They may be run separately or with the Open event.
  - iii. Should have at least two continents represented;
  - iv. Should be a minimum of 6 nations competing in the men's category, and 3 in the women's category.
  - v. Each member federation may enter however many teams are allocated by the S&C Com which will be decided on an event by event basis and announced ideally no later than a year ahead of the event.
  - vi. All youth and junior raft races should be limited to maximum class 3 rivers.
  - vii. All other rules should be applied accordingly for the youth, junior and masters category.
  - viii. These teams should be fairly selected and nominated by their member federation by winning fair and credible national selections.
  - ix. The member federation must be an up-to-date member of the IRF
  - x. If there are 2 or more teams in any category then they compete against each other in their own capacity (they do runs at same time as rest of categories and have a separate scoring sheet)
  - xi. Dealing with low numbers of teams:
    - 1. If there is less than 2 teams in any Youth or Junior category, both categories will be combined into the Junior category.
    - 2. If there is only 1 Masters Women's team then they paddle in the Masters men's section.
    - 3. When teams have to combine into other categories that teams' country is then accepted as having 2 teams in that category (and can be called, for instance, Russia Junior and Russia Youth to differentiate them)
    - 4. If combining is necessary it needs to be announced at the closing date for entries for that event.
  - xii. Only Overall medals need to be given if there are less than 6 teams in any category.

## 2. B-Level competitions:

- a. Euro Champs:
  - i. to be held at least bi-annually,
  - ii. Euro federations may enter two teams in each of the men's and women's categories. These teams must be fairly selected and nominated by their member federation by winning fair and credible national selections.
  - iii. There must be a minimum of 3 nations competing in each category for it to be recognized by the IRF.
  - iv. All IRF members are allowed to race but only nations of Europe will have their scores included in the scores for the regional award and be awarded medals. (Consequently the teams from different regions must not race against each other in the H2H unless all nations of the region agree, as this interferes with the total result.)
- b. Pan-American, African and Australasian Champs: (still in Development Phases)
  - i. Ideally to be held at least bi-annually,
  - ii. Federations may enter as many teams as they can.
  - iii. Ideally there should be a minimum of 3 nations competing in each category for it to be recognised by the IRF.
  - iv. All IRF members are allowed to race but only nations of the region should have their scores included in the scores for the regional award and be awarded medals. (Consequently the teams from different regions should not race against each other in the H2H unless all nations of the region agree, as this interferes with the total result,)
- c. World Cup (still in Development Phase), consisting of a series of 3-5 races in a year held on a minimum of two continents.

## 3. C-Level competitions:-

- a. Includes any international raft race held according to the IRF Race Rules.
- b. The team members may be of any nationality, country of residence or sex.
- c. There is no requirement that nomination comes through a national rafting body but it is highly recommended.
- d. A team carries the nationality of the majority of team members. In the event of no majority, the team captain decides on the nationality.

- e. Pre-events for World Rafting Championships fall in this category – however, teams must be members of their national federations and their federations must be up-to-date members of the IRF. In case the pre-event's organizer sets any specific conditions in respect of participation of teams (limits on number of rafts per nation etc.), such conditions have to be made known early enough (at least 3 - 6 months in advance).

#### 4. D-level competitions:-

- a. Include any national raft race held according to the IRF Race Rules.
- b. Team members should be members of their member 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. National raft races do not have to be run to IRF Race Rules, but it is highly recommended that they be, in order to ensure the high standard of racing in higher level competition.

#### Notes

- The figure of 4- or 6-team members is compulsory for all A, B and C-Level events and applies to all disciplines!
- The IRF will support any kind of raft race worldwide if a timely request is made to it, and if the event will be run within the Declaration and the Statutes of the IRF.

