



## Event Rules

The Rottneest Channel Swim Association (**RCSA**) has set the following rules (**Event Rules**) for the 2023 South32 Rottneest Channel Swim (**Event**). All participants in the Event including any solo, duo or team swimmer (**Swimmer**), any team captain (**Team Captain**), any paddler (**Paddler**) or any skipper (**Skipper**) of a support boat (**Support Boat**) must comply with the Event Rules and any participant in breach of the Event Rules will face disqualification (**DQ**) for themselves and their team, and may also be banned from participating in future events, at the discretion of the RCSA.

Please note that the Race Director, Race Officials and RCSA on-water safety personnel are empowered to disqualify, at their sole discretion, any participant who breaches these Event Rules.

### All Swimmers

The following Event Rules apply to Swimmers in the Event and are in addition to and are not intended to limit in any way the Terms and Conditions of Entry or any rules or requirements set out in the **2023 Event Information** (contained within the Yearbook). Some of the rules are influenced by FINA's Open Water Swimming Rules 2017-2021 (**FINA Rules**).

1. The minimum age for all Swimmers, including those in duos and teams, at the date of the Event, is 14 years.
2. Swimsuits must comply with the FINA Rules. The FINA Rules are subject to revision from time to time and it is the responsibility of each Swimmer to ensure compliance with the most up to date FINA Rules at the date of the Event or the date of the pre-qualification swim pursuant to Event Rule 10 (as applicable).

Generally, the FINA Rules provide that a complying swimsuit must:

- a. be of woven textile material;
- b. not cover the neck; and
- c. not extend beyond the shoulders or ankles.

The RCSA provides the following guidance in the application of this rule:

*A Swimmer may:*

- *wear two suits so long as one suit comprises only briefs (men and women) or a bikini (women);*
- *grease the body before a swim;*
- *wear goggles;*
- *wear two caps (your official cap must be the outer one worn);*
- *wear a nose clip;*
- *wear earplugs; and*
- *wear a rash vest/stinger suit.*

*A Swimmer may not:*

- *wear any item with neoprene or any other buoyant material; or*
- *wear a watch or earphones/headphones; or*



- *wear anything not within the spirit of the FINA Rules or within the spirit of the RCSA exemptions.*
3. Swimmers must, at all times, wear their official Event swim cap while in the water.
  4. All Swimmers must have race number tattoos affixed to the outside of their upper arms or shoulder. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain to ensure that all members of their duo or team have tattoos affixed to their upper arms.
  5. Subject to obtaining an exemption from the RCSA as set out below, no Swimmer is permitted to use, or receive the benefit from, any form of artificial swimming aid or assistance during the Event, including but not limited to, the following:
    - a. holding onto a Support Boat, other boat, paddlecraft or Paddler;
    - b. drafting from an escort boat, Support Boat, paddlecraft or another swimmer; or
    - c. pace-setting from another swimmer, whether they be registered or unregistered for the Event (excluding Tandem Solos who are permitted to swim alongside one another).

If artificial aids or assistance are required for medical reasons, an application for exemption may be made by a prospective entrant to the RCSA at [info@rotnestchannelswim.com.au](mailto:info@rotnestchannelswim.com.au). Should an assisted swim be approved by the RCSA for the Event, that Swimmer/team/duo will not be eligible for a prize but will, upon finishing the Event, be recorded as having finished, subject to the swim being assisted.

