



Australian Underwater Federation- Spearfishing Commission National Competition Rules : A Must Read Document.

Also known as “A section Rules of Competition and Selection”

Version 10 feb 2019.

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of these rules is to be simple, practical and easily understood and implemented by administrators and divers. Because there were gaps and problems, the rules have been redrafted to reduce duplication and to be aligned as much as possible with previously agreed versions (1991). In addition we want to ensure that our A section rules recognise and encourage the interchange of our competitors with other nations (particularly New Zealand) and that our rules in no way disadvantage or discriminate against them when they come to our shores.

These rules are for national Australian spearfishing competitions and the selection of National Australian teams and there are other documents for administration (Bylaws dated March 2005 and a Strategic Plan– see www.auf-spearfishing.com.au) and an AUF Constitution (www.auf.com.au).

Rotation:- events to be rotated as follows,for 2013 completed year. SA, then VIC, then (NT), then QLD, then (TAS), then WA, then NSW. bracketed state/territories for future consideration. Where a state/territory cannot host their turn notification by them must be given at least 12months prior, then the next in order of rotation will be offered the event until a host is found.

SECTION 1- ORGANISATION

1.1 – ORGANISATION AND OFFICIALS

The Australian Underwater Championships will be an annual event.

The National Spearfishing Chair shall provide final authorisation of the Host State body's selected Competition Director (CD) to be responsible for the running of the Championship's events. The CD shall appoint a local committee and officials. Officials may also compete.

Host States or Territories must allow at least Eight days for the overall event to allow for rest days & adverse weather.

The officials and their suggested roles are:

1. Competition Director – oversees the running of the events, provides risk assessment, conducts safety briefings, manages the Disputes Committee, tabulates scores.
2. Sign On/Off Clerk and Timekeeper – verifies memberships, eligibility & start/finish.
3. Weigh-master and scribe- identifies, weighs competitor's fish, records scores

1.2. TITLES AND TROPHIES

Championships and trophies to be awarded are:

Australian OPEN Spearfishing Championship.	All ages.#
Australian GRAND MASTERS Spearfishing Championship.	64 years&over.#
Australian MASTERS Spearfishing Championship	55-63 years.#
Australian VETERAN Spearfishing Championship	45-54 years.#
Australian SENIOR Spearfishing Championship	25-44 years.#
Australian INTERMEDIATE Spearfishing Championship	18-24 years.#
Australian JUNIOR Spearfishing Championship	15-17 years.#
Australian SUB JUNIOR Spearfishing Championship	under 15 years.#
Australian LADIES Spearfishing Championship.	All ages,see note.#
Australian STATE-PAIRS (2divers)Championship.	#
Australian STATE-TEAM (4 divers) Championships.	#
Australian MIXED-PAIRS (male/female) Championship.	#
Australian MIXED-PAIRS L/L,or J/L, or J/J,(subJ included asJ or L, dependent on gender.)	#
Australian FIN-SWIMMING Championship.	#
Australian SUPER-DIVER Championship.	#
Australian FILM-FISHING Championship.	#
Australian most species.	
Australian most meritorious fish(directors choice)	
Australian largest fish.	
Australian Champion State (to be agreed prior to 2016 event).	Trophy only.
Australian True Pairs event.	#

Gold,Silver & Bronze medals awarded where shown # to first 3 competitors. Gold only to the other categories shown above.

Apart from the open champion no male competitor can win more than one of the age categories.

NOTE: LADIES who compete in Ladies Open may also register & compete in the appropriate age categories provided they notify this intention prior to/or on registration day.

A competitors age category will be determined by the age of the person on the first day of competition being actually held.

All perpetual trophies awarded remain the property of the AUF and cannot be taken from the venue by anyone not authorised to do so. Winners may use the trophies at the presentation for photographic purposes & return to the convenors. AUF to have the trophies engraved.

