COMPETITION RULES

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ABOUT THE RULES

The purpose of the competition rules is to ensure fairness – this is a crucial foundation and a vital feature of the 'spirit' of the sport.

The competition rules are relatively simple, but as many situations are subjective and technical officials are human, some decisions will cause debate and discussion. Independent of individual views on these decisions, the technical officials' rulings should be respected. All those in authority, especially team officials, have a clear responsibility to sport to respect the technical officials and their decisions.

The competition rules cannot deal with every possible situation, so where there is no direct provision in the rules and regulations, technical officials are expected to consider both the letter and purpose of the rules in making decisions. Guidance notes have been included to assist technical officials, which may be expanded and developed as needed.

All competitive sports involve some risk of accident and injury. Technical officials must pay particular attention to the rules where they concern the safety of the competition and participants, both on and off the Field of Play.

CHANGES TO THE RULES

The IFSC plans to publish the competition rules in stable form on a quadrennial basis. The regulations governing the sport, including those implementing these rules for individual competitions, may be amended more frequently as necessary to reflect the demands on and from the sport's participants and other stakeholders.

NOTES ON THE RULES

The IFSC publishes the competition rules in English.

National federations which produce a translated version of the rules are invited to send a copy to the IFSC, clearly stating on the front cover that it is their official translation, so it may be posted on the IFSC website for use by others. If there is any divergence in the wording/meaning in or between any translation of the rules, the English text is authoritative

The competition rules should apply in every competition, independent of the level. National federations may vary the rules to suit local constraints unless such variations would run contrary to the spirit or letter of the rules.

1 THE COMPETITION AREA AND FIELD OF PLAY

1.1 In keeping with the ethos for the sport, competitions held under these rules must take place on artificial climbing structures and not on natural rock formations or boulders.

Competition Area

1.2 The Competition Area encompasses the Field of Play together with any off-field holding areas (e.g. **Call Zones**) and transits, technical areas, competitor preparation areas (both for warn-up and warm-down activities), and any mixed areas used for immediate post-competition activities.

1.3 The Competition Area must be delineated and physically separate from any part of the venue open to the public.

Field of Play

1.4 The Field of Play is the public facing area on which competitive activity takes place. The Field of Play may encompass multiple climbing surfaces, as required for the planned events.

1.5 The dimensions of the Field of Play are determined by the number, configuration and size of the climbing surfaces required for the competition. The boundary of the Field of Play should extend beyond both any impact area and the projected ground area of the climbing surfaces to allow competitors and on-field officials to transit without entering the fall zone of another competitor.

1.6 Entrances/exits to the Field of Play should allow unimpeded access for competitors and technical officials.

Design

1.7 Each route/boulder will be designed to limit the risk of injury to a climber or any 3rd party, to avoid obstruction to any other climber or route/boulder, and without moves which create a collision risk.[1]

1.8 The impact area around each route/boulder must be kept clear from obstructions/objects. The Head Route Setter will adjust the number and design of the boulders to the safety matting available.[2]

1.9 Routes and boulders may, if allowed by the applicable competition regulations, be constructed with visually distinctive holds (e.g., in a specific colour). Any holds which do not share this visual distinction will be treated as **out of bounds**.

1.10 The number of handholds on any boulder should not exceed 12 and the average number per boulder across a round should be between 4 and 8.

Technical Markings

1.11 Each lead route must be clearly marked to show which anchor is the **Top**.

1.12 Each boulder must be clearly marked to show:[3]

A) A **Starting Position** defined by holds/macros/volumes fixed to the climbing surface and marked for both hands and both feet. These markings must use a distinctive colour and should not indicate specific hand placements,[4]

B) a **Top**, which will be either a finishing hold marked in the same colour as the starting holds or a standing position on top of the boulder,

C) any **Zone** hold(s) marked using a different colour to the starting holds.

1.13 Any hold designated as a Safety Hold will be clearly marked with a blue cross, with a second blue cross positioned adjacent to the bolt hangar for the associated quickdraw. All Safety Holds must be marked on the relevant scoring topo and pointed out during any collective observation period.

1.14 Holds or parts of the climbing surface that are **out of bounds** for a specific route/boulder must be clearly marked to show they cannot be used.[5]

2 TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

2.1 The climbing structure, safety matting, holds (including any macros and volumes), fixed anchor points, and all technical equipment used in competition - whether provided by the event organiser, equipment partner or individual competitors or teams - must comply with the IFSC Equipment Code.

