

EVENT RULES

The Rottnest Channel Swim Association (RCSA) has set the following rules in the best interest of its competitors. Those in breach of the Event Rules (whether a swimmer, paddler or skipper) will face disqualification, and may also be banned from participating in future events. We'd prefer everyone safely and successfully finish the race, without issuing any 'DQs', so please adhere to the rules. They exist for good reasons!

Please note that race officials, compliance personnel and medical personnel are empowered to disqualify any entrant who breaches these rules.

Swimmers

Rottnest Channel Swim Association Event Rules apply for this event and are influenced by FINA's Open Water Swimming Rules. In addition to the **2020 Event Information** (contained within the Year Book), the following Event Rules apply:

1. The minimum age for all swimmers, including those in teams, at the date of the 2020 Rottnest Channel Swim is 14 years.
2. All swimmers must have their race number written on their swim cap and race tattoos affixed to their upper arms. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain to ensure that all other members of their team have their race number written on their swim caps and tattoos affixed to their upper arms.
3. Swimmer changeovers must be carried out at least 10 metres from any support boat, except paddle craft, and tagging must be above the water in a visible manner. It is acceptable to use any part of the body when tagging, subject to the tag being above the water, and therefore visible.
4. The swimmer wearing the timing strap must pass through the arch (and over the finish mat) at the Finish Line to record the finish time and sign off (ensure the timing strap is collected by a volunteer). Any team or duo swimmer can wear the timing strap to finish.
5. Swimmers are not permitted to use any artificial aids nor receive any form of assistance during the swim. This means that swimmers cannot hold onto any support boat or paddle craft, nor draft from an escort boat, paddle craft or other swimmer. This rule applies to solo swimmers and the member of a duo or team who is the 'active' swimmer at the time.

If artificial aids or assistance is required for medical reasons, an application for exemption may be made to the RCSA. Should an assisted swim be allowed, that swimmer/team will not be eligible for prizes, but will be recorded as having finished. A note stating it was an assisted swim will be recorded.

6. Swimsuits must comply with FINA's Open Water Swimming Rules. Generally, FINA provides that a complying suit:
 1. Is of a woven textile material
 2. Does not cover the neck.
 3. Does not extend beyond the shoulders or ankles

FINA rules are subject to revision from time to time. It is the responsibility of each swimmer to ensure compliance.

The RCSA provides the following guidance in the application of this rule for the purposes of any Rottnest Channel Swim attempt:

You may:

1. (for modesty) wear two suits so long as one suit comprises only briefs (men and women) or a bikini (women).
2. grease the body before a swim
3. use goggles
4. wear two caps (your official cap must be the outer one worn)
5. use a nose clip
6. use earplugs
7. wear a rash vest / stinger suit.

You may not:

1. Wear any item with neoprene or any other buoyant material.
2. Wear anything not within the spirit of FINA's rules or within the spirit of the RCSA exemptions.

7. Swimmers must, at all times, wear their official swim cap while in the water.
8. Solo swimmers must qualify in order to participate in the 2020 Rottnest Channel Swim. To qualify, intending solo swimmers must:
 - a. Have completed a previous solo Rottnest Channel Swim crossing in the past two years – since 24 February 2018 (either within the event, or in an outside of event solo crossing).
 - b. Have completed an alternative open water swim event that is of the same distance or greater than the Rottnest Channel Swim crossing in the past two years – since 24 February 2018. During such swim, Event Rules 5 and 6 must be adhered to.
 - c. Complete a 10km open water swim event in 4 hours and 15 minutes or less between the dates 1 November 2019 and 1 February 2020. During the qualification swim, Event Rules 5 and 6 must be adhered to.
9. Swimmers must not proceed beyond the 1,500m mark without their (powered) support boat. This distance is marked by the Leeuwin Icon Vessel.

10. Swimmers must stay south of the northern boundary buoys that are set along the course.
(Note: your skipper will navigate to ensure you remain south.)
11. Swimmers must stay south of the orange buoys and go between the 19km gate marked by two red buoys. (Note: the finish channel will be clearly marked.)
12. Swimmers must leave the water and withdraw from the Event if they have not met the specified cut-off times (refer to website or Yearbook), or as directed by a Race Official.
13. I agree, as a solo swimmer, if I choose the option of sharing a boat with another solo swimmer, I will adhere to the following rules:
 - a. To swim within close proximity of each other. I accept that this means we will need to swim at the same pace. Close proximity means within the range 10-20 metres.
 - b. Each swimmer must have their own paddler.
 - c. If the solo swimmer I am sharing a boat with is slower than me, I will slow my pace to meet their speed (refer 13 b). Alternatively either solo swimmer may choose to withdraw.
 - d. If the solo swimmer I am sharing a boat with becomes unwell and requires medical assistance causing the boat to have to stop, I will either tread water until the boat is able to proceed or also withdraw from the event.