1.3. ELIGIBILITY AND VISITING / OVERSEAS COMPETITORS

- 1.3.1 The competitions shall be open to any individuals who are financial members of the AUF or an eligible' other organisation-visitor/O'seas competitor as per 1.3.3 & 1.3.4
- 1.3.2 Competitors under the age of 15 may only compete with the approval of the CD.
- 1.3.3 Individuals of teams from other countries may be permitted to compete provided they are affiliated to CMAS and make advanced application to the CD and pay any relevant fees.
- 1.3.4 Individuals & teams from other approved Australian Spearfishing organisations who are financial in that organisation may compete at the discretion of the National & state chairs provided the entrant pay appropriate full AUF membership & competition entry fees.
- 1.3.5 Host State organising committee have the right to protest the entry of any competitor they feel has acted unsafely or in a way that brings the sport or the AUF into disrepute. Such protest to be dealt with before day one of the event in accordance with clause 1.4.
- 1.3.6 All perpetual trophies won by overseas competitors shall not leave Australia however the winner's names will be recorded on them. They will also be entitled to any prizes offered for that category.

1.4. PROTESTS AND DISPUTES COMMITTEE

- 1.4.1 Protests to be lodged as soon as possible after an issue is evident in writing or after an event during the Championships shall also be handed in writing along with a protest fee (Appendix 1) to the CD no later than one (1) hour from the time of posting of the official results for the protested event or heat.
- 1.4.2 The Dispute Committee shall comprise the CD and appointed State or International Team Managers or their duly designated proxies (each will have one vote).
- 1.4.3 The Dispute Committee's decision will be final
- 1.4.4 The protest fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld.

SECTION 2- GENERAL RULES

2.1. SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Individuals

Competitors for spearfishing and filmfishing must have the following safety equipment at all times during the competition:

- 2.1.1 Personal float of a minimum 7ltrs (and no maximum size: but float cannot be used to transport a diver e.g. kayak) and principally coloured either yellow, orange or red with reflective tape and with a clearly displayed flag attached as per (2.1.2). Competitor's number/tag must be attached to the float. Float to be towed & not more than 40mtrs from competitor.
- 2.1.2 International Code Flag A (blue/white) of minimum size 250x150mm on top of the float above the surface of the water. Additional flag of similar size in hi vis Fluro yellow/green is highly recommended.
- 2.1.3 Whistle and signalling mirror of at least 50 mm x 50 mm.
- 2.1.4 Sheathed diver's knife on the competitor's person.
- 2.1.5 Other safety equipment such as use of smoke flares, safety sausages or electronic shark shields shall be permitted.
- 2.1.6 Weight belt fitted with quick release buckle.
- 2.1.7 Cover to spear points.

BOATS

- 2.1.9. In Australian Underwater Championship events held in the open sea, a minimum of two (2) safety boats shall operate simultaneously within the competition area. All safety boats must have a radio or other effective means of communications fitted which is capable of contacting emergency groups through the other dive boats or shore base.
- 2.1.10. Competition organisers are to brief boat drivers about the event safety requirements, risks, rules and emergency procedures.
- 2.1.11. Whenever a dive boat has divers in the water – whether either at anchor, whilst tending to divers, or whilst in the process of leaving an area with other divers in the water shall display an International Code flag "A", measuring a minimum of 400mm x 400mm in a prominent position mounted at least 2m above the water surface. A second flag of similar size flown immediately below the alpha in hi vis Fluro yellow/green is highly recommended.
- 2.1.12. First aid kit & materials to prevent blood loss to be readily accessible.
- 2.1.13. When operating in the area within a 100m radius of divers in the water, the maximum permissible speed shall be 4knots or idle speed. Boat drivers not to proceed in gear within 60mtrs of an individual divers float until that divers location is known

2.2. COMPETITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.2.1 Behaviour of competitors which brings the AUF into disrepute shall initially be reviewed by the Disputes Committee. The committee will have the power to determine an appropriate penalty (including disqualification for a heat or the entire competition).
- 2.2.2 If the matter is serious, they may refer the matter to the AUF Board to determine a more greater penalty (fine – see Appendix 1, or reasonable costs based on damage, cancel AUF membership).
- 2.2.3 Competitors shall compete as individuals (except in a pairs event).
- 2.2.4 Individual Competitors may swim together but must not caddy or spot fish or provide physical assistance for each other or share a float or give assistance by towing another competitor or their float. Obviously in an emergency these rules would not apply for giving assistance.
- 2.2.5 Every competitor must attend the competition briefings or if not possible appoint a proxy.