3 PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

3.1 Each competitor is entirely and solely responsible for the technical equipment and clothing they intend to use or wear during competition.

3.2 Competitors may not use or wear any device or equipment which could impair the ability of on-field officials to communicate with them while on the Field of Play, except as allowed by the applicable competition regulations.

3.3 Competitors must wear climbing shoes and, where relevant, a climbing harness during their attempts. Competitors may also use:

A) a chalk bag and commercially available dry or liquid climbing chalk for their hands.

B) a climbing helmet.

3.4 Unless allowed by applicable competition regulations, competitors are prohibited from:

A) using any substance or equipment that modifies the condition of holds or the climbing surface,[6]

B) wearing gloves or kneepads.[7]

4 TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

Jury President

4.1 Each competition must be controlled by an official who has full authority to enforce the rules (the **Jury President**). The Jury President must maintain strict neutrality and independence. The Jury President must:

A) be independent of the event organiser,

B) have no family, professional, or close personal relationship with any competitor or team official,

C) be free from any financial or other interests that could influence their decisions.

4.2 The Jury President, in consultation with the Head Route Setter, has authority to make decisions about safety within the Competition Area. The Jury President may:

A) delay, interrupt, postpone, or stop any part of a competition and/or require the replacement of any facilities/equipment where necessary for safety reasons,

B) order any competitor to be stopped where continued progress or attempts would present undue risk to the safety of the competitor or any other person,

C) dismiss or have removed any person whose actions present, or may present, a risk to the safety of any person.

4.3 Under no circumstances may the Jury President make special provisions for the benefit of an individual competitor.[8]

Other technical officials

4.4 Other technical officials (category judges, route/boulder judges, route setters) may be appointed as set out in the applicable competition regulations. The Jury President, category judges and route/boulder judges are, collectively, the **on-field** officials.

4.5 The on-field officials have the power to make decisions regarding the scoring of attempts on any route/boulder, the classification of any incident as a Technical Incident, and infractions of the rules within the Competition Area. The applicable competition regulations must identify how such powers are delegated.

Miscellaneous

4.6 The interpretation and implementation of the rules by the on-field officials may be contested only where the rules permit a protest or appeal (§12).

4.7 The applicable competition regulations must identify who will replace a technical official if they are unable to start or continue.

5 DEFINITION AND TYPES OF ATTEMPTS

General

5.1 An individual effort made by a climber to complete a route or boulder is referred to as an **attempt**. Once an attempt starts it is considered in-progress until ruled **successful** or **unsuccessful**, whichever comes first. These rules set out:

- limits on the number and duration of attempts (§6),
- when an attempted starts (§7),
- when an attempt ends, either successfully or unsuccessfully (§8),

- how attempts are judged and scored (§9)

Types and principles for attempts

5.2 Competitors and team officials must not:

A) interfere in the preparation or attempts of other competitors,[9]

B) change or attempt to change any holds or markings on a route/boulder or otherwise change the condition of a route/boulder for later starting competitors.[10]

5.3 Climbing is a problem-solving sport requiring creative movement, spatial awareness, and the ability to read and interpret complex three-dimensional challenges. These skills are most effectively tested where attempts are made **on-sight**. If a round is declared as **on-sight**:

A) competitors must not seek or accept any information about the route/boulders beyond that which is officially provided or gained in any scheduled observation period (collective or individual). Observing other competitor's attempts, or the work of the route setters in creating the route, is prohibited.[11]

B) team officials and other individuals associated with competitors are prohibited from attempting to communicate any additional information about the routes/boulders to the competitors.

C) any attempt to circumvent these rules, whether by competitors seeking information or by others trying to provide it, will be considered a serious breach of these rules.

Although only a competitor's first attempt can be **on-sight**, these principles of fair play and problem-solving integrity apply to every attempt made by all competitors in a round, and these rules should be interpreted and applied with this in mind.

5.4 If a round is declared as **on-sight**:

A) a collective observation period **may** be organised prior to the start of the round. During this period, competitors may observe the routes/boulders, and touch the starting holds, but must not practice any moves on the routes/boulders.[12]

B) a competitor may share information gathered during the collective observation period with another competitor only where neither has attempted the route/boulder.

C) team officials must not communicate any information about or relating to the routes/boulders with competitors until they have completed the round.

5.5 If a round is declared as **flash**:

A) a demonstration of the routes/boulders must also be made prior to the start of the round.

B) team officials may communicate information about or relating to the routes/boulders with competitors before, during and after their attempts.