## **B. Teams and Competitors**

1. For A and B level events:
  - a. Only competitors who are members of their national rafting bodies who in turn are members of the IRF have the right to participate.
  - b. A competitor may not compete for more than one Rafting 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 rafting federation has no right to prevent the competitor/s from racing in an event.
  - c. In the case of residents holding the passport of a different nation, the current National Rafting Federation must prove official permanent residency to the satisfaction of the S & C Committee. Such cases should be brought to the attention of the race organisers as early as possible so that approval may be given by the S & C Committee prior to the deadline for entries.
  - d. Proof of residency or citizenship must be given on demand to the organizing committee and the IRF Sports & Competition Committee.
2. Competitors are allowed to race in both the class of 4-person rafts and the class of 6-person rafts in a single event when both categories are raced.
3. There is only one reserve per team allowed. Only the nominated reserve can be substituted into a team. Multiple substitutions can be made in the ongoing event in any single discipline but must be announced each time to the Race Director or Head Judge in advance. Substitutions may not be made during a single discipline.
4. Competitors may participate in an IRF event in the calendar year in which they turn 16, but not earlier. The event's organizer shall comply with all domestic legal regulations in terms of liability under 18 years, i.e. the organizer shall arrange that all necessary waivers etc. are signed in advance. Similarly, particular national federations shall arrange that all team members comply with legal regulations of their own country in terms of liability under 18 years.
5. Youth ages: A competitor shall be considered as falling under the youth category from the calendar year when he/she turns 16 (as in rule 4 above) until the calendar year when he/she turns 19. All team members shall be of the prescribed age in order to compete within the youth category.
6. Junior ages: A competitor shall be considered as falling under the youth category from the calendar year when he/she turns 16 (as in rule 4 above) until the calendar year when he/she turns 23. All team members shall be of the prescribed age in order to compete within the junior category.
7. Master's ages: A competitor shall be considered as falling under the master's category from the calendar year when he/she turns 40. All team members shall be of the prescribed age in order to compete within the master's category.

8. Team selections and eligibility:
  - a. The team that wins their National Selections (which are not necessarily their National Champs) is the team that is eligible to go to the World Championships;
  - b. This team must have a minimum of 4 for R6 or 2 for R4 of the original competitors that won at their National Selections (unless selections are more than 1 event);
  - c. If the above team is unable to go, the team that came second is to be offered the spot and so on down the order. If the first team cannot go this decision must be made timeously (at least 6 weeks ahead of Worlds) so that the second team has time to plan and get to the event.
  - d. National Selections should be run on no less than Class 3 rivers. National Federations must be confident that the team they select for any event is capable of paddling the Class of river on which that event is to be held. The IRF S & C Committee or event organisers are within their rights to refuse a team's entry if their paddling capabilities are in doubt.
  - e. Any deviations from point a, b, c and d above by the national rafting body should be in the interest of the rafters and if queried by anyone must be explained to and accepted by the IRF Sport and Competition Committee.

## **C. IRF International Rafting Competition Calendar**

### **1. General**

- a. The IRF will maintain an events list to the best of its ability on the website ([www.intraffed.com](http://www.intraffed.com))
- b. All A, B C and D level events must be advertised on the IRF website in order to be recognised by the IRF.
- c. Organisers of these events or member federations must ensure the event and contact details are sent through to IRF Administration. The information should include the date, venue and section of the rivers for each rafting discipline, type of race (R4, R6), accommodation, transport, entry fees, training possibilities and other relevant information in advance of the competition.

### **2. A and B level events**

- a. Bidding for A and B level events is to be done according to Annex C of the IRF Bylaws.

## **D. Minimum entries**

1. If there are less than the minimum requirements for entries, the organizers may apply to the S & C Committee for recognition of the event.
2. It is not necessary that the required minimum number of nations finish in all the disciplines of the competition for the results to be valid.

## **E. Race format**

### **1. General:**

- a. Ideally, rafting competitions consist of 4 disciplines: - Sprint, Head to Head (H2H), Slalom and Downriver race.
- b. In A and B level events, all disciplines must be raced. In C level events, there is no obligation to race in every discipline.
- c. In A and B level events the order of disciplines should be: - Sprint, H2H, Slalom then Downriver.
- d. The start and finish line should be marked clearly with a line across the river or with buoys or poles on the left and right sides. This is to be done 24 hours before every race. The race director has a right to change that start position due to unusual circumstances (e.g. changes in water level).
- e. In A and B level events the downriver race must include a Class 4 or 5 rapid. This is also preferable for C and D events as well. (If teams are being selected for World Championship events at their National Selections, they should be able to paddle Class 4 at least.)

