

COMMITMENT – VARIETY - EXECUTION

RAPID SURF JUDGING

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RAPID SURF JUDGING

Rapid Surfing represents an emerging discipline within surf culture, defined by riding waves in river environments or specialized artificial standing-wave pools. Unlike traditional ocean surfing, where wave conditions constantly fluctuate, rapid surfing offers a unique scenario with consistent, reproducible wave characteristics. This uniformity provides an identical performance platform for each surfer enabling more precise technical assessment. The predictable wave environment has catalyzed the development of a specialized judging methodology.

Rapid surfing has its foundation in ocean surfing and draws inspiration from skateboarding and snowboarding. However, rapid surfing is not defined by ocean surfing or any related sport. Instead, rapid surfing has established its own identity as a freestyle discipline performed on static waves. The sport embraces all styles of surfing equally, without favoring one over another. When judging, the difficulty level of maneuvers and tricks is crucial, with additional emphasis placed on whether the performance demonstrates power, speed, flow and control.



1 KEY JUDGING ELEMENTS

The simplification of the judging criteria is distilled into three key elements: **commitment**, **variety**, and **execution**. This refined approach will not only enhance the sport's progress but also establish clear guidelines for both athletes and judges. The surfing community has long advocated for more technical judging that simultaneously encourages athletes to push the boundaries of repetitive surfing, transforming it into a dynamic, expressional freestyle discipline.

CVE => Commitment - Variety - Execution

Commitment (Surfers Attitude an Approach)

Describes how a surfer approaches the wave - whether they play it safe or take risks from the start and maintain a radical style throughout the run. While a cautious start may secure a basic score, true competitive advantage comes from bold, high-risk surfing from beginning to end.

Variety (Run Composition)

Variety takes a broad view of the run, focusing on the overall flow and run composition rather than the fine details of individual maneuvers. Because the wave is consistent and the riding area small, performance can easily feel repetitive. Judges therefore look closely at the diversity of maneuvers, lines, and combinations, how each movement connects to the next, how the surfer uses the wave, and how all these elements combine into a well-composed, dynamic run.

Execution (Maneuver Evaluation)

A major focus of Rapid Surf Judging is on the technical precision and execution of maneuvers. Execution refers to the detailed evaluation of each maneuver, assessing its accuracy, control, and level of difficulty. As the sport progresses, judges must be able to identify and differentiate subtle technical nuances to fairly assess the quality of every maneuver performed.



2 JUDGING SCALE AND SCORING

2.1 JUDGING SCALE

Providing a **consistent** judging scale over the entire competition is key for an unobstructed event. Surfers evaluate their performance by comparing themselves with others and the scores they get for a specific run combination.

The goal of an excellent judging panel is to ensure consistent scoring throughout the competition, as long as it does not interfere with the clear separation of scores within each heat.

Using the full scoring scale and ensuring clear differentiation of scores within each heat takes precedence over maintaining consistent scoring across the entire competition.

2.1.1 ROLE OF THE HEAD JUDGE

The Head Judge is responsible for setting the scoring benchmark before the competition begins

1. Evaluate the surfing level of the competitors and their potential performance.
2. Establish the benchmark for an excellent score for the competition and communicate it to the riders, clearly outlining the key elements the judging panel will be looking for.

2.1.2 COMPETITION AND DIVISION START

Before releasing the scores for the first run in the first heat of the day or when divisions change, the judging panel, under the direction of the Head Judge, should review the scores and make necessary adjustments to set the scoring scale for the competition and each division.

2.2 JUDGING PROCESS

The judging panel should follow the process: **Evaluate – Compare – Separate**

1. **Evaluate:**
 - Assess the score against the benchmark set at the beginning of the competition.
2. **Compare:**
 - Compare the score with those given to other surfers in the same heat.
3. **Separate:**
 - Clearly separate each surfer and their scores from one another within a heat
 - The most important distinction within a heat is between the second and third place