6 NUMBER AND DURATION OF ATTEMPTS

Lead

6.1 A climber may make a single scoring attempt on a route in any round of competition. If attempts are to be made **after-work**, climbers will be allowed a practice period before their scoring attempt. This practice period may be time- or attempt-limited.

6.2 A climber may be allowed to restart an attempt if a Technical Incident has occurred.

6.3 The allowed climbing time for each attempt will be set out in the applicable competition regulations and should not exceed 6 minutes.

Speed

6.4 A climber may make a single scoring attempt on a route in any scheduled heat. A practice period may be organised before the start of the first round of the competition. This practice period may be time- or attempt-limited but any attempts made will not count as a scoring attempts.

6.5 A climber may be allowed to restart their attempt if a Technical Incident has occurred, or where a race was stopped following a False Start, or if required by the applicable competition regulations as a tie-break process.

6.6 A maximum climbing time for each attempt may be set out in the applicable competition regulations.

Boulder

6.7 A climber may be allowed a limited number of attempts on each boulder in a round of competition, given a time limit for their attempts on each or all boulders, or a combination of both. A practice period may be organised before the start of the first round of the competition. This practice period may be time- or attempt-limited but any attempts made will not count as a scoring attempts.

6.8 A climber may be allowed additional time or attempts if a Technical Incident has occurred which impeded the climber's attempt(s).

6.9 The allowed climbing time for attempts on any individual boulder, or for all boulders in a round, will be set out in the applicable competition regulations. The allowed climbing time may be measured from:

A) the start of the round,

B) from a defined starting signal for each boulder attempted, or

C) the start of the climber's attempts on a boulder.

7 THE START OF AN ATTEMPT

Lead

7.1 An attempt is considered to have started when a climber leaves the ground.[13]

Speed

7.2 An attempt is considered to have started when the force on the starting pad falls below the threshold required to trigger the timer.

7.3 A start will be judged invalid (i.e., a **False Start**) if a climber's recorded Reaction Time is less than 0.100s **and** less than that of any other climber in the same race.

Boulder

7.4 An attempt is considered to have started when a climber leaves the ground.[14]

7.5 A climber must start each attempt by Controlling the marked starting holds to achieve a stable position with both hands and both feet in the **Starting Position**. A start will be invalid (i.e., a **False Start**) if the climber fails to achieve this or uses any other holds before doing so.[15]

8 THE END OF AN ATTEMPT

8.1 An attempt will be ruled **unsuccessful** if the climbing time has expired or prior to that, a climber either:

A) makes a False Start,

B) falls from the route/boulder,[16]

C) touches the ground,

D) has gained an advantage by using any part of the climbing surface or any holds, macros, or volumes marked **out of bounds** in accordance with §1.9 and §1.14,

E) has gained an advantage by using the climbing rope/lanyard or other safety equipment (including quickdraws or bolt hangars), any open edges to the climbing surface, any placards on the climbing surface, or (with the hands) any unused/unplugged T-Nut emplacements,

F) has their attempt stopped by an on-field official.

Lead

8.2 An attempt in lead will also be ruled **unsuccessful** if a climber:

A) clips a quickdraw out of sequence,[17]

B) unclips any quickdraw other than to correct a **z-clip**,[18]

C) makes any climbing movement past the Last Safe Position on a route.[19]

8.3 An attempt in lead will be ruled **successful** if a climber clips the final anchor on the route.[20]

Speed

8.4 An attempt in speed will be ruled **successful** if a climber stops the timer by striking the finishing pad with a hand.

Boulder

8.5 An attempt in boulder will be ruled **successful** if a climber:

A) finishes standing on top of the boulder before the climbing time expires, or

B) Controls/matches the marked finishing hold with both hands[21] and having done so:

i) achieves a stable position before the climbing time expires, and

ii) either performs some action common to the sport or Controls the marked finishing hold long enough to do so.[22]

9 DETERMINING THE RESULT OF AN ATTEMPT

Lead

9.1 The result of an **unsuccessful** attempt in lead will be last scoring hold Controlled with the hands to:

A) complete an Establishing Movement,[23] or

B) make an Advancing Movement.[24]

If a hold is Controlled to make an Advancing Movement, the result will be marked with the postfix "+".

9.2 No postfix "+" may be awarded where an attempt has ended **unsuccessfully** under §8.2.

9.3 The result of a **successful** attempt in lead will be recorded as **Top** and, when required by the applicable competition regulations, the climbing time.

Speed

9.4 The result of an **unsuccessful** attempt in speed will be recorded as a **Fall** or a **False Start**, depending on the cause.

