



Australian Surf Championships - Priority Rules

- Prior to any waves being ridden, all non-priority rules apply.
- The Priority Judge will make any call on Priority using a coloured display system corresponding to the Surfer's competition jersey colours in the water to indicate priority and may consult the judging panel for close calls. With all display systems, if vertical then order of priority will be from top to bottom and if horizontal then order will be from left to right.
- Wave priority is lost as soon as a Surfer Rides a wave or makes a committed paddle to catch and misses a wave.
- For 3-surfer or 4-surfer heats, if the Surfer makes a committed paddle to catch the same wave as a Surfer with higher priority, they then risk losing their priority at the discretion of the Priority Judge.
- Under priority allocation it is the Surfers' responsibility to continually check the priority system for verification.
- If a Surfer inside has second or third priority and their opponent paddles for, but misses a wave, the inside Surfer automatically assumes the higher priority. Therefore, if they also paddle for, but miss the wave, then they have also lost priority. That is, both Surfers have then lost priority even though only one wave has passed and there was not sufficient time to change the priority.
- The Priority Surfer will lose priority if in the opinion of the Head Judge or Priority Judge they:
 - (a) Paddle in front of the non-Priority Surfer to deliberately impede them from catching a wave.
 - (b) Position themselves in the take-off zone to prevent another Surfer from catching a wave.
 - (c) Use their priority by either paddling for or taking off on a wave to block their opponent when the Surfer with Priority appears to have had no intention to score. In this situation priority can be awarded regardless of which Surfer reaches the take-off zone first after the Ride.
- If Surfer with superior priority paddles outside the Primary Take-off Zone and sits on inside position, they will have their Priority suspended until he re-enters the Primary Take-off Zone. If the Surfer does not re-enter the Primary Take-off Zone, they will no longer be the Priority Surfer. The Priority Judge will determine the Surfer's new priority position in the heat. All attempts will be made to verbally announce the Priority Surfer as they start to leave the Primary Take-off Zone by a verbal warning via the PA system. Events to provide a microphone for the PA to the Priority Judge for this purpose that is able to override the beach announcers, to relay Priority decisions like this although Surfers should not rely on the same and rather always rely on the Priority system for the Event.
- An interference can be called on a Surfer with Priority if, in the opinion of the Priority or Head Judge, the Surfer utilises their priority in an unsportsmanlike manner to intentionally block another surfer with lower or no Priority outside of the Primary Take-off Zone.
- In all cases where a dispute results from a decision or a Malfunction of the priority system, the Head Judge and Contest Director to determine a resolution which may include a re-surf.

- Allocation is based on who the Priority Judge believes has reached the primary take off zone first. In cases where Surfers appear to reach the line-up at the same time, priority will go to the Surfer who did not have the last priority.
- Once a heat has ended all priority ceases. If a surfer is riding on a wave as the heat ends they can't be interfered with by any surfer, (even if that Surfer had higher priority before the heat ended). If an interference occurs the violating Surfer will receive a priority situation interference.
- When there is PWC assistance the allocation of Priority when two riders are being transported at the same time will be decided by the Priority Judge after taking into account both pick-ups and drop-offs. PWCs cannot overtake each other at any time when returning a Surfer to the line-up.
- If the Head Judge or Priority Judge determines that priority is affected by either the PWC pilots capacity or mechanical problems in a certain situation, priority will be allocated as the Head Judge or Priority Judge deems fit.
- If PWC assistance is used by any Surfer with priority they automatically lose that priority.
- When a Surfer rides a wave prior to a heat start, that Surfer takes the lowest priority position in their heat once it has begun and retains it after any restart.
- If a Surfer's equipment is damaged (in the discretion of the Priority Judge) or when a Surfer gets washed out of the Primary Take-Off Zone by a set:
 - (a) The Surfer's priority is suspended, indicated by that Surfer having "No Priority"; and
 - (b) The Surfer's priority position (1st, 2nd etc.) they had when they were in the Primary Take-Off Zone can be reinstated once they return to the Competition Area.
- 4-Surfer Heat priority works in the following manner.
 - (a) The first Surfer to Ride a wave then receives fourth priority (First Surfer).
 - (b) The remaining three surfers in the heat have priority over the First Surfer and may paddle for waves without losing this priority until the next Surfer catches a wave (Second Surfer).
 - (c) The remaining two surfers in the heat have priority over the First and Second Surfer and may paddle for waves without losing this priority until the next Surfer catches a wave (Third Surfer).
 - (d) Once the Third Surfer catches a wave, the initial heat priority order is established:
 - (i) The Surfer yet to catch a wave receives first priority; and
 - (ii) the remaining Surfers will receive priority in the order they return to the take-off area.
 - (iii) The Surfer with first priority has priority over all other Surfers. The Surfer with second priority only has priority over the Surfers with third and fourth priority. The Surfer with third priority only has priority over the Surfer with fourth priority.
 - (f) If a Surfer is not in the Competition Area when the heat starts and arrives late, the Surfer will be allocated the appropriate priority position as determined by the Priority Judge at the time when the Surfer reaches the Primary Take Off Zone.
- Priority rules issued by WSL Priority Judge