2.3 COMPETITOR'S SPEARFISHING EQUIPMENT

- 2.3.1 All fish must be captured by the competitor using rubber-powered spear, speargun, hand spear or similar device, or by hand. Guns fired by the discharge of compressed or explosive gases into water are forbidden.
- 2.3.2 Burley is only permitted using finned fish species that have been obtained in the water at the competition site during the hours of the event. Such fish must comply with relevant bag & size limits.
- 2.3.3 Fish speared whilst in traps, nets or on lines shall be ineligible for the weigh-in.
- 2.3.4 No breathing aid other than a snorkel shall be permitted.
- 2.3.5 Competitors must be immersed in the water at the time of spearing of any fish.
- 2.3.6 Assisted catches are ineligible for any score. An assisted catch is one where another person contributed muscular power or equipment towards the catch. The use of caddies or fish spotters during the course of the competition is not permitted.
- 2.3.7 A diver must remain within 40 metres of their floats when he/she is at or near the surface of the water.

SECTION 3- SPECIFIC RULES

3.1 Spearfishing

Locations and days

- 3.1.1 Maps of designated competition areas will be provided to competitors (prior to 14 days before the start of the National Championships & the areas to be competed will be determined at the Championships by the organising committee, to suit conditions and venue.)
- 3.1.2 The organiser will provide maps showing 4 preferred locations & 2 other locations designated as reserved for adverse conditions.
- 3.1.3 The individual championships will be run over 2 or 3 days (usually 3). At least 2 days of min 4 hrs must be completed to award positions in the individual open event.
- 3.1.4 Each day of competition will be between 4 to 6 hours duration.
- 3.1.5 The competition will be a 'swim competition' with all competitors starting in a designated start/finish area
- 3.1.6 For land based events a competitor may get out of the water outside the designated area after 3 hours (and may walk but use no other equipment e.g. backpack, push bike, car, unless such equipment was taken into the water by the competitor at the start of the event & towed with them). No equipment is to be hidden on shore prior to the event. Competitors may leave the water prior to the 3 hours for safety, ablutions or equipment repair but must re enter the water in the same location or they may walk back to starting point, deposit fish, or carry out repair/replacement & then re enter the water at the starting point.

- 3.1.7 Rules are basically the same for events being held from boats all marshalled in close proximity. Competitors must start & finish within the marshalling area. Specifics for boat transport events shall be addressed in "B'Sect" rules.
- 3.1.8 The timekeeper will notify official time before the start of the event & notify finish time & then signal the start and finish.
- 3.1.9 No competitor is allowed to spear fish in the designated areas within 14 days prior to the start of the National Championships.

Scoring and eligible species

- 3.1.7 The minimum fish weight will be 500 grams or as agreed by both the AUF Spearfishing Commission and the Host State body running the Championships (and then given in B-section rules).
- 3.1.8 There will be only one Weigh-master per day of competition and all fish weights recorded for scientific & eligibility purposes. Fish will be checked on certified scales where possible or zero adjustable electronic scales.
- 3.1.9 Scoring shall be 100 points per species plus 10 points per kilogram for eligible species with a maximum weight for each species of 15kg.
- 3.1.10 Should any competitor's fish presented for weighing be more than thirty percent (30%) below the minimum weight, a penalty of 105 points (which is equivalent to 100 points for a species and 5 points for a 500 gm fish) shall be deducted from the competitor's score. This is the only penalty to be applied to a competitor for presented fish falling below minimum weight.
- 3.1.11 When preparing the eligible species list (B section rules) for the competition the CD must refer to the National Chair for advice and ensure that no fisheries or marine park limits or regulations are infringed.
- 3.1.12 The CD and Host State body shall take into consideration the area, abundance and edibility of various fish in setting eligible species lists (B section rules).
- 3.1.13 The CD may designate that some species should be gutted to maintain edibility quality.
- 3.1.14 The following species shall be ineligible for weigh- in's at all events.1) sharks, rays & crustaceans. 2) all molluscs & shellfish. 3)squids,Octopus,cuttlefish,4) pipe&flutefish,trumpetfish. 5) marine mammals. 6) all toad fishes.7) protected species.8)catfish,frog fish,9) fish ineligible under "B Sect" rules. Edible species of eels will be allowed if agreed by the majority of State/Territories.

