



Association
1904 Coastal Highway, Suite C-7
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Phone# 302-227-4011
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UST & SkimUSA Priority & Interference Rule

Priority & Interference

The priority system exists to provide a level playing field for competitors and to avoid potential conflict through clear and simple communication with the riders in the hopes of avoiding conflicts before they occur.

1. Priority Rule: Right of Way

The skimboarder with priority has the unconditional right of way to catch any wave they choose, provided they make a reasonable attempt to indicate intent to ride the wave. Other skimboarders in the heat can run for, and catch, the same wave, but only if they don't obstruct or hinder the scoring potential of the skimboarder with priority. At the start of the heat once the first wave has been ridden, the remaining skimboarder(s) on the slope automatically get priority. A skimboarder loses priority once they catch a wave or initiate running for a wave. If two or more skimboarders catch a wave at the same time, those two skimboarders shall retain the same priority they had before that ride.

In three or four man heats the first skimboarder to catch a wave takes last priority and the remaining skimboarders have priority over that skimboarder. The remaining skimboarders move into the bottom position in the order that they run for their first wave.

2. Other Priority Rules: Abuse of Priority

The Priority Skimboarder will lose priority if in the opinion of the Lead Priority Judge or the Secondary Priority Judge they:

- a. Initiate running for a wave.
- b. Stand in front of the non-priority skimboarder deliberately to impede them from catching a wave.
- c. Position themselves in the running zone to prevent another skimboarder from catching a wave.
- d. Use their priority by either using positioning or running for a wave to block their opponent when the skimboarder with priority appears to have had no intention to score.
- e. Indicate that they are going for a wave, verbally, physically or otherwise, and then do not go for the wave.
- f. Use their priority to obstruct and/or hinder their opponent who is already riding towards or on a wave that they had not made any obvious movement or attempt to get and the under priority rider is not reasonably able to divert out of the way of the priority rider.

For example: Red has priority and yellow is second on the priority list. A far-out wave is approaching red makes no obvious gesture or movement (skimboard up in ready position, movement into position for the wave, no verbal signal to fellow opponents) that they are interested in the wave, so yellow goes. As yellow slides way out and turns on the wave red sees and realizes the potential of the wave, so red goes. As yellow rides the wave back in red cuts in front of yellow obstructing and hindering yellow's ride. Red cannot be called for interference since red has priority, but due to Red's lack of clear communication regarding the wave, yellow shall not incur a interference penalty and Red shall move to the lowest priority position following the ride.



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3. Abuse of Priority Penalty

If a priority skimboarder is found to have egregiously abused priority in an apparent attempt to draw an interference with no apparent goal to generate a score from the wave, the skimboarder will receive a Priority Abuse Penalty. A rider who receives a Priority Abuse Penalty will have their third highest wave (fifth highest wave for AM) from the heat dropped (count as zero points), but the rider will still have three (five for amateur) scoring rides (I.E. Their scoreline will include their first, second, and fourth highest scoring rides from the heat and for AM it will include first, second, third, fourth, and sixth highest wave). After a Priority Abuse Penalty, the rider who received the penalty will drop to the bottom of the priority queue. An abuse of priority penalty can be called only if all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The **rider without priority** made a clear and reasonable attempt to understand the intent of the rider with priority.
- b. The **rider with priority** did NOT make a reasonable attempt to indicate intent to ride the wave either verbally or by picking up their board before running.
- c. The **rider with priority** rode the wave in such a way that the rider without priority was forced to interfere.

4. Interference:

A skimboarder who hinders the scoring potential of the skimboarder with priority over them will be given an interference penalty.

- a. A skimboarder can be called for interference if in the opinion of the Lead Priority Judge and/or Secondary Priority Judge they:
 - i. Cross the running or riding path of an opponent who had Priority, hindering or obstructing their score or timing in any way (crossing the running path of a priority rider within 10 feet in front of them is an automatic penalty). Priority holders shall have free reign to ride the wave how they best see fit without any interference from competitors including from competitors wake or spray or run. **Stay out of the way of rider's who hold priority over you.**
 - ii. Intentionally block the pathway of their opponent so that they cannot run or get into position for the wave.
 - iii. Stand in the pathway of an opponent who is already running for a wave causing them to have to redirect their running path or have to stop running altogether.
 - iv. Abuse priority as stated in the Other Priority Rules: Abuse of Priority segment of this rule book.

5. Interference Penalty

- a. For priority situations when an interference is called on a skimboarder, then the skimboarder shall lose the top counting wave for the heat and shall be judged on their lowest two wave scores in the heat rather than three (or four for amateur).
- b. When an interference is called on a skimboarder when running or riding a wave, the ride will be scored zero.
- c. Any interfering skimboarder must be penalized and once an interference decision is made, it is irrevocable. The Lead Priority Judge, the Secondary Priority Judge, and/or any scoring judge will not enter into any discussion over the interference call.
- d. Where any skimboarder incurs two interferences within a single heat they must immediately leave the Competition Area.



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6. Minor Interference Penalty

- a. For a situation in which an interference is called but it is clear to the Priority Judge(s) that the interfering rider made all reasonable attempts to avoid interfering but nevertheless did interfere, the priority judge may at their sole discretion substitute the standard penalty with a Minor Interference Penalty. When a Minor Penalty is called, the interfering rider will lose their highest scoring ride of the heat but will still be judged on the regular three wave total wave count, rather than two (five wave total for amateur).
- b. The interfering ride shall still be scored as a zero in the case of a Minor Interference Penalty.

7. Additional Clarifications

- a. Priority is decided by order of rides/whoever went last, not by who gets back to the top of the slope first.
- b. The rider with priority can drop to the bottom of priority queue once they initiate running/deter other rider (or riders) from running by blocking, etc. (This may be as little as a single running step). Initiating a run may be as little as a single running step or even a head fake or board fake if that movement deters the other rider from running.
- c. If two riders go for the same wave, the rider without priority must not cross paths of the rider with priority, on the sand or in the water. If rider without priority crosses within 10 feet then it's an automatic minor penalty.
- d. The act of simply picking up your board and walking laterally is not a cause for loss of priority for the priority skimmer. There has to be full physical and/or verbal intent (this will be at the discretion of the Priority Judge).
- e. Rule Clarifications for priority:
 - i. The rider without priority must make a clear and reasonable attempt to understand the intent of the rider with priority.
 - ii. The rider with priority did NOT make a reasonable attempt to indicate intent to ride the wave either verbally or by picking up their board before running.
 - iii. The rider with priority rode in such a way that the rider without priority was forced to interfere.

8. Competitor Protest

If a rider feels that another rider interfered with them, they may protest to the Priority Judge at that time or immediately after the heat. The Priority Judge(s) will decide whether or not the situation warrants an interference call and relay their decision to the tabulating staff.

Interference penalties are designed to be harsh to discourage interference. Respect your fellow competitors to avoid the chance of interference penalties.