### **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 may not exceed 3 minutes and the duration of a single run should be in an interval 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 format. It is recommended that the H2H immediately follow the Sprint.
- b. The H2H should be held on a section of river where scouting the course is viable.
- c. All teams qualify for the H2H, nevertheless only a limited number of teams proceeds to the stage two of the competition. Based on results of the sprint some teams proceed directly to the stage two and another ones have to compete in the stage one in order to proceed further. "H2H System Form" (Addendum 1) defines which teams proceed directly and which need to compete in the stage one (see the form, and other relevant information is included in the same document). The stage two consists of a regular knock out format of the last 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 etc. The race order is specified in respective "H2H Race Order Form" (see the form/forms).
- d. In the Stage 1 and the first round of the Stage 2 the team with the faster time in the Sprint has lane choice. Thereafter the team with the faster time in the previous round has lane choice.
- e. The winners of the semi-finals race in the A final to determine first and second positions. The losers of the semi-finals race in the B final to determine third and fourth positions. The final position of all other teams is determined by their ranking against the other teams knocked out in the same round using their time from that round. For example, the 4 teams knocked out in the quarter finals are ranked by their times in that round and based on their ranking 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. It is the duty of the Jury to ensure the two starting positions and lanes are as fair as humanly possible particularly if there are no overtaking opportunities further down.
  - ii. At A-level events various methods will be used to test the above. Where possible teams will be timed from the start to a set position a certain distance from the start. Teams must be timed in each lane for comparison. If timing is not possible then two teams who are fairly even are to race each other over the same distance - twice, testing out each lane for comparison. This will need to be done until the Jury is satisfied the lanes are as equal as humanly possible and will have to be done close to the start of the first H2H run if conditions vary.
  - iii. It is up to the Race Director to decide how to choose the teams needed in ii) above but no team should be forced to do these test runs if they prefer not to, and consideration is to be given to various influencing factors affecting the teams. Options for doing this are suggested below but are not limited to this only:
    1. Chosen from local teams not competing if they are suitable,
    2. Chosen from the racing teams for their equivalent abilities and therefore for their suitability to compare the race lanes.
    3. Out of a hat
    4. Availability at the time of testing.
  - iv. Teams chosen for these test runs are to cooperate with the Jury and to race to the best of their ability in ensuring the best test results are achieved.
  - v. The route for each team is to be clearly marked to the top of the first rapid. Crossing the marked line after the race start by any part of boat, body or equipment is penalized by 10 secs.

### 4. Slalom

- a. The slalom should be held on a section of a river where access for scouting the course is viable.
- b. The slalom consists of two runs. The faster run counts for points.
- c. 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.
- d. The minimum width of the gates should be 2,50 meters. They should hang so that the base of the pole is between 50cm and 1m above the water (considering pulsing of water and type of boat and with respect to fair and easy judging) . Down river gates are preferably in green and white color and upstream gates in red and white color. Minimum length of poles is 2 meters. Minimum Diameter 0,070 meter. Gate number plates should be fastened inside the top of each gate. The poles virtually delimit the area of the gate. The gate is therefore only between the poles, not outside them.
- e. The course should be ready for inspection by the jury ideally 24 hours but no less than 2 hours prior to the first run and is subject to change by a vote from those jury members.

- f. 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.
- g. Gates must be negotiated in numerical order. A gate is "live" for penalization until the next one is passed or touched.
- h. A gate is passed correctly if all team members are in the raft and their heads pass between the poles.
- i. A gate is considered entered once one head has crossed the imaginary line between the two posts or a pole is touched. Once the gate has been entered a team can not back up, or it is considered as going the wrong way through the gate.
- j. Penalty points will be awarded as follows;-
  - Touching one or both poles of a single gate = 5 points
  - Missing a gate by one or more team members = 50 points
  - Negotiating a gate in the wrong direction = 50 points
  - Missing gate(s) by pre running or touching higher numbered gates = 50 points each gate
  - Incomplete teams over the finish line = 50 points
  - Going upside down through a gate = 50 points
  - Points for intentional displacement of a pole = 50 points
- k. The points will be added to the racing time in seconds.
- l. In the case of a tie, the slower runs are compared.
- m. The start intervals should be between 1 and 4 minutes and the duration of a single run should be between 3 and 4 minutes.
- n. Teams late for the start may forfeit their run.
- o. The finish line is also judged.
- p. Training runs in the raft slalom are not mandatory.
- q. 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.
- r. Single pole gates may be used for upstream gates only.

