



**Geelong Freedivers Inc.**

**2018 - 2019**

**Surf Coast Cup Spearfishing  
Competition Series**

**Rules and Guidelines**

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# 1. Introduction

The Geelong Freedivers Inc. *Surf Coast Cup* is a points based aggregate spearfishing competition series, spanning 4 separate one-day competitions;

- At least one of which will be limited to the use of a pole spear.
- At least one of which will be a designated boat competition.
- At least one of which will be a designated hybrid “photography / spearing” competition.
- The remainder being “normal” shore based competitions.

Ideally, all of the single day events in the series are to be held along the Surf Coast, but weather may require us to move a days competition to within Port Phillip.

The principle prize of this series is the *Surf Coast Cup*, a perpetual award to be issued to the individual obtaining the highest aggregate score.

This document outlines the rules, procedures, and scoring system for the individual day competitions, the aggregate scoring system, and awards issued for the competition series. Each competition in the series will incur an entry fee of \$15, making entry for the series a total of \$60.

## 2. General

1. All competitors must be financial members of the AUF.
2. All competitors must sign up for the competition at least 24 hours **PRIOR** to the specified competition start time, using the (electronic) sign up form located on the Geelong Freedivers Website.
3. Competitors under the age of 15 may only compete with the approval of the dive convenor and with parent or guardian consent.
4. Competitors must load their own gun, kill and thread their own fish, produce their own berley and carry their own gear. Exemptions for gun loading may apply but only for the very young or the physically handicapped, on a case by case basis.
5. All competitions within the *Surf Coast Cup* series shall be a minimum of 4 hours, and a maximum of 6 hours duration.
6. All fish must be captured by the competitor using rubber-powered spear, speargun or similar device, or by hand. Guns fired by the discharge of compressed or explosive gases into water are forbidden.
7. No breathing aid other than a snorkel shall be permitted.
8. Competitors must be immersed in the water at the time of spearing of any fish.
9. Competitors must only load their speargun whilst in the water and must unload their speargun before exiting the water.
10. Competitors must not tow a loaded speargun on a float.
11. Competitors should be mindful of where their speargun is pointed at all times, loaded or otherwise.
12. The use of torches is permitted.

### 3. Safety

1. All *Surf Coast Cup* series competitions will be run as individual diver based but we recommend diving in pairs if desired.
2. Each competitor must tow float with positive buoyancy of not less than 7 kilograms and principally coloured either yellow, orange or red with reflective tape and with a flag clearly displayed as per Safety rule 3 (below)
3. International Code Flag A (blue/white) of minimum size 300x250mm with its base a minimum of 200 mm above the surface of the water.
4. The float may be anchored, but the divers gun must remain tethered to the float, and must remain within 30 metres of their floats when he/she is at or near the surface of the water.
5. Competitors must carry a whistle and a reflective mirror of at least 50 mm x 50 mm **on their person**.
6. Spearheads must be covered in a suitable manner, and spearguns must not be loaded, ***at all times, unless actively engaged in hunting.***
7. Weight belts must be fitted with quick-release buckles. Weight vests must have the capacity to be easily removed in an emergency situation.
8. Competitors must carry a sharp knife which shall be adequately sheathed and readily accessible.
9. Other safety equipment such as use of smoke flares, safety sausages, EPIRBs / PLBs, or electronic shark deterrents shall be permitted.

## 4. Use of Berley

1. Berleying is only permitted using species that have been obtained in the water at the competition site during the hours of the event. No pre-purchased bait or otherwise to be used.
2. The Berleying of Abalone, Sea Urchins and Southern Rock Lobster is strictly forbidden. Any Member found to be berleying these species, shall be disqualified from the days competition with no exception.

## 5. Banned Areas

No competitor is allowed to swim within a banned area during any competition. Such person if found guilty will be disqualified. Banned areas include;

1. Any restricted area or closed water as specified by Victorian recreational fishing legislation for spearfishing.
2. All Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries
3. Any restricted area outlined by the dive convenor in the pre-dive brief
4. An area within 100m of the Queenscliff ferry terminal.
5. An area within 100m of the Sorrento ferry terminal.
6. An area within 100m of the Blairgowrie Marina.
7. The area adjacent to Swan Bay and the Submarine marked by Yellow "No boating" buoys . (This means no spearfishing at the Submarine or inside of the buoys).