"B'Sect" Rules. (also known as local rules)

These are the local rules prepared by the CD, Host State body and the local committee and endorsed by The National and state chairpersons and shall include the scoresheet, ineligible and protected species, penalties, possible locations, times, administration and any other relevant information

'B'Sect' rules to also include a competition Safety strategy identifying hazards & harm minimisation strategies.

3.2. Super Diver

- 3.2.1 Competitors must compete in three nominated events- spearfishing, finswimming and filmfishing.
- 3.2.2 Scoring shall be on a numerical basis, and based on individuals placing in the event.
Example- 3 competitors
1st – 3 points
2nd 2 points
3rd- 1 point

Example- 35 competitors

1st – 35 points

2nd – 34 points etc

- 3.2.3 In the event of a draw the competitor with the highest placing in the Spearfishing competition will be determined to win the Super diver event.

3.3 Filmfishing

- 3.3.1 Competitors will use their own underwater camera (preferably digital).
- 3.3.2 The event is meant to closely parallel the conditions governing a spearfishing event. A competitor seeks to take still photographs of up to 20 different species of fish or invertebrates. Each photo is allocated points (1-easy fish specie, 5- difficult fish specie) on the degree of difficulty of photographing with additional points for framing. A score sheet of acceptable species will be published for the event and will be selected by the Organising Committee. Score sheet to be representative of the local species and selected to form a suitable score sheet for this competition. Points for different species will reflect the relative difficulty of capturing the species on film.
- 3.3.3 A species must be in its natural habitat and photographed by the competitor below the surface of the sea. Photographs of species in nets, hooked on lines, in containers or aquaria, out of the water or speared, will not be accepted.
- 3.3.4 Berley shall not be used. During the duration of the competition, a competitor cannot have in his possession any marine life.
- 3.3.5 The competitor is allowed twenty (20) frames after the start point of the film or memory card as specified by the event organiser. Blank frames are still counted in this number. Each frame scores only once. The start point of the film or memory card will be of the competitor taken by the event organiser.
- 3.3.6 The 3 Judges (a fish expert, a photography expert, AUF member, or others available & considered suitable by the CD) will decide which fish is the subject of the photograph, and then award points as per the Score Sheet for that species. Each species listing on the Score Sheet can be used only once. Should the same species be photographed a second time, it will score no points.
- 3.3.8 Each photo is awarded additional points for FRAMING of the main subject of the picture as follows:
- | | |
|--|-------------|
| FAR DISTANT (just recognisable) | 0.5 points. |
| MID TO CLOSE RANGE (not centre frame) | 1.0 point |
| MID TO CLOSE RANGE (well framed centred) | 1.5 point |

The procedure at the conclusion of the competition shall be as follows:

- 3.3.9 After signing off, at a designated time a competitor shall have up to 30 minutes to give his exposed film to the clerk, having labelled it first in the manner required by the event organiser. Where digital cameras are used competitors will be allowed one hour after return to land to hand their labelled camera to the clerk. This is to provide time to review and delete shots if required, so that the first 20 shots are those the competitor wishes to present for judging.
- 3.3.10 Photos shall be returned to the competitor after judging.

3.4. Finswimming

- 3.4.1 Fin Swimming shall be defined as the self propulsion in water of a competitor equipped with fins (flippers). There shall be no fin restrictions on size or material. Optional equipment shall include: masks, goggles, snorkel, and neoprene exposure clothing.
- 3.4.2 Individual open competitive events shall be held over distances of between 200 and 500 metres.

