

Surfski.info World Series

In 2006 Surfski.info established a “World Rankings” system for surf ski paddling, which has gained the support of paddlers and event organizers alike. In the 2007/2008 season, the system has been expanded and improved based on feedback from paddlers and race organizers around the world.

Why a World Series?

What are we trying to achieve with the World Series? True, part of it *is* to decide the “best paddler in the world” but actually, the big picture motivation for it is:

- To give the sport more visibility,
- to bring the countries together and
- to encourage more people to paddle surf skis.
- And ultimately we want to achieve a major sponsorship for a World Series and to drive the sport to the prominence that it deserves.

Define surf ski racing!

Perhaps most importantly, the creation of a World Series presents an opportunity for defining what surf ski racing actually is. Based on a poll of top paddlers around the world, we believe the components of the ideal surf ski race include:

- Open Ocean paddling.
- Big water movement.
- Downwind paddling.

Perhaps the ultimate in surf ski racing was seen in the 2007 ARB Surf Ski World Cup where the course was over 90% downwind in massive swell conditions. A World Series should encourage organizers to plan downwind races on the open ocean.

Money

We also want to see all the top paddlers at all the top races; to achieve, in other words, a World Tour. Most of the leading surf ski paddlers rely on prize money to pay their way. One of the goals of the Surfski.info World Series is therefore: “To encourage race organizers to provide prize money sufficient for all paddlers down to 15th place to pay at least their transport costs to the race.”



Surfski.info World Series – How does it work?

World Rankings

At the heart of the World Series is the World Rankings – which lists paddlers from all over the world who have achieved a 50th place or better in any of the races. The way it works is this:

- Paddlers are awarded points down to 50th place in each race. The paddler who wins gets 50 points; second place gets 49 points and so on, down to 50th place which gets 1 point.
- The points are then multiplied by the course star-rating. For example, the Perth World Cup 2007 is a 4-star race; therefore the winner gets $50 \times 4 = 200$ points.

What if there aren't 50 paddlers in the race?

- If the race is 2-star or less, then the winner gets points equal to the number of paddlers in the race. E.g. the winner of a 2-star race that has 33 paddlers will get $33 \times 2 = 66$ points.
- If the race is 3-star or greater, the winner gets 50 points. So the winner of a 3-star event with 25 paddlers will get $50 \times 3 = 150$ points.

Best of Six Results to Count

Each paddler's best six results count towards the championship. In order to be competitive therefore, the top paddlers must choose which events they compete in.

Racing Season

The World Series begins on July 1 and ends on June 30th.

World Champion

The paddler achieving the highest points total from six races at the end of the season is the "Surfski.info World Champion".



Star Ratings: Criteria

How do we decide between 1- and 5-star races? Here are the criteria based on prize money, the course and ICF recognition.

Prize Money

Why is prize money important? Our goal is help the top athletes attend as many of the World Series races as possible. One way to do this is to provide a) a large first prize to attract the best paddlers and b) enough prize money that all the paddlers down to 15th position can at least pay their transport costs to the race.

1st Prize *	Points
\$1,000-\$2,999	1
\$3,000-\$4,999	2
\$5,000-\$9,999	3
\$10,000-\$39,999	6
\$40,000+	8
\$100,000+	12

* The first prize cannot be greater than 40% of the prize pool. If it does, then the 1st prize is deemed to be 40% of the total prize pool.

Course Characteristics

These criteria were set by the paddlers themselves the majority of whom believe that surf ski racing is should be on the open ocean, should be 25-35km and should have a large downwind component.

Course	Points
50% or more downwind	3
75% or more downwind	3
25-35km	1
50% or more of the course on the open ocean i.e. not in a sheltered bay	1
Waiting period of more than one day (to maximize the chances of optimum racing conditions)	1
Maximum points	9

ICF Recognition

Why be concerned with ICF recognition? For one thing some countries (e.g. France) allocate funding to athletes taking part in recognized races.

ICF Recognition	Points
Yes	1

Drug Testing

Why is this important? While other paddling disciplines such as sprint kayaking sees athletes being frequently tested for performance enhancing drugs, surf ski has no drug testing. As the prize money for races in Surf Ski increases, so does the temptation.

Drug Testing	Points
Yes	1

Race Stars

Race stars	Points	Min 1 st Prize
1 star	<5	
2 star	5-7	
3 star	8-9	US\$5,000
4 star	10-15	US\$10,000
5 star	16+	US\$15,000

Eligible Races

Any race that scores 2 or more points from the criteria above including *at least the minimum criterion for prize-money.*

For example the NY Mayor's Cup would score 3 for the \$5K 1st place prize money. It would qualify as a 1-star race.

How do the current World Rankings races measure up?

Criteria	US Surfski Champs 2007	Defis Kayak (Guadaloupe)	NY Mayors Cup 2007	HK Dragon Race 2007	Dubai Shamal 2007 (UAE)	Perth World Cup 2007 (Australia)	King of the Harbour 2008 (NZ)	Molokai 2008	ARB World Cup 2008 (SA)	Cape Point 2007	Tahiti 2008
Prize Money	2	1	3	3	6	3	1	6	6	1	4
Course	3	8		4	4	8	2	8	9	1	8
ICF recognition									1		
Total	5	9	3	7	10	11	3	13	16	2	12
Stars	**	***	*	**	****	****	*	****	*****	*	***

Races to Count

A total of 6 races will count.

Tie Breaker

Should there be a tie, then the winner will be decided from the previous most highly rated race at which both paddlers competed.