## 6. Competition Location, Start, End and Weigh In.

1. Competition locations are not set in advance due to the nature of the sport depending on favourable conditions. The dive convenor will endeavour to hold the competition at a suitable location.  
The location will be selected based on weather conditions at the listed competition sites. If the dive convenor determines there are no suitable locations the competition may be cancelled and rescheduled for the following spare weekend.  
Information will be made available by the clubs website, facebook page, and individually, if applicable.
2. All competitors must personally sign-on at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the event. If there is no record of a competitor entered on the competition roll, that competitor shall be considered not to have entered the event.
3. Prior to the competition start, a pre-dive safety check & briefing will be conducted, and announcements concerning the competition shall be made, including:
  - a. A current weather report with any warnings which may be applicable.
  - b. Identification of any areas of danger: i.e. shallow reef, strong currents
  - c. Official time shall be announced at this time with the responsibility on the competitors to synchronize their watches.
  - d. Official finishing time of the competition shall be stated at this time.
  - e. If a boat start is to occur, the starting point is to be defined
  - f. Any changes to score sheets shall be made known at this time.
  - g. Announcement of boundaries and marine park zonings are to be defined at this time.
  - h. Officials are to be identified at this time.
4. Competitors must start from the designated area and may travel by foot over land to another area, but must sign-off back at the designated sign-off area.(unless otherwise specifically allowed by the convenor on the day of competition)
5. Competitors must personally sign-off after exiting the water (even if disqualified).
6. All competitors must treat their fish appropriately to preserve their edibility after the competition and present them to the weigh-in area within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of the event.
7. Competitors are to present fish whole at the weigh station, however in the event of a shark, seal, stingray, or similar predatory species attacking a competitor's catch resulting in damage or mutilation, or any other activity causing severe damage, breakage or mutilation to the fish, then only the longest/heaviest section of each scorable species can be entered at the weigh in. Two or more sections of the same species cannot be weighed as one.
8. Competition weigh in and scoring takes place as an individual.
9. Only **five species total** from the eligible species list is to be presented at weigh.
10. The score obtained goes towards the *Surf Coast Cup* series aggregate score.
11. Fish will be drained by the weighmaster before weighing.

12. Competitors who are late back shall have their fish recorded but are not eligible for scoring unless reason for being late is successfully protested and approved by the convener.
13. Any competitor who is caught in the weigh-in ring or at the competition venue (including in their boat ), with an undersized fish, breaking any bag limits or other fisheries regulations as determined by Victorian fisheries laws and regulations will be disqualified from the competition on the day. Depending on the severity of the offence further penalties may be applied.
14. Any individual found to be disposing whole fish in an inappropriate manner, after exiting the water, shall be subject to disciplinary action with no exception.

## 7. Eligible Species and Competition Scoring

1. All fish captured during competition must comply with Victorian recreational fishing minimum legal size limit and bag limits.
2. Eligible species appear on the *Surf Coast Cup* scorecard. Unlisted species may not be weighed in.
3. Only 5 of the eligible species can be presented at weigh in.
4. Not more than two fish from any eligible species are to be presented at the weigh-in. A competitor will only receive points for one eligible fish of each species on the current scoresheet.
5. Should any fish presented at weigh in be under the specified minimum weight for that species, that fish will be ineligible for scoring. No penalties will result from presenting underweight fish.
6. Fish speared whilst in traps, nets or on lines shall be ineligible for the weigh-in.
7. For scoring on the day of competition, see the “Surf Coast Cup” scorecard.
8. Eligible species have been given specific base points. Score will be calculated by the base points + a specified % of weight as points.
9. Score shall be determined as a percentage of the top points from the day’s competition.
  - a. For instance, in a competition, a competitor weighs in 5 species and achieve a point tally of 883. This is the highest point tally for the day. As a result, their score will be 100%, and each competitor will then be awarded 100 points towards the *Surf Coast Cup* aggregate score.
  - b. In that same competition, the second place competitor achieves a point tally of 833, so they achieved 94% of the highest point tally for the day for the day, so their score is 94. Each competitor will be awarded 94 points towards the *Surf Coast Cup* aggregate score.

### **Specific additional rules for designated hybrid spearfishing / photography competitions:**

10. In addition to weighing in fish for scoring, competitors are able to submit photographs that have been taken of eligible species during the period of competition.
11. Each competitor may submit one photograph of each eligible species.
  - a. If you have weighed in a fish of that species, you may not submit a photograph of a fish of that same species.
12. The subject of the photograph must be alive, and in its natural environment at the time of the photograph being taken.
13. Though there is a limit of 5 species that can be presented at weigh in for speared or captured species, there is no such limit for photographed species, and photographs of eligible species do not count towards your limit for speared or captured fish.