9.5 The result of a **successful** attempt in speed will be recorded as the climbing time.

Boulder

9.6 The result of a **successful** attempt in boulder will be recorded as **Top** together with the number of attempts required.

9.7 If the design and marking of a boulder includes any **Zone** holds, and the climber during an in-progress attempt Controlled the hold with their hands to:

A) complete an Establishing Movement,[25] or

B) complete an Advancing Movement to achieve a stable position on some hold further along a line of progression of the boulder,[26]

then the result of the attempt will include the relevant **Zone(s)**.

10 TIMING ATTEMPTS

10.1 Only times recorded in scoring attempts may be considered for the purposes of records, results or rankings.

11 SPORTING AND OTHER INCIDENTS

11.1 Any incident or unusual/unforeseen circumstance affecting a climber's attempt on a route or boulder will be evaluated under the principle that climbers are primarily responsible for their own actions and decisions, while acknowledging that external factors may impede or assist an attempt.

Technical Incidents

11.2 The on-field officials will determine whether any incident or unusual/unforeseen circumstance affecting a climber's attempt is classified as a Technical Incident. The on-field officials will consult with the Head Route Setter when necessary.

11.3 If a competitor elects to continue an attempt after a potential or confirmed Technical Incident that adversely effected their attempt, the incident will be considered waived and closed for that competitor. A competitor may not waive an incident that provided an advantage.

11.4 If a Technical Incident is confirmed and cannot be waived or is not waived:

A) the relevant attempt may be ruled unsuccessful at the point and time of the incident,

B) the climber may be allowed to restart the route/boulder once the cause of the incident is rectified and, if necessary, the allowed climbing time will be reset or adjusted to account for any time lost.

C) the result of the attempt will be the better of the progress made before the incident and after any restart.

11.5 The process for managing Technical Incidents should be set out in the applicable competition regulations.

Blood injuries

11.6 If a climber sustains a blood injury, any contaminated holds must be cleaned and the wound cleaned/dressed. Where the competition format allows the climber to make multiple attempts or involves multiple routes/boulders, the Jury President must be satisfied that the wound is adequately dressed and that the risk of blood transfer is minimal before allowing the climber to continue.[27]

12 PROTESTS AND APPEALS

12.1 A competitor (or a team official acting on their behalf) may file an **appeal** if their result/ranking in an event is affected by:

A) a judging error,

B) an error in scorekeeping or timekeeping,

C) some matter relating to the eligibility or conduct of a competitor or team official.

12.2 To be admissible, an appeal must be submitted to in writing to the Appeal Jury:

A) by the competitor affected or a team official with Appeal Eligibility under the applicable competition regulations (the **appellant**),

B) inside the time limits specified in the applicable competition regulations, and

C) must state the competitor affected, the substance of the appeal and the rule basis for the appeal.

If ruled inadmissible, the appeal form will be returned and marked as **invalid**. No appeal fee will be payable.

12.3 In examining an appeal, the Appeal Jury will have regard for and consider the spirit and intent of the rules and the need to uphold the integrity of the sport.[28]

12.4 The Appeal Jury will consider the Admissible Evidence allowed under the applicable competition regulations. If this evidence:

A) is conclusive and supports the appeal, the appeal will be marked as **successful** and the decision on the Field of Play will be amended or the error otherwise corrected.

B) Is inconclusive or does not support the appeal, the appeal will be marked as **unsuccessful** and the decision on the Field of Play will stand.

All appeal decisions will be confirmed in writing and communicated to the appellant.

12.5 If the Admissible Evidence does not allow the matter under appeal to be reviewed, the decision made on the Field of Play will stand, and the appeal marked **undetermined**.

12.6 An appeal fee may only be charged if an appeal is unsuccessful.

12.7 A decision of the Appeal Jury will be considered as a Field of Play rule decision and is not subject to further review or appeal, other than as allowed under the IFSC Disciplinary Rules.

13 RULE INFRINGEMENTS AND MISCONDUCT

Sanctions

13.1 Sanctions may be imposed for infringement of these rules and/or for misconduct as follow:

Caution	Disqualification
Breach of these rules without actual or potential serious impact on the fairness or results of competition.	Breach of these rules with actual or potential serious impact on the fairness or results of competition. Observation or gathering information on any route/boulder intended to be attempted **on-sight** beyond that contemplated within these rules.

