

2026

COMPETITION

REGULATIONS

FOR INTERNATIONAL ICE CLIMBING COMPETITIONS

Summary of major modifications* made to the 2026 Competition Regulations for International Ice Climbing Competitions as agreed by the World Ice Climbing Board and the Rules Working Group

*Minor modifications to format, grammar and wording have not been listed below. Also there has been a lot of format changes and rules moved to more appropriate places in the document. Several sections have been removed as they are already covered in the UIAA Event Organisers Handbook and not required in the regulations document.

PART ONE – GOVERNANCE

2.8. TEAM CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

2.8.2. Team Uniform: Athletes and team officials shall wear an appropriate uniform with visible country information that they represent. Country information may contain the full name of the country or the IOC country code. The same team uniform is recommended for athletes and team officials.

b) BIB numbers: As supplied by the competition **organizer or UIAA**. These BIB numbers (paper/vest), which each athlete must wear, must not be cut or otherwise modified and must carry the official identifying number of the athlete. **BIB numbers shall be visible for judges to read. It shall be on the back above the harness.**

3. COMPETITION ORGANIZATION – GENERAL RULES

3.2. SAFETY

3.2.3. It is mandatory for all people in the Competition Zone to wear helmets, including during the Route Observation Period. **Athletes are also required to wear helmets when climbing on the warm-up wall.**

3.9.2. Unless specifically authorized by the Jury President, the top 6 athletes for each category and discipline shall attend the award ceremony.

4. GENERAL COMPETITION REGULATIONS

4.4.5. The ice lanes may involve the sides of the ice wall. The Jury President may decide to prohibit the use of the side walls for safety reasons. In such a case, the side walls must be clearly marked with the red line, and this must be announced at the Technical Meeting.

5. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES DURING COMPETITIONS

5.5.2. The issue of a third yellow card in one season:

- a) In the same level of competition, shall result in suspension of the athlete for the following UIAA approved event of the same level they are registered in. This sanction will also span across seasons.
- b) In a different level of competition, shall result in suspension of the athlete for the following UIAA approved event of the higher level they are registered in. This sanction will also span across seasons.

6. APPEALS

6.1.1. All appeals related to judging and scoring athletes, or in general breaking the rules, shall be decided by an Appeals Jury consisting of:

- a) Jury President.
- b) If the Jury President was involved in the case, they shall instead appoint a Category Judge not involved in the case.
- c) Any additional officials the Jury President invites to participate who are required to ensure a fair and equitable process.

6.3 VERBAL APPEALS

6.3.1. Before the publication of the Provisional Results, any athlete or team official may submit a verbal Appeal. Such an Appeal does not require an Appeal Form or an Appeal Fee. Any later Appeals or Appeals submitted by a team official must be written and require the Appeal Fee.

PART TWO – TECHNICAL RULES

8. DIFFICULTY

8.4.3. Minimum time break:

- a) In qualification with 2 routes: At least 50 minutes between the start of the first route in the qualification and the start of the second route for the same athlete.
- b) In the qualification with more than 2 routes: 50 minutes between the start of the first route in the qualification and the start of the second route should be followed, however, if the schedule of the competition is tight, the minimum time gap can be smaller but not less than 30 minutes.
- c) In case of more rounds during the same day, at least 2 hours between the last athlete of the previous round and the start of the next round within the same age category and gender.

8.6. ISOLATION ZONE (SEMIFINAL AND FINAL)

8.6.8. Information that can or cannot be communicated to the athlete during climbing in a round where Isolation Rules are applied (semifinal or final):

- a) Giving information to the athletes about the route or previous attempts of other athletes is not allowed.
- b) Shouting the time and cheering them on is allowed.

8.8.10. Each athlete shall be ready to leave the Transit Zone and enter the arena, facing away from the wall, when instructed to do so.

8.8.11. If it is not possible to tie in the knot and finish preparations in the Transit Zone for a round with Isolation Rules, athletes must do so in the climbing area facing away from the wall.

8.8.12. Once the athlete is fully prepared (knot tied, fully clothed), they will be allowed 30 seconds to review the route and start climbing. The judge will inform the athlete, "Your preparation time starts now," and then the athlete can face the wall.

8.8.14. If the athlete does not start climbing by the end of the 30-second preparation period, the judge will ask the athlete, "Please start climbing immediately," and the athlete must start their attempt without any delay.