14. Photographs must be submitted for scoring to the competition weighmaster within 1 hour of the designated competition end time.
  - a. Photographs must be provided to the Competition weighmaster on a USB key or SD Card.
  - b. Photographs must be submitted unedited (no cropping, colour enhancements, etc).
  - c. Photographs must be submitted in .jpg or .png formats.
  - d. The filenames of the submitted photographs must contain your name, and the name of the species as it appears on the scoresheet. Eg. if John Smith was submitting a photo of a Snook, he would name the file "*John Smith Snook.jpg*"
15. The subject species of the photograph being submitted must be **clearly present** and **clearly identifiable** in the photograph. If the subject species cannot be found, or there is ambiguity surrounding the identity of the species, the photograph will attract 0 score. These decisions will be at the discretion of the Competition Weighmaster.
16. **A photograph of an eligible species will attract the base points of that species towards the competitors total points for the days competition.**

## 8. Series scoring and awards

1. Final score will be the individual's total score from their best “three out of four” results, from each of the competitions within the *Surf Coast Cup* series.
2. Awards will be given to the individuals who achieved the following:
  - a. Highest score across the series (“Surf Coast Cup Series Champion”).
  - b. Second highest score across the series.
  - c. Third highest score across the series.
  - d. Winner for each event:
    - i. Pole spear
    - ii. Boat
    - iii. Shore
    - iv. Photo
3. In the event that two or more individuals obtain the same aggregate score for the series, both individuals will share the award.

## 9. Boats, PWCs and Kayaks

1. The use of power craft (Motorised boats and Personal Watercraft) is permitted **only** if the competition is designated as a “Boat Competition”.
  - a. Designation of a boat competition will be advised at the time of competition announcement.
  - b. All power craft used in the course of a competition must comply with all requirements of the Maritime authority, and must carry all appropriate safety equipment. All power craft may be subject to inspection by the dive convenor.
  - c. When at anchor or with divers in the water, all powercraft must clearly display flag “A”, measuring 750mm x 600mm and displayed a minimum of 900mm above the gunwale
  - d. Boat flags must be displayed by dive boat as soon as a diver is in the water.
  - e. During the hours of a Competition and from a boat registered into that Competition, there shall be no line fishermen fishing or non-competing spearfishermen operating from said boat, with the exception of ‘caddies’.
  
2. The use of a Kayak is permitted **only** if the competition is designated as a “Boat Competition”.
  - a. Notification of the use of a kayak is provided to the dive convenor 24 hours prior to the commencement of the competition.
  - b. The kayak operator is skilled in the working of the kayak, and is able to demonstrate that they can dismount and mount the kayak, whilst in-water.
  - c. The Kayak has a minimum length of 3.5 metres.
  - d. The Kayak is in good working condition, and does not leak water into the hull.
  - e. The Kayak is a “sit on top” fishing style kayak, with no way for water to enter the hull with all hatches firmly secure.
  - f. Appropriate safety equipment is used (PFDs, etc).
  - g. Each Kayak must have at least 1 metre of reflective tape per side.
  - h. If using the Kayak *in lieu* of a dive float, the kayak must display an International Code A flag of minimum size 300x250mm, at least 1500mm above the water's surface, as well as an orange or red flag at least 300x250mm displayed directly below the Code A flag.
  - i. Each competitor stays within 2 kilometres of shore.
  - j. Each competitor carries at least one **UHF** radio tuned to channel 33.
  - k. Each competitor carries a least one Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) or similar device.

## 10. Additional Rules and Limitations

1. Additional rules or limitations may be placed on a specific competition day.
2. The additional rule or limitation will be advertised at the time of competition announcement.
3. Any additional rules or limitations are not to affect species eligibility or scoring.

# 11. Protests

1. No protest fee is required to be paid.
2. Any competitor may protest against any fish weighed during a competition. The objection must be made whilst the fish is being weighed in and is still available.
3. Competitors are responsible to see that their fish are properly weighed and recorded by taking the spare score sheet provided, and must protest any discrepancy prior to their fish being removed or mixed up with other fish.
4. Protests involving discrepancies in the provisional scores must be submitted to the dive convenor within 7 days of the competition scores being posted on the club website or facebook page.
5. All protests will be heard by the dive convenor and any other official, competitor, or club member that the dive convenor deems to nominate as part of a protest committee. The protest committee may hear evidence as it sees fit. The protest committee's final ruling on the protest is final.
6. Any protest will be ruled on in a time frame decided by the dive convenor or competition sub-committee.