#### **5. Down river race**

- a. The down river race is the most demanding of all disciplines and therefore highest ranked in the point system.
- b. The total duration of a down river race should be between 20 to 60 minutes depending on the rapids and access to the river (the duration of the down river race would be submitted at time of proposal to the IRF).
- c. The race should be started in groups of between 4 and 8 rafts depending on the river situation. However, if the possibility exists for more than 8 rafts to start simultaneously then this figure should be chosen.
- d. The start line should be as fair as possible for every team but due to river conditions this is often impossible. Therefore 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 then the highest ranked teams 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 down river race are determined by the final racing times irrespective of starting position or group.
- h. Le Mans starts can be considered if there is a river beach with sufficient space for rafters to run towards the lined up rafts at the shore. All the teams must stand behind a clearly marked line at the start.
- i. Yachting starts are allowed where the river has sufficient space for all boats in the start group to cross the start line side by side. Slalom poles or floats are to be used to mark the start lanes. Rafts can be going as fast or slow as they want but can not cross the start line before the race start.
- j. To prevent false starts each raft should be held back by a pre-starter (water starts).
- k. Teams late for the start may forfeit the race.
- l. Training runs in the raft downriver race are mandatory!

#### **F. General Competition rules**

1. Flips are no reason for disqualification as long as the raft has been re-flipped and all team members are inside the raft when crossing the finish line. Failing to have the raft re-flipped and all team members inside the raft (feet outside the water) when crossing the finish line results in a 50 second time penalty.

2. No intentional contact between paddle to paddle, person to person, person to paddle/raft is allowed at any stage of a race. Time penalty per infringement: 10 seconds. Ramming is allowed.
3. Intentional blocking of teams wishing to pass is illegal. Intentional blocking is defined as the intentional changing of direction more than once intended with the aim of impeding the progress of another raft. Time penalty per infringement: 10 seconds.
4. In the event of a team member being unable to continue due to injury, the team may only continue once the injured party has been handed over to the satisfaction of the safety/medical personnel.
5. Outside assistance (by persons other than team members) is prohibited during the race with the exception of dangerous situations. The penalty for this is disqualification from the run.
6. After runs, teams must, if requested, assist the operations personnel in carrying rafts back to the start or loading the trailers for transport. Arrangements will be stated at the previous captain's meeting.
7. Captain's Meetings for A and B level events:
  - f. The first Captain's 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.
  - g. Subsequent meetings should be held the day prior to each competitive discipline
  - h. Written minutes are to be provided to all the captains at the end of the meeting if there is any deviation from the rules or within an hour where possible.
  - i. The Captain's meeting room should be a room of its own with no other activities during the meetings.
  - j. Only Captains, managers/ coaches and, where needed, their interpreter's are allowed into the captain's meetings. Exceptions are to be applied for to the Chief Judge.
  - k. Captains are to sign off on the meetings minutes and race rules in case minutes are provided as per art. F7 c).
8. Captain's meetings for C and D level events should be held the day prior to each competitive discipline.
9. In every event the timing starts when the starter gives the command go and the pre-starter(s) simultaneously release the raft(s) or when first part of raft crosses the starting line. Where the start is not measured electronically, the starter can ask for paddles to be off the water until he gives the command "Go".
10. Electronic timing is mandatory for A and B level events.
11. The timing stops when any part of the raft first crosses the imaginary finish line. All members of the team must be inside the raft otherwise a 50 second time penalty will be given.
12. A time penalty (50 seconds) will be given to any team trying to cheat the start signal. If a false start occurs the start must be repeated. Any team that receives a second warning is automatically disqualified from the discipline. The vacant starting position will not be filled by another team.
13. In a case where there is a tie in points and time, teams are to select their starting positions by drawing it from a hat or flipping of a coin. If teams are tied for positions in the Downriver, if possible they are to be kept in the same group where possible.
14. At the end of the competition, in the unlikely event of two teams having equal points overall, the winner of the Slalom is to be given first place.
15. Gate judges and section judges are to be provided with an isolated or roped-off area and competitors can be penalised for not moving out of this area when requested to do so by any Judge.
16. The Jury reserves the right and is responsible for correcting technical mistakes found on the Judging side before the next discipline starts.
17. The race organizer must for A and B level events (and should for all other events), put in place a system to transfer the penalty sheets from the judges and section judges so that the scoring team and jury can double check all penalties during the race. If this is not in place or working properly the jury has the right to double check all results from the section judges and change the results if any technical mistakes or unspecific issues occur, which could lead to late delivery of the results to the scoring team.
18. Should any team or team member at an IRF sanctioned event be found guilty of bringing the sport into disrepute or disrespecting Judges or Jury, that team or team member can be sanctioned. Such behaviour could include, but is not limited to, indisputable bad sportsmanship or behaviour, and/or flagrant disregard of IRF race rules, event rules or legitimate requests made by the race officials or event staff. The Race Jury at the event can be advised of the occurrence by anyone in writing within 24 hours of the occurrence believed to have brought the sport into disrepute, and should 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 can be through any means available, including but not limited to; no points for that event, no points for the entire competition, or expulsion of a team or competitor from an event or discipline without refund of any entry fees paid, time penalties or even prohibited from racing a defined number of years at IRF sanctioned events.