2.3 SCORING

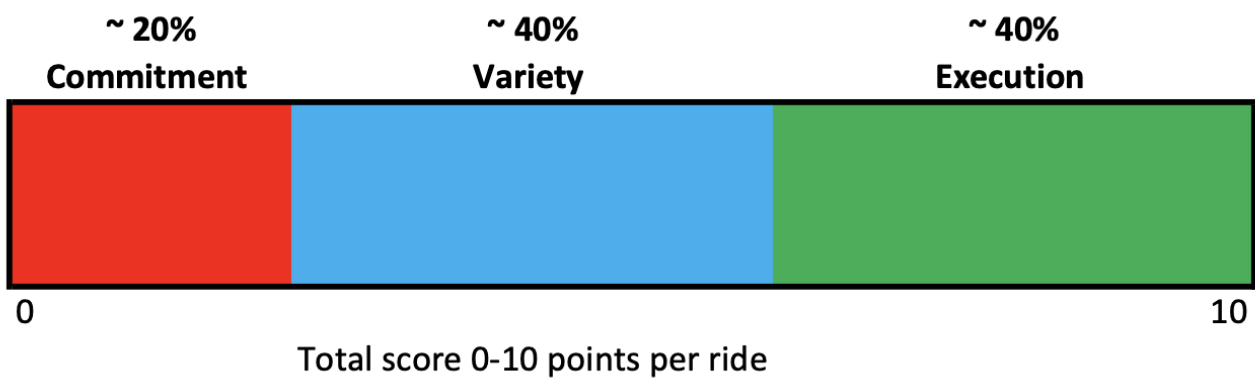
The overall wave scoring will be done from zero to ten. Broken into one-tenth increments.

Poor: 0.1-1.9 / Fair: 2.0-3.9 / Average: 4.0-5.9 / Good: 6.0-7.9 / Excellent: 8.0-10

Each surfer can get a maximum score of 10 points for each ride.

Heat score will be best of 2 waves. Maximum score 20 points

The score is built on the 3 key judging elements **commitment**, **variety**, and **execution**. The weighting should reflect the following graphic. Around 20% **commitment**, 40% **variety**, 40% **execution**.



The judge builds the score as the run progresses. **Commitment** is mainly determined in the beginning of the run. **Variety** is the overall impression that takes shape as the run progresses. **Execution** is the maneuver recap at the end of the run.

2.4 JUDGING TIPS

- Start the heat using **whole and half points**
- **Use the full scoring scale** to create clear separation between performances.
- **Judge the performance, not the potential** - do not over-score a poor performance, even from a top athlete.
- **Be fair, not generous** - avoid over-scoring an average athlete just to be nice.

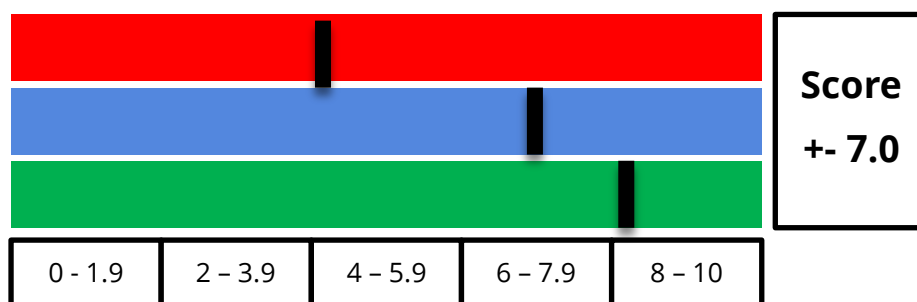


2.5 SCORE SHEET

The score sheet functions as a graphical tool that guides judges through the evaluation process. While **variety** and **execution** constitute the primary scoring components, the **commitment** score serves as a nuanced directional indicator, helping judges calibrate the final run score with greater precision. This strategic approach allows for a more comprehensive and balanced assessment of the surfer's performance.

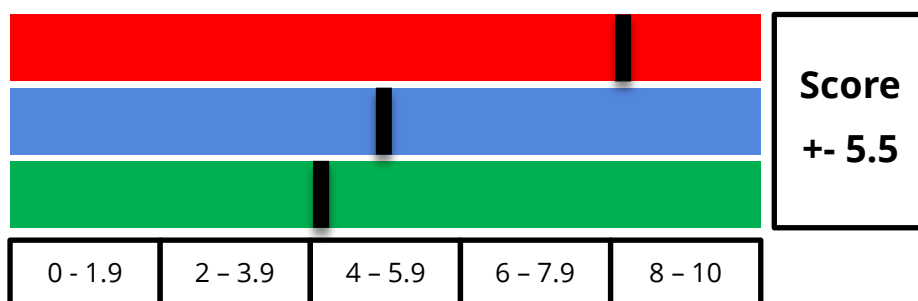
Example 1:

The surfer had a good **variety** score around 7 and an excellent **execution** score around 8, the **commitment** was judged with a low average score because of a slow start. For the final score decision, the score therefore will be on the low range of the two scores for variety and execution. Final score around 7



Example 2:

The surfer took great risk in the first half of the run. Therefore, the **commitment** score is in the excellent range. But because the run was not finished the scores for **variety** and **execution** are in the average range. Because of the excellent **commitment** score the high range of the two variety and execution scores can be slightly lifted. Final score around 5.0-5.5 points



3 JUDGING CRITERIA

Classical surfing criteria such as rail surfing with power, speed and flow are **fundamental to every run**.