Non-compliance with the instructions of an IFSC official.	
Unsporting conduct of a minor nature. Use of obscene or abusive language or behaviour of a relatively mild nature.	Unsporting conduct of a serious nature. Use of obscene or abusive language or behaviour of a serious nature. Receipt of two cautions in an event.

13.2 Sanctions may also be imposed as set out in any code given the status of a rule within any applicable competition regulations.

13.3 The imposition of a sanction will be accompanied by showing a Yellow Card (for a caution) and/or a Red Card (for a disqualification):[29]

Consequences

13.4 A competitor in receipt of a caution may continue to participate in the event. A team official in receipt of a caution will not be allowed access to the Competition Area for the remainder of the event.

13.5 A competitor who is disqualified will be ineligible to participate in any subsequent rounds and will be unranked.[30]

13.6 A competitor disqualified for a serious offence in any event will be disqualified for all events in the competition.

Other persons

13.7 The Jury President may order the removal of any person infringing these rules or disrupting the competition and, if necessary, suspend any competition activities whilst this takes place.

GLOSSARY

1. The following terms will apply throughout these rules:

Shall, and **must** mean a mandatory requirement.

Shall not and **must not** mean a prohibition.

Should and **should not** are recommendations, there may be reasons choose a different course of action, but the full implications must be understood, and the case carefully weighed before doing so.

May means a discretionary matter.

The terms **athlete**, **climber** and **competitor** are used interchangeably**.**

2. The following definitions will apply throughout these rules:

Admissible Evidence means the evidence allowed to be used in determining the results of any appeal, as set out in the applicable competition regulations.

An **Advancing Movement** is a single or continuous series of climbing movements aimed at securing the next hold in a sequence, in which the climber attempts to reach or grip that hold with their hand(s) and advances or repositions their body to enable this.[31]

After-Work means an attempt on a route/boulder made with first-hand knowledge of the intended climbing sequence. This knowledge comes from pre-practice of or prior attempts on the route/boulder.

Appeal Eligibility means an entitlement to make an appeal as set out in the applicable competition regulations.

Appeal Jury means the technical officials responsible for determining the results of any appeal, as set out in the applicable competition regulations.

Competition Area means those parts of the venue set aside:

- for use by technical officials, and/or on-venue results management teams.
- for athletic warm-up/warm-down before and after climbing, and/or areas set aside specifically for recovery.
- as Call Zones and transits to/from these, the Field of Play and adjacent technical areas, including any areas set aside for team officials (e.g. any “coaches’ corridor”)

Control means the intentional management of a climber's position and movement by either:

A) using the climbing surface/holds, or

B) shifting their centre of mass.

An **Establishing Movement** is a single or continuous series of climbing movements aimed at stabilising a climber’s position on a hold, in which the climber uses the hold to adjust their position, re-grip, or shift weight to achieve balance and stability.[32]

Event Seeding means the preliminary ordering or ranking of competitors for an event, based on their previous performances or other specified criteria.

False Start has the meaning given in §7.3 and §7.5.

Fixed Time means a specific time at which an event or activity is scheduled to take place.

Flash means a ground-up attempt on a route/boulder made with some knowledge of the intended climbing sequence but without prior practice/attempts.

Invalid Result Mark or **IRM** means a mark or code indicating a non-scoring or invalid result. IRMs include failure to start (**DNS**), disqualification for technical infractions (**DSQ**), and disqualification for unsporting behaviour (**DQB**).

Last Clipping Position means the last hold from which the Head Routesetter has ruled it possible to clip some quickdraw, or from which a competitor has shown it is possible to clip.

Last Safe Position means that a competitor has Control of, but not yet made any climbing movement to pass beyond:

A) a marked Safety Hold where the associated quickdraw has not been clipped, or

B) any other hold beyond which, in the reasonable opinion of the Jury President or category judge, further progress would be unsafe.

Not Earlier Than (NET) time means the earliest possible time for an event or activity.

Official Results means the results published following the conclusion of any round of an event, marked as such and issued by an authorised official.

Official Start List means a list of all competitors scheduled to start a round in the order and/or at the time set out on the list. Each Official Start List will show:

- the event and round,
- the starting order and, where competitors are scheduled to start at a fixed time, the starting times for each competitor
- the name and IOC country code of each competitor,
- the time at which warm-up area will be open and/or closed for entry, and for any collective observation, and the Start of Play,
- the scheduling of any cleaning breaks

On Sight means a ground-up attempt on a route/boulder made without any prior knowledge of the intended climbing sequence and without any prior practice/attempts.

Provisional Results means any results published whilst a round is underway and/or prior to the publication of the Official Results for the relevant round.