6. At the start of the Event, Swimmers must not proceed beyond the 1,500m mark without their Support Boat. This distance is marked by the Leeuwin Icon Vessel. Should a swimmer proceed beyond the 1,500m mark without their Support Boat this may result in automatic disqualification from the Event.
7. Swimmers and Support Boats must at all times remain south of the Rescue Corridor marked by red buoys (as depicted in the South32 Rottnest Channel Swim website and the Yearbook). A failure to comply with this rule will result in Swimmers being automatically disqualified from the Event. Skippers must navigate to ensure all Swimmers remain south. For the purposes of these Event Rules, the '**Swim Course**' covers the area from the start to the finish line and includes:
  - a. the area between the north and south extremity buoys of the 'start channel' (as defined in the South32 Rottnest Channel Swim website or the Yearbook);
  - b. the area running West to East from the end of the 'start channel' to Philip Rock and from North to South from the northern boundary to the southern-most Support Boat in the fleet at any time during the Event; and
  - c. the area between the designated markers from Philip Rock to the finish line,
8. Swimmers must withdraw from the Event if they have not met the specified cut-off times (refer to the South32 Rottnest Channel Swim website or the Yearbook), or as otherwise directed by a Race Official. Swimmers will be advised if cut-off times are amended during the Event and all swimmers must adhere to these new cut-off times.



9. Swimmers must remain south of the northern orange buoys that go between the northern 18km buoy and the northern 19km buoy. A failure to comply with this rule will result in Swimmers being automatically disqualified from the Event.
10. If a Swimmer is directed by a Race Official to leave the water as a result of a failure to comply with the Events Rule(s), then the Swimmer must do so automatically. Failure to do so will result in automatic disqualification and may also result in the Swimmer and/or Skipper being banned from future Events.

### **Solo Swimmers**

11. Solo Swimmers must qualify to participate in the Event. To qualify, prospective solo Swimmers must have either:
  - a. completed a previous solo Rottnest Channel Swim crossing in the past two years – since 20 February 2021 (either in a previous Event or in a ratified solo crossing outside of the event);
  - b. 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 20 February 2021. During such swim, Event Rules 2 and 5 must have been adhered to; or
  - c. completed a 10km open water swim event in 4 hours and 15 minutes or less between the dates 31 October 2022 and 29 January 2023. During the qualification swim, Event Rules 2 and 5 must have been adhered to.
12. For solo Swimmers who share a Support Boat with another solo Swimmer (**Tandem Solos**) the following additional rules apply:
  - a. each Tandem Solo must at all times swim within 20 meters of their tandem partner. Therefore, Tandem Solos must swim at a similar pace to their partner for the duration of the Event;
  - b. each Tandem Solo must have their own Paddler; and
  - c. if a Tandem Solo becomes unwell and requires medical assistance requiring the Support Boat to stop, the tandem partner must either tread water until the Support Boat can proceed or withdraw from the Event. The partner must, in no circumstance, continue swimming without the Support Boat. A failure to comply with this rule will result in both swimmers being automatically disqualified from the Event.

### **Duo/Team Swimmers**

13. For teams and duos, Swimmer changeovers must be carried out at least 10 metres from any Support Boat, except paddlecraft, 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 visible.
14. Each Swimmer wearing a timing strap must pass through the arch (and over the finish mat) at the finish line to record the finish time and sign off (ensuring the timing strap is collected by a volunteer). Any Swimmer from a duo or team can wear the timing strap to the finish and not all Swimmers need to cross the finish line for the team or duo to be recorded as “Finished”.



## **Skippers**

15. The minimum age for all Skippers at the date of the Event is 18 years.
16. Skippers of the Support Boat and tender (if applicable) must have completed their Recreational Skipper qualification and have been in possession of a Recreational Skippers Ticket or equivalent for the entire duration of the 12 months preceding the Event.
17. Support Boats must be licensed to carry all passengers for whom the Skipper is responsible. This includes all people on the Support Boat and in the water, including the Paddler. 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 not to be relied on and it is the Skipper's responsibility to determine the exact number of people permitted to be on-board for a safe voyage.