19. If a team gets disqualified from a particular discipline, that team gets no points in the discipline. If a team gets disqualified from the event, that team loses the right to compete in the remaining disciplines.
20. If a team doesn't finish a race, that team gets no points for the race.

## **G. Scoring System**

1. Teams are awarded points in each discipline according to their finishing position.
2. The maximum points awarded are:

Sprint	100
H2H	200
Slalom	300
Down River Race	400
Total	<b>1000</b>
3. 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.)
4. A team that does not start a race at all will receive 0 points
5. The overall results are determined by ranking teams according to the total points achieved during the competition.

## **H. Rafts and equipment**

1. Rafts used in IRF competitions are the basic symmetric river raft design used worldwide by various outfitters and wild water enthusiasts or identical boats provided by the organisers and approved by the S & C Committee.
2. Ideally, all rafts should be self-bailing and meet the following specific requirements:

Type	4-person	6-person
Minimum length	3,65 m (12 foot)	4,25 m (14 foot)
Minimum width	1,70 m	2,00 m
Thwarts	2	3
Foot cones	4 - 6	6 - 8
Min. tube diameter	0,45 m	0,50 m
Minimum weight	40 kg	50 kg
3. All rafts must provide a safety line around the outside and a bow line in front, fixed by a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10 D-rings. Carrying handles are allowed.
4. Any other ropes and rigging are, for safety reasons, strictly prohibited.
5. Every raft must have a minimum of one foot cone (no foot loops or ropes) per person at the seating position. Ideally, cones are fixed by the manufacturer in advance.
6. The floor should be of standard drop stitch or I-beam construction using soft material and, preferably, be laced in rather than glued. Pressure release valves in floors are recommended.
7. Every competitor is free to use his/her own single blade C1 paddle. Oars are banned.
8. At A-level events the air pressure in the rafts is to be checked before each race to ensure all rafts are equal. The check should be done once the raft has entered the water.



9. Anyone found tampering with a raft will receive at least a time penalty on their team's next discipline and possibly sanctioning as mentioned in F.16 above. The time penalty will be decided by the Race Jury and will be in accordance to the severity of the tampering and the time length of the next discipline. Tampering entails but is not limited to inflating the rafts above the specified pressure, blocking valves and changing the raft in any way to give the team an advantage.
10. For A and B level events the event organisers are to provide identical rafts numbering at least half the number of teams present, plus 1 or two spares.

## **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 receive a penalty of \$50 or 10 seconds.
  - 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 and be fixed securely to the front of the raft right way 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 events:- the requirements for bibs and flags are optional.

## **J. Safety at/on the river**

1. Every competitor must use his/her own personal safety equipment during the entire event at all times on the water. The safety equipment consists of a buoyancy aid/PFD with a minimum flotation of 60N (which may be checked and marked by an IRF judge or a member of the organising committee prior to start in a basin or barrel with 6kg of weight) and a safety white water helmet according to the National and International standard and appropriate footwear. Being barefoot is not allowed. Organisers are given the option to increase the minimum buoyancy of PFDs up to 100N (10kg). It is recommended for competitor's safety to use PFDs with reinforced shoulder straps and adjustable waist bands.
2. The organising committee may specify particular clothing requirements. If the expected water temperature demands a wet or dry suit the organizing committee must announce in the race program three months prior to the event the minimum thickness of the wet suit material recommended. The IRF recommends wearing a neoprene- or dry suit for water temperatures below 15 degrees Celsius.
3. It is compulsory for all disciplines on natural rivers that at least one team member carry a flip line, a river knife and a throw bag. Throw bag must be stored safely and be minimum of 15m long if not specified prior the race. River knife should be accessible with one hand. On artificial courses safety equipment is defined by the Safety Director. Information about the minimum Safety equipment must be communicated by the organizers together with the clothing requirements including also the required length of throw bag.
4. Prior to the start of the first race, the safety director or a delegated member of the safety team may check the safety equipment. The chief starter or a delegated starter can do the same too. Any team not complying with the safety requirements will not be allowed to continue until the safety requirements are met. A team's run may be forfeited if they do not satisfy the safety requirements by their allocated start time.
5. The safety director has the right to stop the competition immediately if any hazards to the competitors and/or officials arise. No Race discipline starts without the confirmation of the Safety Director.
6. In safety issues the safety team has the final say. All teams/competitors must follow the orders of the safety personnel. If they require a raft to stop or help with a situation, they will give a specified signal and this must be obeyed. This signal will be notified at the captain's meeting prior to that event. Any team ignoring race or safety officials or showing disregard for their own or other's safety may be penalised and/or disqualified from the event.