Reaction Time means the difference between the time at which an attempt is considered to have started and the initiation of the Starting Signal.

A **Safety Hold** is a designated hold on a route, placed in circumstances where progression past the hold without clipping an associated quickdraw would pose a significant safety risk. A Safety Hold and its associated quickdraw must be clearly marked on the route.

Starting Signal means a unique tone broadcast by an automated timing system to indicate the start of the climbing time.

The **Start of Play** for any round of competition is the time when the first competitor taking part in the round enters the Field of Play to commence their attempt or any period of individual preparation/observation.

Technical Incident means:

A) a broken or loose hold,

B) an improperly positioned quickdraw or karabiner,

C) a tight rope caused by the action or inaction of the belayer, which either assists or hinders a competitor,

D) a critical failure of an official timing system,[33] or

E) any unusual or unforeseen circumstance that places the competitor in a situation different from their peers,

and in each case (a) must result in a material disadvantage or advantage to a climber's attempt and (b) must not be the result of the climber's own action or inaction.

3. The following terms relating to starting orders will apply throughout these rules:

Rank Ascending Order means the best seeded competitor will start first. The seeding for any round will be determined from the competitor's General Ranking (if applicable) followed by their Event Seeding. Unseeded competitors will start after all seeded competitors in random order. Competitors with identical seeding will be ordered randomly.

Rank Descending Order means the best seeded competitor will start last. The seeding for any round will be determined from the competitor's General Ranking (if applicable) followed by their Event Seeding. Unseeded competitors will start before all seeded competitors in random order. Competitors with identical seeding will be ordered randomly.

Tournament Bracket Order means the starting order for a single elimination tournament for 4, 8 or 16 competitors. The general principle for constructing the bracket order is that the best seeded competitors should, all other factors being equal, meet in the final heat of the round. Where two competitors have the same seed, their position in the first stage of the bracket will be decided by random selection.

Random Order means each competitor's starting order is independent of rank or seeding, distributed at random.

Offset Order means the starting order for each course or route will be a cyclical shift from the starting order of the first course/route, proportional to the number of routes (e.g., half the number of competitors, rounded down, for 2 courses/routes).

4. The following terms relating to rankings and results will apply throughout these rules:

General Ranking means the overall standing of competitors who have participated in at least one round of an event (excluding any competitors disqualified during or following the event), calculated after each completed round. Where a round of competition was held with multiple starting groups, the General Ranking of competitors in that round:

A) will be determined by merging the rankings from each group, treating competitors having equal rankings between the two groups as tied,

B) cannot be used for any countback purposes in a subsequent round of competition.

Ranking refers to the ordinal position of competitors determined using the *standard competition ranking* method unless another method has been specified.

5. The following terms relating the structure of competitions apply throughout these rules:

An **event** is a specific competition defined by a unique combination of discipline, sport class, age group and category (i.e., gender grouping).

A **round** is a major subdivision of an event to which a set of competitors is qualified to participate, e.g., qualification, semi-final and final round.

The term **phase** is used as a synonym for a **round** in the context of ranking calculations and medals/titles more generally. e.g., the **medal phase** of an event is normally the final round but may be an earlier round if the final round cannot take place[34].

A **stage** is a subdivision of a round. e.g., each round in a Boulder&Lead competition includes lead and boulder stages, the final round in a Speed competition will include (at least) final and semifinal stages.

A **heat** or **race** is a competitive unit within a stage or round typically involving multiple competitors. The terms are used interchangeably in Speed competitions.

A **course** is a set of boulders attempted by a set of competitors. A round or stage will typically include a single course but may include multiple courses, e.g., if the competitors have been split into two starting groups.

An **attempt** is the smallest competitive unit, representing a single effort by an individual competitor on a single route/boulder.

NOTES AND GUIDANCE

[1] Moves include downward or sideways dynos where the climber may collide with the climbing surface or any holds (whether the move is completed or not) are not permitted.

[2] If a climber uses any equipment to clean holds on a boulder, it is the climber's responsibility to place that equipment in a position where it presents minimal risk of harm to themselves or any climber close to them.

[3] The type and colour of these markings should be the same throughout a competition. An example may be placed in the warm-up area.

[4] Each Starting Position must have 4 markings, regardless of the number of holds, macros or volumes used in its construction. These markings should be placed to clearly identify the holds forming part of the start.

If Route Setters use additional holds to modify or limit the usable part of a starting hold, these **blocker holds** must not be designated as starting holds. Climbers cannot Control any **blocker holds** when starting the boulder.