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

18. Support Boats must be equipped with all the required mandatory marine safety and emergency equipment as per the WA Navigable Waters Regulations. No Support Boat or power craft shall exceed a speed of 6 knots anywhere or at any time on the Swim Course or near any Swimmer, Support Boat or Paddler. RCSA and authorised vessels (e.g. rescue boats) will endeavour to stay off the Swim Course should they need to exceed this speed, except in the case of an emergency. If, for mechanical reasons, a Skipper is required to run the engine of a Support Boat or tender vessel at higher revs to clear the engine, this must be done well clear of the Swim Course and any Swimmer, Support Boat or Paddler.
19. Support Boats must have an operating VHF Radio. On Event Day, the radio must be turned on, tuned to VHF channel 74 and the volume audible. Skippers must then follow any instructions given by Channel Swim Base, at all times. If Support Boats have the facility to do so, dual watch of VHF channels 16 and 74 is encouraged.
20. Skippers must keep their mobile phones on and easily accessible at all times during the Event as a delivery method for course and emergency information.
21. Support Boats must display the supplied boat stickers showing their Swimmer/s race number. The stickers must be displayed on either side of the Support Boat in a visible location above the waterline.



22. Tender vessels must display one set of the supplied A6 stickers with their Swimmer/s race number. Numbers are to be displayed on either side of the boat in a visible location above the waterline.
23. Support Boats must remain at least 1,000m from Cottesloe Beach at the start of the Event. This means Swimmers cannot be dropped to the start line by their Support Boat.
24. At the start of the Event, Support Boats must not enter the Swim Course until their solo, duo or team has been called. The Yearbook contains a map indicating the Support Boat Holding Areas which the Support Boats must remain in until the solo, duo or team has been called.
25. When taking a Swimmer on-board, whether during a Swimmer changeover or otherwise:
  - a. the Support Boat motor/s **MUST** be disengaged and in neutral;
  - b. in accordance with rule 26, the Support Boats **MUST NOT** make way astern to pick up a Swimmer;
  - c. Support Boats using multiple outboard motors **MUST** place the motors in neutral before taking a Swimmer on-board at the stern.
26. 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 a Skipper needs to stop or slow the vessel's forward way, they must ensure it is safe to do so (i.e. there is no Swimmer or Paddler immediately behind the vessel). This rule applies at ALL times on the Swim Course regardless of the proximity of other vessels.
27. Swimmers, Support Boats and Paddlers must give way to commercial shipping as there is no arrangement for commercial shipping to give way to Swimmers, Support Boats or Paddlers. On Event Day the Race Director or Channel Swim Base will advise Skippers (via Race Radio) of expected shipping movements. Support Boats and Swimmers must remain a safe distance (minimum 50 metres) from any commercial ship whether they be stationary or moving.
28. All Support Boats (yachts or power 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. use a registered tender;
  - c. exit the Swim Course at the 18km gate (Phillip Rock). This means the Swimmer will finish their race with the tender and/or Paddler. From Philip Rock to the finish line, it is relatively sheltered water. Additional water safety personnel are present along this final 1.7kms for swimmer safety.
29. Powered Support Boats that are less than 10 metres in length must leave the Swim Course no later than the 19km gate. Between 18km and 19km buoys, the Swim Course becomes heavily congested. It is encouraged that Support Boats stay out of the Swim Course during this period. Powered Support Boats that are less than 10 metres in length may leave the Swim 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 Swim Course until the 19km mark where they must leave the Swim Course.

30. Skippers are not permitted to consume alcohol while responsible for their Swimmer(s) and Paddler(s), and operating the Support Boat.

### **Paddlers**

31. Paddlecraft must display the supplied A6 stickers with the team/duo/solo race number.
32. All paddlers must wear a lifejacket, this lifejacket must be level 50S or higher.
33. Paddlers must not proceed beyond the 1,500m mark without their Support Boat. This distance is marked by the Leeuwin Icon Vessel.
34. Paddlers who are accompanying swimmers in the first 1,500m Start Channel must depart from either the North or South Paddle Craft Departure Points on Cottesloe Beach. Paddlers cannot paddle to Cottesloe Beach from their Support Boat.
35. Paddlers must depart the Swim Course at the 19.25km Rottneest Express buoys and must exit to the south only.
36. Paddlecraft may be left in the designated area as shown on the finish channel map for a maximum of 15 minutes.