7. In any event competitors take part at their own risk. Neither the IRF, sponsors nor organizers bear responsibility for accidents or damage that may occur during a competition. Every participant, including organising staff and competitors, is obliged to act in a safety conscious manner at all times so as to minimize the risk of an accident or damage.
8. Under no circumstances will the IRF endorse a competition held on class VI wildwater. In case there is a class VI or potentially dangerous river section nearby the race location, competitors must be informed and safe stopping above the section must be guaranteed.
9. Competitors' minimum self rescue knowledge and skills:
  - 1 person/team: re-flip raft, active use of throw bag
  - each member: climbing onto/into the raft unaided, aggressive and passive swimming in whitewater, passive use of the throw bag and awareness of all risks involved in raft racing.
 Organizations registering competitors for the races need proof in the registration process that the teams' have the skills and knowledge about self rescue.
10. It is the competitors' responsibility to act in a safety conscious manner minding their own, their team's and others' safety. Competitors must mind their own outfit, their position and set up in the raft (for instance eliminating potential dangers around them such as sharp edges, loose ropes, loops, open carabineers, etc.) The Safety Director is entitled to require adjustments on teams outfit and set up. Competitors are responsible for all their actions on the shore and on the water regarding safety. Violation against this rule may cause penalties up to disqualification.
11. The Race Director and Safety Director have the right to change the above stated rules where it is deemed necessary for improved safety, but this must be announced in advance.

## **K. Officials and duties of officials**

1. **Head of the organizing committee / Event Director:**
  - a. He/she is responsible for the overall running of the competition and coordinating all local preparations.
  - b. His/her responsibilities include entries, dealings with local authorities, staff, safety team, media releases, technical and raft equipment, prize giving, and lodging of the officials and competitors.
2. **Race Director**
  - a. He/she runs the races according to the IRF race rules together with the Jury.
3. **Safety Director**
  - a. He/she is in charge of safety during the competition.
  - b. He/she 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 cut off level.
  - c. He/she together with the organizing committee is responsible for the delivery of the Risk Assessment and the Safety & Rescue Plan according to the IRF Safety Document (Addendum 2.)
  - d. He/she has the right to check self-rescue abilities of any member of any participating teams and exclude those not complying with minimum expectations that are defined and can be reviewed in the Race Rules document.
  - e. He/She may invite any particular team to show there skills, He/She may expel those which are not capable of the minimum skills needed, as stated in the race rules, from the race. If he/she is not sure of the skills shown, then a second test is possible.
  - f. He/She together with the Race Director has the right to change the Start and Finish positions due to safety reasons.
  - g. The Safety Director reports to the Race Director
4. **Head Judge and Jury**
  - a. The Head Judge is head of the jury. The jury ensures that the entire competition is run correctly in accordance with the IRF race rules.
  - b. The Jury are responsible for all the judging and judges.

- c. Together with two other jury members he/she receives protests concerning non-observance of the IRF rules and may disqualify a competitor or a team. He/she may also grant a re-run if the protest is successful although he/she is under no obligation to do so. All decisions of the jury must be in accordance with the IRF race rules.
- d. In the event of a tie vote and matters not covered by the IRF rules, the Head Judge decides.
- e. After the event the Head Judge provides a full report to the S & C Committee within one month.
- f. The Jury is responsible for ensuring the Judges Workshop Form is to be completed by the person who ran the workshop and returned to IRF Admin.

#### **5. Chief starter**

- a. He/she ensures that the teams are in the correct racing order and gives permission to start.
- b. He/she will be assisted by another starter/pre-starter for each additional 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 loose end rope.
- c. He/she can refuse to start a team if the team or a single team member fails to respect the safety rules, is late for the start, is not wearing the issued bib(s), or does not follow the starter's orders.
- d. In the event of a false start, he/she 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 he/she must disqualify the team from this particular race.
- e. He/she 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 starting signal is to be made. The signal should be loud and clear.