[5] Boundary markings may be used to mark holds, macros, volumes or parts of the climbing surface that cannot be used during an attempt, including distinct features like arêtes or corners. Boundary markings may also be placed to prevent interference between adjacent routes/boulders.

Any boundary markings must all use the same colour (black) for all routes/boulders in a round, and for all rounds of competition. If a boundary marking is used to delineate some part of the climbing surface, the marking should extend to each edge of the surface.

If any holds or parts of the climbing surface are marked **out of bounds** by a boundary barking, climbers may touch or use the marking without being considered out of bounds.

The judging of potential **out of bounds** infractions should apply the concepts of advantage and safety. Rulings should avoid arbitrary distinctions and recognise the purpose of the relevant boundary marking. An **out of bounds** ruling should be made if an infraction is intentional or if it alters the intended difficulty or character of the climbing movement.

If an infraction is unintentional, determining that a climber is **out of bounds** should focus on effect:

- incidental contact (e.g., a simply brushing or touching without weight transfer) can be allowed.
- any active or passive use (e.g., pulling on, stepping on, or stabilising with a feature or using it for progression) is not allowed.

[6] The transfer of chalk residue from the hands, which occurs naturally during climbing, is not considered a violation of this rule.

7 Climbers may used elasticated compression bandages/wraps (for arms/legs); and/or kinesiology and similar tape where necessary for the prevention or management of injury.

8 No request should be granted (i) to allow a climber to descend to the ground using any equipment not permanently part of the route/boulder, e.g. a ladder, or (ii) to provide security measures different to those considered necessary for the route/boulder as whole, e.g. pre-clipping additional quickdraws, or providing additional safety matting.

9 Attempts by a competitor to assist another competitor who is injured or in distress are not considered to be interference [Mawem, Meiringen 2021].

10 The transfer of chalk residue from the hands, which occurs naturally during climbing, is not considered a violation of this rule.

11 Enforcing strict on-sight regulations in climbing competitions presents challenges in outdoor venues. The integrity of individuals and teams, as well as their adherence to a shared ethos is fundamental to maintaining the spirit of fair play.

Where the competition venue is open to the public or overlooked by a public area, competitors may observe routes/boulders from these areas whilst they are open, however the following actions are prohibited:

- watching, recording, or making use of any recordings of the work of the route setters.
- using drones or other devices to gain a closer or detailed view not generally available to the public.

12 During a collective observation period, competitors may touch the climbing surface and:

(a) on lead routes: any hold they can reach from the ground, and

(b) on boulders: only the marked starting holds and any associated blocker holds.

Competitors may use binoculars to view routes/boulders and make hand-written notes or sketches of routes/boulders but may not take photographs or make recordings of routes/boulders.

A competitor may share information gathered during the collective observation period with another competitor if neither has attempted the route. A competitor may share information about a route with other competitors where they have each completed their attempts in a round. e.g., when in a “leader corner” or similar.

13 The route judge has discretion to determine whether a climber’s movement is an adjustment prior to starting or the actual start of the attempt.

14 A climber may jump to brush a hold - this action will not be counted as a scoring attempt provided they do not make use of the climbing surface or touch any other holds in the process.

15 When validating a climber’s start, a boulder judge must assess whether:

(a) the climber has demonstrated they have Control of the marked starting holds and successfully achieved the Starting Position, and
(b) the climber's movement(s) to establish the Starting Position are separate and distinct from any movement initiated from that position for progress.

16 In speed, a fall should be considered to have occurred where a climber either:
- slips and is not able to recover by grabbing another hold or re-gaining their footing,
- grabs or pulls on the auto-belay rope/lanyard to recover,
- acts with intention to repeatedly practice a section of the route.

17 If a quickdraw becomes unclipped during an attempt, the attempt should be ruled **unsuccessful** at the Last Clipping Position for that quickdraw unless there is compelling evidence that:
(a) the quickdraw was properly clipped initially, and
(b) it became unclipped due to factors outside the competitor's control.`z

18 A z-clipped quickdraw will be treated as unclipped, and scoring will stop when the competitor reaches the Last Clipping Position for that quickdraw. Scoring will restart from the same hold if the competitor corrects the z-clip.

A Z-Clip may be corrected by un-clipping and re-clipping either of the two relevant quickdraws.

If a competitor fails to correct a Z-Clip, §8.2(C) will govern when the attempt is ruled **unsuccessful**.