Skippers

14. Support boats must be equipped with all the required mandatory marine safety and emergency equipment per the WA Navigable Waters Regulations.
15. Skippers of the support boat and tender must hold, and be in possession of a Recreational Skippers Ticket or equivalent.
16. When taking a swimmer on-board, whether during a swimmer changeover or otherwise, the:
 - a. Support boat motors MUST be disengaged and in neutral.
 - b. In accordance with rule 29, Support boats MUST NOT make way astern to pick up a swimmer.
 - c. When possible, the swimmer should be on the windward/weather-side of the boat.
 - d. Support boats using multiple outboard motors MUST place the motors in neutral before taking a swimmer on-board at the stern.
17. All yachts, as well as powered boats that are 10 metres or longer, are required to:
 - a. Stay on the extremities of the fleet at all times (north or south), but remain south of the northern boundary.
 - b. Have a tender.
 - c. Exit the race no later than at the 18km gate (Phillip Rock). This means the swimmer will finish the race with the tender or paddler. From Philip Rock to the finish is relatively sheltered water. Additional water safety is present along this final 1.7kms.

18. Powered support boats that are less than 10 metres must leave the race no later than the 19km gate. Between 18km and 19km buoys, the swim course becomes heavily congested. We encourage strongly for support boats to stay out of the swim course during this period. Powered support boats that are less than 10 metres may leave the course at the 18km gate, but are not required to. Should the team (swimmer, paddler and skipper) decide to do this, a paddler or tender must accompany their swimmer(s) to the 19.25km gate. Powered boats that go beyond the 18km gate will be encouraged to navigate to the boundaries of the course until the 19km mark where they must leave the course.
19. Support boats must display the supplied boat stickers showing their race number. You may stick this directly onto either side of the boat in a visible location, or apply this to corflute and use cable ties to attach to the boat.
20. No power craft shall exceed a speed of 6 knots on the course. The course extends from the start, the marked buoys north and south of the start, the area south of the northern boundary across to Philip Rock, and the area from Philip Rock to the finish. For clarity, where you are likely to encounter other Event boats, paddle craft, or swimmers, it is likely to be 'on the course' and the speed limit applies. Authorised vessels (e.g. rescue boats) will endeavour to stay off the course should they need to exceed this speed, but may need to exceed this speed limit in the case of an emergency. We acknowledge that, for some vessels, they will need to run their motors hard (from time to time) to clear them. You will need to be clear of the course to do this.
21. Tender vessels must display one of the sets of the supplied A6 stickers with their race number. Numbers can be on either side of the boat in a visible location.
22. Swimmers, support boats and paddle craft must give way to commercial shipping as there is no arrangement for commercial shipping to give way to swimmers. On Event day the Race Director will advise skippers (via Race Radio) of expected shipping movements.
23. Support boat skippers are not permitted to consume alcohol while responsible for their swimmer(s) and paddler(s), and operating the boat.
24. Support boats must be licenced to carry all passengers the skipper is responsible for. This includes all people on the boat and in the water. The number permitted is determined by either the information displayed on the Australian Builder's Plate or (if there is no Builder's Plate) by reference to the below guidelines from the Western Australian Department of Transport. Please note these guidelines are recommendations only and it is the masters responsibility to determine the exact number of people on-board for a safe voyage.

Length of Boat	Maximum number of people aboard (including the swimmer/s and paddler/s)
4.5m to less than 5.0m	5
5.0m to less than 5.5m	6
5.5m to less than 6.0m	7

25. Support boats must have an operating VHF Radio. On Event Day, the radio must be turned on, tuned to VHF channel 77 and the volume audible. Skippers must then follow any instructions given by Channel Swim Base. If support boats have facility to do so, dual watch of VHF channels 16 and 77 is encouraged.
26. Skippers must keep their mobile phones on during the event.
27. Support boats must remain at least 1,000m from Cottesloe Beach at the start of the race. This means swimmers cannot be dropped to the start line by the support boat.
28. At the start of the race, support boats must not enter the swim course until their swimmer's wave has been called. The Yearbook contains a map indicating the swim course.
29. Support boats MUST NOT make way astern. This means they must not move backwards. To avoid danger (to a vessel, a swimmer, a paddler, etc.) a skipper IS permitted to use astern (reverse) thrust – BUT ONLY TO STOP OR SLOW THE VESSEL'S FORWARD WAY. The vessel MUST NOT make way astern (i.e. move backwards) under any circumstances. If you need to stop or slow the vessel's forward way, they must ensure it is safe to do so (i.e. no swimmer or paddler immediately behind the vessel). This rule applies at ALL times on the course regardless of the proximity of the other vessels.

Paddlers

30. Paddlecraft must display the supplied A6 stickers with their race number.
31. Paddlers must not proceed beyond the 1,500m mark without their support boat. This distance is marked by the Leeuwin Icon Vessel.
32. Paddlers must depart the race at the 19.25km Rottneest Express buoys and must exit to the south only.
33. Paddlecraft may be left in the designated area as shown on the finish channel map for a maximum of 15 minutes.