8.9. CLIMBING PROCEDURE

8.9.5. Each route will have a pre-determined limited time set by the Head International Route Setter, during which an athlete may attempt the route. **The minimal and maximal time allocation per competition round is summarized in the following table:**

Round	Time Limit
Qualification	3:30 – 5 minutes
Semifinal	5 – 8 minutes
Final	5 – 8 minutes

8.9.6. During the attempt on a route:

- a) The last clipping position for each quickdraw is the last hold/zone from which it is possible to clip that quickdraw. If a clip is passed or skipped, then the Route Setter will determine the last clipping position.
- b) An athlete may climb back at any point during their attempt on a route as long as they do not return to the ground.
- c) If the athlete does a move from the Mandatory Clipping Hold to the next holds without clipping the relevant quickdraw, their attempt will be terminated at the Mandatory Clipping Hold, and the final score will be the score of the Mandatory Clipping Hold.
- d) For safety reasons, athletes shall not use a mantle move on Ice Axe (pressing down on the ice axe in undercling position to push the body upward – [an explanatory video can be seen here](#)) during their attempt. Any use of a mantle will result in the immediate termination of the attempt.

8.9.7. Termination of an attempt: An attempt will be considered successful if the athlete:

- a) Climbs the route in accordance with 8.9.6.
- b) On lead:
 - i. Clips the last quickdraw (marked in a blue square) within the permitted time.

8.9.8. Termination of an attempt: An attempt will be considered unsuccessful if the athlete:

- a)
- b) Uses any Illegal Aid, which is defined by the following:
 - i. Ice axe:
 - E. Using ice axes with any parts of the body other than hands.
 - iii. Any part of the body or gear:
 - A. Using any areas beyond the Climbing Surface.
 - B. Using or touching any part of the wall surface beyond the marked boundaries of the route. Using or touching the actual red zone boundary line is OK ([an explanatory video can be seen here](#)).

8.12. TECHNICAL INCIDENTS

8.12.3. A Technical Incident shall be dealt with as follows:

- b). The minimum resting time shall be at least 1 minute per hold/zone climbed before the Technical Incident and up to 20 minutes between attempts on the route, while the Jury President has the decisive power over the exact allotted time.

8.12.4. If a technical incident results in a hold being replaced:

- a) In case the new hold is the same, no action is required.
- b) In case the new hold is different and does not change the difficulty of the move, the round shall continue, and all the subsequent athletes must be informed by the Category Judge before their attempt which hold has changed.
- c) In case a hold of the same difficulty is not available, the Jury President shall decide whether the route or round shall be rerun or cancelled.

9. SPEED

9.3.4. In case the quality of ice or the thickness of the ice is not enough to hold practice, the Jury President can decide to cancel the practice. This should be announced at the technical meeting and not later than 1 hour before the scheduled start of practice.

Competition Procedure

9.3.10. In exceptional circumstances, the Jury President may decide to change the format of the final round from duel to single. This decision must be made before the start of a round. The format cannot be changed once the round has started.

- b) Manual timing as a backup system with an accuracy of 0.1 seconds. Each route shall be timed by one (1) judge and one (1) assistant, each using an electronic timer. Both times will be recorded by the Category Judge. The final time will be the average of the two (2) electronic timer readings, calculated to one (1) decimal place without rounding, and obvious timing errors will be excluded.

9.7.4. Rerun in Single Speed Format in case of accepted technical incidents:

- a) When there is no recorded time, the athlete shall do a rerun.
- b) When there is a recorded time:
 - i. If a Category Judge decides that the technical incident gave the athlete an unfair advantage, the athlete shall do a rerun, and the result from the rerun will be the valid one.
 - ii. If a Category Judge decides that the technical incident gave the athlete a disadvantage, the athlete may choose to do a rerun, and the better result of both attempts will be the valid one.

9.7.5. Rerun in Duel Speed Format in case of accepted technical incidents:

- c) In the Qualification Round:
 - i. Article 9.7.4 is applied in this case.
 - ii. If the Category Judge claims a technical incident during the climbing for one athlete by shouting, both athletes are affected.
- d) In the Final Round:
 - i. The decision to claim a technical incident by the Category Judge will affect both athletes, and both athletes must do a rerun, and the result from the rerun will be the valid one.

9.7.6. Rest period before rerun after a technical incident in speed is no less than 5 minutes or until the technical incident is fixed. Athletes may decide to rerun without a resting period (in the duel format, both need to agree with this). The competition will be paused during the rest period, and the competition will resume with the athletes affected by the incident.

9.8. SINGLE SPEED COMPETITION

9.8.7. The number of athletes qualified for the final round is based on the number of athletes with valid times:

- a) In case of 16 or more valid times, the top 16 athletes go to the final.
- b) In case of fewer than 16 valid times, all athletes with valid times go to the final.
- c) In case of ties for the last qualifying place, all tied athletes qualify for the final round.