19 The Last Safe Position is distinct from the Last Clipping Position:
- if a competitor reaches the Last Clipping Position for an unclipped quickdraw without clipping it, scoring will stop, but the attempt remains in progress (i.e. the competitor can still correct the situation).
- the attempt becomes **unsuccessful** only if the competitor passes the Last Safe Position for that quickdraw without having clipped.
- if the competitor clips the quickdraw before passing the Last Safe Position, scoring will resume from the hold designated as the Last Clipping Position.

The Jury President must always act with due regard to their responsibility for the safety of the competition and must stop an attempt if it is safe to do so where further progress would be unsafe.

20 In the lead discipline, the climber's result will be marked as "TOP" regardless of the hold used to clip the final anchor. In the lead stage of the boulder&lead discipline, a result will be marked as "TOP" only where the competitor clips the final anchor from the marked finishing hold.

21 *Matching* requires both hands to have simultaneous contact with the marked finishing hold. A hold will not be considered matched where one hand is placed over another without contact on the hold itself.

22 Actions common to the sport include:
- clipping: i.e. securing a rope into a quickdraw or anchor.

- shaking out: e.g. relaxing one arm while maintaining balance to manage fatigue.
- celebrating: e.g. acknowledging a successful move or ascent.
- chalking up: e.g. applying chalk to hands for improved grip.
- changing foot position: adjusting foot placements for better balance and efficiency.

23 See **Establishing Movement**.

24 See **Advancing Movement**. In lead competitions, the *next hold in a sequence* will normally be the next sequentially numbered hold marked on the scoring topo. However, a higher-numbered hold (beyond the next sequentially numbered hold) may also be credited as the *next hold in a sequence* if another climber shows that it is possible to complete the movement to this hold.

25 See **Establishing Movement**.

26 In certain circumstances, a climber may attempt to use a Zone hold *en passant* without attempting to stabilize on the Zone (e.g., making a 'paddle move'). If the climber use the Zone to change their direction of motion and advance their hand or body, their movement would be classed as an Advancing Movement. However, the Zone should only scored if the onward movement is successfully completed, and the climber achieves a stable position. For reference, see [Levier, Meiringen/2019] as a negative example.

27 A climber with a blood injury must remedy any bleeding prior to making or continuing their attempts. The on-field officials may stop an attempt where a climber has a blood injury. If the climber is unable to remedy any bleeding themselves, the Jury President may request either the event medical team or a team doctor to treat the wound.

If a blood transfer to any climbing holds has occurred, the holds should be cleaned before any other climbers start their attempts.

A blood injury will not be treated as a Technical Incident and no additional time/attempts will be granted, unless the blood injury itself is the consequence of a Technical Incident. [Moroni, SLC/2022].

28 In determining any appeal, the Appeal Jury should balance the following principles:
- **consistency:** decisions should align with previous rulings.
- **correctness:** decisions should reflect an accurate application of the rules and their spirit.
- **fairness:** rigid adherence to precedent should not override the need to reach a fair outcome.

29 A verbal warning may be given for a first offence for any matter where a Caution is discretionary.

The Jury President has authority to determine whether some relevant matter warrants a Caution or Disqualification.

30 A disqualified competitor will be unranked in the General Ranking and in the last round in which they competed or were eligible to compete. The results of that round may be restated to allow this.

31 A single or continuous series of climbing movements will not be considered an Advancing Movement if the climber's body is falling away from the next hold or the climbing surface.

Indicators of an Advancing Movement include:

- the parallel or sequential movement of a climber's hips, shoulders and hand toward the next hold in a sequence.

32 An Establishing Movement will be considered successful where a climber, has a clear grasp of a hold and is able to make a movement consolidating their position with that hold, e.g. transferring their weight onto that hold.

Indicators that a climber has completed an Establishing Movement include:

- arresting their motion, e.g., [Anraku, Paris/2024],
- being able to release or reposition their trailing hand,
- moving their centre of mass and repositioning one or both feet, e.g., [Hamers, Graz/2022], [Sterrer, Shanghai/2024, [Avezou, Paris/2024].

33 A failure of the timing system may be considered critical where the start/end of the climbing time cannot be measured. e.g., unless it impacted the start/stop signals, a temporary interruption of the timing signal during a boulder rotation would not **automatically** be classed as a Technical Incident.

34 The terms **phase** and **round** are used to separate the organisation of a round (its format) from the calculation of rankings. For example, if the final round of a competition is cancelled, the semifinal round will become the medal phase, and in certain cases tie-breaks typically not applied in a semifinal may be used.