- 3.4.3 All competitions shall be conducted in open water and it shall be the responsibility of the CD to ensure that the distances and markers are correctly set up and checked both prior to and at the conclusion of the events.
- 3.4.4 The style of swimming shall be by fins only (no use of arms for propulsion). The start and finish points must be clearly obvious to competitors.

SECTION 4

INTERPACIFIC AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

- 4.1 Selections for Interpacific teams will be carried out in the year proceeding the upcoming event by a call for "expressions of interest" from competitors who are interested & available. The expression of interest call will be made no later than the end of July in the proceeding year & remain open for at least 45 days.
- 4.1.1 A chairman & selection team will evaluate the applications & determine the selected representatives who are to be advised as soon as practical before the event.
- 4.1.2 THIS PROCESS UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

4.2 Selection criteria for World Championships

World teams shall be selected following a call for "expressions of interest" from interested competitors. A chairman & selection panel to be established to manage the process. Expressions of interest will be called in the year proceeding the event & applications remain open for at least 45 days. Successful competitors to be notified as soon as practical before the event.

THIS PROCESS STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

- 4.3** Matters to be considered to select international teams.
- Suitability to proposed event conditions.
 - Previous experience in similar conditions.

 - Ability to successfully identify, hunt & capture unfamiliar or extremely evasive or rare species.

 - Previous performance at international events.

 - Being a team player.

 - Ability to self fund and assist in fundraising.

 - Attitude to safety & following rules & officials directions.

 - Previous local competition results, National, State, Interclub, club events.

 - Willingness to train to peak performance for the event.

 - Availability to compete regularly at international events.

 - Referees opinions.

DEFINITIONS.

AUF: Australian Underwater Federation

Australian or National - Championships or Competition

Competition held annually between members of the Federation, hosted by a State Branch or State Commission in order of rotation and encompassing one or all of the various sporting activities of the Federation.

B Section Rules: Rules governing the various competition events (spearfishing, film-fishing and fin-swimming) as customised by the responsible Organising Committee to suit the Championship local area.

Burleying: Deliberate spreading of food matter in the water to attract target species for Underwater Fishing (Only allowable in the spearfishing events and not any filming events)

Bylaws: The administrative rules of the National Spearfishing Commission.
This includes: purpose, elections, voting, meeting, membership, awards, reports, finance.

CMAS: Confederation Mondiale Des Activities Subaquatiques

(World Underwater Federation of which the AUF is an Affiliated Member)

Super Diver:

The competitor in the Australian Underwater Championships who has competed in a multitude of events and gained the greatest points according to a scoring system.

Club: Organisation affiliated with a State Branch or Spearfishing Commission of the Australian Underwater Federation.

Commission: Body approved by the Federal Board and under the responsibility of a Federal Board to control, represent or act for and/or on behalf of a specific aspect of underwater activities.

Commitment deposit: money paid in advance by a successfully selected competitor to ensure his/her attendance for the selected event. Deposit to be held & released as part of expenses to selected event. Not refundable if competitor becomes unavailable unless in exceptional circumstances determined by selection committee.

Film Fishing Competition: Free diving competition in which competitors take still photographs of target species to gain points according to a scoring system based on difficulty of capture and framing.

Federal Board: Controlling body of the AUF consisting of the Federal Executive, Executive Officers and Commission Chairpersons.

Fin-swimming: Competition race over a fixed distance in water, by the self-propulsion of a competitor equipped with a fin or fins placed on the feet.

Free Diving: Diving below the surface of the water by using only one's lungs as the air supply.

Member: Person financially registered with the Federation.

Open: Event, Competition or Championships in which any CMAS Member may compete.

Policy: Rules fundamental to the aims and objectives of the Federation.

Rules: Rules and Regulations of the Australian Underwater Federation.

Skindiving: All underwater activities administered by the Federation.