Run completion until the horn announces the last trick is critical, with falls midway resulting in score reduction. The final five seconds of each run are dedicated to free expression, during which falls will not result in a score reduction, though a perfect 10 requires full wave completion. Touching the wall will negatively impact scoring, reinforcing the importance of technical precision and artistic control.

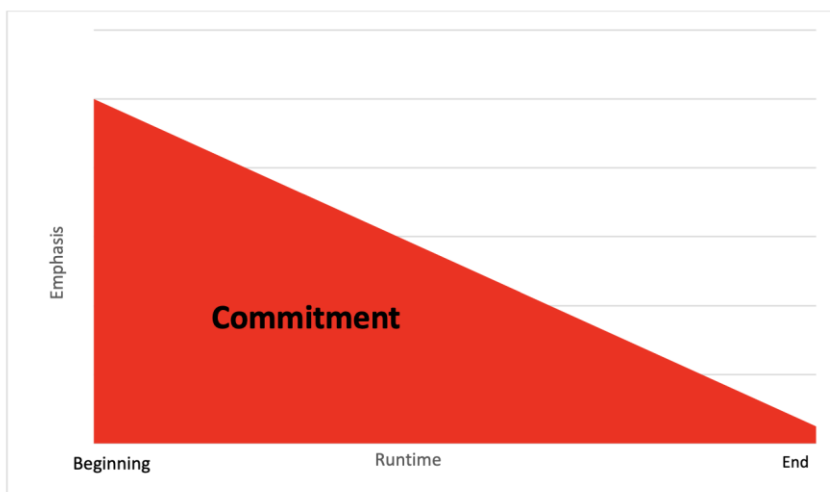
Competitors are free to choose their equipment. Judging focuses solely on the performance and following the criteria, regardless of whether the equipment makes certain maneuvers easier.

To maximize scoring potential, showcasing maneuvers on both the forehand and backhand is essential. Equally important is the need for a surfer to demonstrate at least three different major tricks and three distinct major turns.



3.1 COMMITMENT (SURFERS ATTITUDE AND APPROACH)

Judges assess commitment primarily through the surfer's technical courage at the beginning of the run. A strategic, high-risk approach that challenges the athlete's skills will be rewarded. To maximize their commitment score, surfers must demonstrate ultimate technical boldness by executing a drop-in complemented by a radical first maneuver combination that pushes the boundaries of the sport.



High risk - radical surfing

Judges prioritize risk-taking, especially at the start of the run, and look for radical, committed surfing throughout all tricks and turns until the very end.

Drop-In

The highest commitment score can only be achieved by starting the run with a drop-in.

Key words

Key words for excellent commitment scores are **drop in start, first maneuver combination, high risk, radical surfing till the end.**



3.2 VARIETY (RUN COMPOSITION)

Variety is the framework that judges use to evaluate the overall composition of a run, with the central focus being on the diversity of maneuvers.

Variety includes 5 judging criteria **flow, innovative and progressive surfing, lines, combinations, overall impression.**

Judges evaluate variety prioritizing **the dynamic range of maneuvers** across the entire performance. To maximize scoring potential a surfer must demonstrate a repertoire of **changing** maneuvers with a **high degree of difficulty**, combined in a smooth and flowing run. The surfer should utilize the full potential of the wave, in addition to innovative and progressive maneuvers

Variety is primarily assessed within a single run, with secondary consideration given to the surfer's performance across the entire heat and competition. Repetitive performances will progressively lose scoring potential, emphasizing the importance of creative evolution. Surfers are encouraged to adapt their approach, avoiding monotonous and predictable routines that fail to capture the judges' imagination.

The essence of exceptional scoring lies in the dynamic range of lines and tricks well composed together in a flowing run. A piece of art that reflects individual creativity and mastery of rapid surfing technique. **Variety fundamentally outweighs repetition.**

Ultimately, each run should be a piece of art that illustrates the surfer's unique relationship with the wave, showcasing a wide variety in all facets of rapid surfing, challenging the boundaries of technical skill and creative expression.

JUDGING CRITERIA VARIETY

Flow

Flow refers to the seamless connection of every maneuver in a run, expressing effortless surfing and technical skill. Without flow, a run looks disjointed, with setup turns, maneuvers, and recoveries breaking the rhythm.