9.8.12. If one or more athletes are tied in the final round, they will remain tied, and there will be no countback.

PART THREE – EVENT RULES

10. WORLD CUP SERIES

10.1. INTRODUCTION

10.1.4. The UIAA shall issue an information sheet for each World Cup event not less than 30 days in advance of the first day of the relevant competition, setting out:

- d) The format of the Speed competition (Single or Duel).

12. WORLD COMBINED CHAMPIONSHIP

12.1. INTRODUCTION

12.1.3. The format of the speed competition shall be Single

12.5.2. In addition, the first three national teams shall be awarded a World Combined Championship medal or trophy.

14. CONTINENTAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

14.1. INTRODUCTION

14.2.2. In case the Continental Championships are combined with a World Cup event, then:

- a) The host federation may register up to 9 athletes for the World Cup and can only register 6 athletes for the Continental Championships.
- b) It is not possible to register different athletes for the Continental Championships than for the World Cup.

14.2.3. Only athletes representing countries that are members of the respective continent in [the UIAA Members Directory](#) shall be eligible to take part in these championships.

14.3.2. In case the Continental Championships are combined with a World Cup event, then:

- a) For the Difficulty competition, the Semifinal of the World Cup will be used as the Final for the Continental Championship. Therefore, if there are not enough continental athletes in the World Cup Semifinal to make up the full quota of the Continental Championship Final (8), then the extra quota will be taken through to the World Cup Semifinal accordingly.
- b) E.g., if at the European Championships, there are only 6 European athletes already qualified for the World Cup Semifinal, then the next 2 highest-ranked European athletes from the qualification round will be allowed to compete in the European Championship Final (World Cup Semifinal) as extra quota – their results will only be included in the European Championship rankings.
- c) Any athlete selected for the extra quota for the Continental Championship Final will be selected based on their result taken from the qualification rankings of the Continental Championships (not the World Cup).

- d) The starting order of the World Cup Semifinal (Continental Championship Final) will follow the order of the World Cup Qualification results, but with the addition of the extra quota Continental Championship athletes going first in their rank order. E.g., the lowest-ranked Continental Championship athlete, then the next, and then the lowest-ranked World Cup semi-finalist, and so on.
- e) For Single Speed – extra quota will be taken through to the Final, similar to Difficulty as described above in 14.3.2.a), with the minimum quota of continental athletes being eight (8).
- f) For Duel Speed, there will be no extra quota for continental athletes.

14.4. COMPETITION RESULTS AND RANKINGS

14.4.2. In case the Continental Championships are combined with a World Cup event, then the Continental Championships ranking will be determined by the removal of the World Cup athletes not from the continent in question, and only then will the results be calculated.

15. CONTINENTAL CUP SERIES

15.1. INTRODUCTION

15.1.3. Each Continental Cup event approved by the UIAA:

15.1.4. d) The format of the Speed competition, if applicable (Single or Duel).

15.1.5. The difficulty competition shall have the following rounds:

- a) Qualification with two to five (2) - (5) routes climbed on top-rope or lead with at least one route climbed on lead.
- b) Optionally, a semifinal climbed on lead.
- c) Final climbed on lead.
- d) The decision of which qualification routes shall be climbed on top-rope and which on lead shall be made by the Jury President.

16. YOUTH CONTINENTAL CUP SERIES

16.1. INTRODUCTION

16.1.2. Youth Continental Cups shall be organized as part of Continental Cups.

16.1.4. The difficulty competition shall have the following rounds:

- a) Qualification with two to five (2) - (5) routes climbed on top-rope or lead.
- b) Optionally, a final climbed on top-rope or lead.
- c) The decision of which routes shall be climbed on top-rope and which on lead for each age category shall be made by the Jury President.

19. GLOSSARY

19.1. TERMS USED IN THESE RULES

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

Should means a strong recommendation. With the goal of raising the level of the competitions, such rules are often likely to change to mandatory requirements in the future.

May and **can** mean it is optional.

Must not, shall not, and cannot mean it is not allowed.

19.2. DEFINITIONS USED IN THESE RULES

Live Results means any results published or circulated by the UIAA prior to the publication of the Provisional Results for any competition, or any route/round within that competition (e.g., on Vertical Life system). They can be appealed verbally.

Mantle move on Ice Axe means pressing down on the ice axe in undercling position to push the body upward – [an explanatory video can be seen here](#).