#### **6. Section Judge**

- a. He/she is in charge of a section of the river, including the slalom gate judges in that section.
- b. All section judges must be approved IRF General Judges. The section judge will transmit the penalties to the chief of scoring as soon as possible by radio, phone or running personnel.
- c. If a section judge sees evident discrepancy in judging, they can overrule immediately.

#### **7. Gate and finish line judges**

- a. Two gate judges are required for each section or single posted gates of the slalom course.
- b. The gate and finish line judges must be able to be positioned on river left and river right.
- c. They watch the rafts coming down the course in the right order and give clearance or indicate a penalty according to the IRF racing rules.
- d. They must write down the reason why a penalty was given.

#### **8. Finish judge**

- a. He/she determines when the teams have crossed the finish line and in what order and coordinates with the chief starter. He/she will be assisted by and work closely with the timekeepers.

#### **9. Time keeper**

- a. He/she is responsible for keeping the exact time and transmitting this to the chief of scoring.
- b. A separate back up timing must be in place in case the official timing fails.

#### **10. Chief of scoring**

He/she is responsible for calculating the results according to the IRF scoring system and to ensure they are given to the Media Liaison person immediately after they are termed official in a format that is easily publishable on the internet.

#### **11. Course designer**

- a. He/she is responsible for designing the slalom course and assisting in the other disciplines. However, for A and B level events the final positioning of the gates is to be agreed by the course designer and the two other non-local, suitable persons appointed by the S&C Com.
- b. He/she is responsible for proper hanging of the gates and ensures that the 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.

#### **12. Media Liaison**

- a. He/she is responsible for ensuring the daily results of the A and B level events are up on the IRF website as soon as possible.

- b. They are responsible for collecting and collating as much media as possible that comes out of this event and ensuring it is made available to teams and IRF members through the IRF website.

**NOTE: - Officials 2,4-8,10-11 must be approved IRF judges.**

## **L. Protest**

1. In the sprint, H2H and down river race protests must be lodged by the team captain to the Finish Judge within 5 minutes of completion of the run or race (10 minutes for H2H). In the slalom, protests must be lodged by the team captain to a jury member within 15 minutes of the posting of provisional results.
2. The jury holds the right to change the time limit for a protest if they judge that it is not long enough to give team a fair chance to protest. The time limit should be posted on the Jury tent so teams are aware of it.
3. Protests are to be made in writing on the forms available from the Finish Judge or Jury Member.
4. Protests are to be heard in a secluded area in which only the jury and the team captain (or team member making the complaint) will be. This enclosed area should have technical facilities to view video or other relevant material if possible.
5. The protest fee is USD or EURO 100,00 and must be paid as a deposit with the written protest. No cash, no protest!
6. Video/TV evidence is legal.
7. If the protest is successful the money will be returned.

## **M. Judges**

1. There are 4 categories of Race Judges:- Assistant, General, Chief and Assessor Judges. They are defined as:
  - a. **Assistant Judge** (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 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 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.
    - 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 events
    - ii. *Assessment* – must pass an exam on thorough knowledge of sections E to M and working knowledge of the rest of the rules. They will be a Provisional General Judge until they have judged at 2 events.
    - iii. *Expiry* – must judge at a minimum of 1 event over a 2 year period.
    - 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. Cannot be Head Judge at A level events.
    - ii. *Assessment* – must complete Chief Judge assessment form and hand in to IRF admin / Head of Judging so can be assessed. Must also assist at minimum of one Workshop with Assessor who will assess ability to teach and examine Judges.
    - iii. *Training and Assessing* – can train and assess Assistant Judges.
    - iv. *IRF Representatives* – when a Chief Judge is the Head Judge on the Jury at an event (B, C or D level) they are also 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 drop back down to General Judge level.
    - vi. *Renewal if expired* – at discretion of S&C Com
  - d. **Assessors:**
    - i. *Judging* – can judge at any level. Can be Head Judge of Jury at any event.