Innovative and Progressive Surfing

Any performance that goes beyond standard competition surfing - pushing the boundaries of classic maneuvers to a higher standard or introducing new tricks with high degree of difficulty - will be recognized and rewarded.



Lines - Variety

Lines are smoothly connected turns on the wave - carves, snaps, hacks, and wrapping turns - composed into a continuous run. The term "lines" encompasses turn variety.

Combinations

Combining maneuvers is a key factor in scoring for variety. Judges look for runs that feature a diverse mix of tricks and turns, smoothly linked together. The quality and difficulty of these combinations can significantly affect the score:

Combinations can refer to "combos" - two maneuvers performed directly one after the other - but more broadly, the term describes the fluent integration of different maneuvers within a sequence of a run.

Overall Impression

Judges assess the overall composition of the run, looking for captivating and dynamic performances highlighted by standout maneuvers, smooth flowing lines, and a strong variety of turns and tricks. A high-scoring run should be engaging and memorable, reflecting the surfer's unique style and personality, rather than simply presenting a sequence of standard tricks and turns.

Key words

Key words for excellent variety scores are **flow, innovative and progressive surfing, lines- and trick-variety, combinations, using the whole potential of the wave.**



3.2.1 VARIETY TRAINING

A trick shorthand is helpful for judges training to provide an accurate judging score later. (*Trick shorthand below in chapter execution*)

The training sheet is set up to practice variety judging using the trick shorthand. The form is split in to left and right to easily recap the run afterwards. While practicing, focus on big tricks and turns first, then going down to smaller transitions- and minor maneuvers.

Practicing the trick shorthand will enhance the judge's ability to accurately name and memorize tricks.

In the example below, the trick shorthand brings to light that the surfer in red is performing his maneuvers only on his backhand, this should result in a lower overall score compared to the other surfers that show a complete run on the back- and forehand

Rider	Run	Start	Right	Left
Red	1	FS	H, AR, RH, BS	RH, AR
	2	FS	SN, AR, RH, BS	RH, O
Yellow	1	FS	H, RH, SH, AR, C	RH, SN, AR, 3
	2	BS	H, AO, C, AR	AR, 3, RH, C



3.3 EXECUTION (MENEUVER EVALUATION)

Judges evaluate **execution** primarily assessing technical precision, control, dynamic range and degree of difficulty of the maneuvers

- Technical precision is showcased in the smooth execution of a maneuver
- Control is mainly assessed in the downtime between maneuvers
- The dynamic range is measured with power, speed, height, distance and rotation
- The difficulty range as defined in the following charts

JUDGING CRITERIA EXECUTION

Power and Speed

Power and speed are evaluated based on spray distribution during carves, snaps, and wrapping turns. Stop sprays are considered intermediate maneuvers; while more body weight creates bigger sprays, these do not demonstrate power and speed as effectively as more technical turns.

Height and Rotation

Height and rotation are measured by three factors: height above the lip, tail height, and the degree of rotation completed while airborne.

Rail-to-Rail Surfing

Showcased in roundhouse or carve - snap combos. Judged on the seamless transition from one rail to the other, with consistent spray throughout the carve.

Top-to-Bottom Surfing

Deep bottom-turns and high top-turns are more difficult than mid-face surfing. They require speed, precise rail work, and excellent timing to maximize height and performance.

Control

Assessed during the downtime between maneuvers. Is recovery time needed, or are maneuvers smoothly connected?

Note: When judging, there will be a preference for progressive, high-risk surfing over controlled surfing, especially when the two stand against each other and a decision has to be made."



Degree of Difficulty

Each maneuver has its own technical demands; here are a few examples.

- **Air Reverse:** Judged on height and distance traveled "Is the aerial performed above the wave's lip, and what is the length of the trajectory traveled while in the air?", rotation in the air "how far does the board rotated - 180/270/360 degrees?", and tail height "is it a horizontal spin or is the tail higher than the nose?", smooth transition into the next maneuver.
- **Shove It:** Key factors include flow/momentum (is it performed in the direction of travel with minimal interruption, or on the spot with loss of momentum?), height (below or above the lip), and smooth transitions into the next maneuver. Additional difficulty is added if the body and the board are counter-rotated, or the shove-it-out is counter-rotated to the shove-it-in.
- **Snap:** Judged by how far the board projects over the wave, the amount and shape of spray, and any over-rotation to extend the spray.
- **Combos:** Two directly connected maneuvers. The difficulty and score depend on the combination:
 - Some combos score lower than the single maneuver (e.g., carve-alley-ooop combo).
 - Some score slightly higher (e.g., spin-spin combos, air reverse - 360 combo).
 - Some score significantly higher (e.g., carve - air reverse combo, 360 - alley-ooop combo).