Spearfishing: Catching a fish while free-diving with a complying hand spear or speargun

State Branch: State Branch and/or Territorial Branch affiliated with the Federation.

Tethered: Lashing, stowing or stringing of captured fish close to the body.

Spearfishing Competition: Free diving competition to capture fish with a speargun.

APPENDIX 1

Fee schedules

1. Protest fee will be \$50 (see 1.4.1)
 2. Maximum penalty will be \$500 (see 2.2.2)
 3. Australian team member deposit will be \$300 (see 4.1.5 & 4.2.5)
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APPENDIX 2

4.3. Interpacific/Worlds Managers responsibilities

- 4.3.1. Obtain information about the forthcoming venue, locations, maps, weather, visibility, water temperature, eligible species, score sheet, competition rules, penalties, etc.
- 4.3.2. Compile a list of relevant species and some study information on each species as might be available on the web (e.g. www.fishbase.org) including photographs.
- 4.3.3. Compile a document of all relevant information regarding the competition including estimated costs based on current rates for accommodation, food, airfares, car hire, boat hire.
- 4.3.4. Check which equipment may be used during scouting e.g. scuba, underwater scooters, GPS and sounding devices may be used in scouting but not during the competition.
- 4.3.5. Supply a training schedule for the selected team members at least two months before competition.
- 4.3.6. Co-ordinate the departure of team members so as to allow for sufficient time to acclimatise and scout in preparing for the competition.
- 4.3.7. Explain a fair system by which the final team will be selected and structured for each days fishing. Such a system should not allow for individuals to work against one another as the team effort is that which will ultimately count. Divers should be selected upon merit before the competition starts and the reserve may replace one of the divers on the second day.
- 4.3.8. Prepare a list of applicable size limits by species by weighing fish and measuring their sizes at a local fish market. Such limits by species to be marked on each competitor's spearguns so that they cannot become confused during the competition and/or receive penalties as a result.
- 4.3.9. Attend all meetings which have a bearing on the competition and ensure that team members are informed and get access to available boats and equipment, so they are not disadvantaged in any way by competing nations or the organisers.
- 4.3.10. Make sure that divers are giving themselves the best chance of performing well by eating sensibly and taking enough water and food to sustain them during the competition.
- 4.3.11. Manage the teams on the water on each day of the competition making the best possible use of local knowledge, skills and experience. Communicate with each of the divers through whatever methods are allowable under the rules. Direct spearfishermen to areas where other divers are having success and keeping them informed on ways in which they can improve their performance.
- 4.3.12. The manager should keep a close eye on proceedings before and after the weigh in.
- 4.3.13. Provide a feedback report and photos to the AUF Spearfishing Commission within one month of returning from the titles.

4.4 Team Responsibilities

- 4.4.1. Pay a deposit (Appendix 2) to team manager to confirm selection.
- 4.4.2. Provide for sufficient time to be away so as to allow for acclimatisation and scouting. It is best that teams travelling to World Titles have at least 2 weeks prior to the competition in which to scout.
- 4.4.3. Work with the manager by completing checklists so that he can evaluate the knowledge and awareness that the team has of what to expect.
- 4.4.4. Maintain a high level of fitness in the lead up to the competition. Follow guidelines in training specified by the team manager. Attend as many competitions in the lead up as possible and dive as often as possible.
- 4.4.5. Raise funds through raffle draws, functions, sponsors, sale of t-shirts, etc.
- 4.4.6. Arrange appropriate clothing including dress Jacket with Australian colours.
- 4.4.7. Work with the manager to ensure the team has the best chance of performing well.
- 4.4.8. Accept the manager's decision as to which combination of divers to field on any particular day and regard such decision as in the interests of the team and not the individual.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These rules have been re-written with the assistance of many people. Particular thanks to those state chairs & individuals who contributed.

This version of the NATIONAL COMPETITION RULES was last endorsed by all state Chairs and national spearfishing Chair prior to 12/2018.

Adrian Wayne.

National Chair (Australian Underwater Federation – Spearfishing)