- ii. *Assessment* – potential Assessors are to be proposed to the Head of Judges by an Assessor. They will be required to complete an application form.
- iii. *Training and Assessing* – Assessors can train and assess Assistant, General and Chief Judges.
- iv. *IRF Representatives* – Assessors are all IRF representatives. When an Assessor is the Head Judge on the Jury at any events they are to be involved in medal ceremonies and are also to ensure there is one meeting held for all IRF representatives to attend to discuss any issues.
- v. *Expiry* – must judge at a minimum of 1 event over a 3 year period. If not, will drop back down to Chief Judge level.
- vi. *Renewal if expired* – at discretion of S&C Com.

## 2. Judge Exams:

- a. Education and examination of IRF judges will be organised by the IRF Sports & Competitions Committee. Any examination of IRF judges must meet the requirements set down by this committee.
- b. Education of judges will be in a workshop format.
- c. Workshops are to be run before A & B level events at the event location and attendance will be mandatory for certified judges wanting to judge at the event, to learn more about recent changes of the rules. Competitors and interested spectators are to be encouraged to attend these workshops to grow the number of IRF Judges.
- d. Examination of judges on the IRF Rules will consist of a theoretical plus a practical section.
- e. The examination will vary on the depth of knowledge of the race rules that judges need to know, according to the category they are to be certified on.
- f. Education and examination of judges can be done regionally if done by an Assessor.
- g. After every workshop a Judges Workshop form must be completed by the Judge running the workshop and returned to IRF admin.

### Note:

- a. All Judges are to keep a log book with the following details: Date, name, location and level of event; name of Head Judge; own position held at event.
- b. Head Judges of every event are to send a list of all Judges who worked at the event, to the IRF Admin.
- c. Judges will need to fill certain criteria before they will be appointed as a Judge at any specific event, in particular for A and B level events. (This is to ensure all Judges are able to communicate clearly with the Jury as well as are physically capable of carrying out their job.)
- d. 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 down graded or revoked completely.

## N. Doping

1. Doping is strictly prohibited and the IRF works in full accordance with the guidelines laid down by the 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 event 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 will be held together with the prize giving for the last race.

4. Prize giving events may be arranged in accordance with the requirements of the main sponsor. The decision will be made by the S & C Committee.
5. Medals for A- and B-Level events:-
  1. Must be provided in gold, silver and bronze for the top placed three teams in each category and racing class.
  2. Must include a medal for reserve – therefore 5 medals for R4 and 7 for R6.
  3. Can be provided by the IRF or the host organisation
  4. The host organisation needs to let the IRF know at least 3 months ahead of the event as to whether they wish to have the IRF's medals or if they wish to provide their own medals.
  5. The host is to cover the costs of the medals as well as getting the medals transported to them.
  6. 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. However, it must include the place, the river, the year, the discipline and the class (women, men, youth, masters)
  7. All team members must be called to the podium.
6. At prize givings in A- and B-Level events, the national anthem of the winning team must be played after the medals are handed over to each of the athletes by a member of the S & C Committee or sponsors/VIP's.
7. All team athletes must either wear their team or national uniforms. In the event that the prize giving is held straight after the race has finished, teams may wear their national water gear. Paddles are allowed to be carried on to the podium.

## **P. Invitations, entries and confirmations**

1. In C- and D-level competitions all entries and deadlines are at the discretion of the event organisers.
2. A- and B-level events are to define their registration and entry fee payment requirements together with the IRF at least 8 months ahead of the event and this must be communicated to all potential participants.
3. The organizing committee for A- and B-level events must confirm each entry within one week of receipt.

*Composed by IRF Board of Directors: Mr. Peter Micheler - 1st Vice President; Mr. Tony Hansen - Funding; IRF Administrator - Ms. Sue Liell-Cock; Mr. Neil Baxter - Head of the IRF Sports and Competition committee: The committee members: Mr. Thomas Karas, Ms. Vember.Mortlock  
Hotel Suerre, Guapiles, Costa Rica, 23rd of September 1998*

*Modified in Futaleufu, Chile and over email. February/March 2000 by Peter Micheler; Robert Kazik; Neil Baxter, Tony Hansen; Sue Liell-Cock; Steve Nomchong; Oleg Grigoriev; Bruce Waters; Rafael Gallo; Glenn Lewman.*

*Modified by email Congress September 2002 and by continued email discussions and voting afterward.*

*Modified by email through BOD vote in June 2004.*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in July 2005.*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in Feb 2007.*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in March 2008*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in February 2009*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in March 2010*

*Modified by email through Extraordinary Congress in July 2010*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in March 2011*

*Modified by email through Sport & Competition Committee vote in Dec 2012*