Key words

Key words for excellent execution scores are **vertical, top to bottom, inverted, full rotation, over the lip, rail to rail surfing, control.**



3.3.1 JUDGING GUIDELINES TURNS

Naming	Shorth.	Key Criteria
Front & Back Side Turn	T	<p>Bottom How deep is the bottom turn?</p> <p>Top How high is the top turn</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Carve	C	<p>Line How defined is the executed carve? + constant spray + on rail throughout the maneuver</p> <p>Grab Performed with a grab?</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Roundhouse	RH	<p>Line How constant is the drive throughout the carved 8? + rail to rail + speed</p> <p>Finish + finishing the RH with a high turn or snap</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Hack	H	<p>How large is the spray + distance + amount of water</p> <p>Radical stop How radical is the stopping motion? + push over tail + push over rail</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the recovery of the hack?</p>
Snap	SN	<p>Position of the snap At what position was the snap initiated? 3 o'clock, 2 o'clock, 1 o'clock</p> <p>Height of the spray How high is the spray?</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Layback	LB	<p>Spray How large is the spray? + distance + amount of water</p> <p>Layback and rotation + Hand in water ++ shoulder in water +++ full body in water + far rotation ++ fin break out</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the recovery?</p>



3.3.2 JUDGING GUIDELINES SLIDE & SPINS

Naming	Shorth.	Key Criteria
Tail Slide	TS	<p>Stall Time / Distance How long is the trick stalled? How far is the tail slide</p> <p>Grab +</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Rock n' Roll	RR	<p>Position on Wave - bottom of the wave + top of the wave</p> <p>Rotation & Stall Time + body counter rotation to the surfboard + stall time</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
360	3	<p>Maneuver Initiation - hand needed to initiate the 360</p> <p>Flow - uncontrolled stopping after 180 ++ full spin with speed and flow</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Rock n' Roll 360	RR3	<p>Maneuver Initiation - bottom of the wave + top of the wave ++ high pop</p> <p>Flow + flow throughout the spin</p>
720	7	<p>Introduction Is the maneuver initiated with hand on rail or not</p> <p>Interruption - two 360 + full spin 720</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>



3.3.3 JUDGING GUIDELINES AERIALS

Naming	Shorth.	Key Criteria
Straight Air/Ollie	O	<p>Height + fins out ++ board over the lip</p> <p>Additional Grab +</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Jumped Rock n' Roll	JRR	<p>Height & Rotation How high is the air and how far does the surfboard rotate while in the air? + counter body rotation + stall time</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Alley-Oop	AO	<p>Height & Rotation How high is the aerial, and how many degrees does the surfboard rotate while in the air? 180 degrees in the air + 270 degrees in the air ++ 360 degrees in the air ++ board over the lip</p> <p>Additional Grab +</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Air Reverse	AR	<p>Height & Rotation How high is the aerial, and how many degrees does the surfboard rotate while in the air? 180 degrees in the air + 270 degrees in the air ++ 360 degrees in the air ++ board over the lip</p> <p>Additional Grab +</p> <p>Grab How is the trick grabbed?</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>
Shove-It	SI	<p>Height How high is the aerial, and how many degrees does the surfboard rotate while in the air? + 180 degrees in the air ++ 360 degrees in the air ++ board over the lip</p> <p>Body counter rotation Is the Surfer also rotating? ++180 degrees +++ 360 degrees</p> <p>Connection How smooth is the transition into the next maneuver?</p>



4 SCORE ADAPTION

Scoring criteria dynamically adapt across different divisions - including men's, women's, and junior categories, reflecting the varying skill levels and developmental stages of surfers in both amateur and professional competitions. The scoring system is inherently flexible, recognizing that a perfect 10 differs substantially between divisions.

In the open professional division, a perfect 10 requires a comprehensive demonstration of technical mastery, demanding a complex arsenal of challenging tricks and precisely executed turns. Conversely, in junior divisions, a perfect score might be achieved through one difficult air complemented by strategic turns and intermediate-level tricks. This adaptive approach ensures that scoring remains responsive to individual division progression and the evolving technical landscape of the sport.

5 JUDGING PANEL

Judging panel composition varies based on event scale. For smaller events, a minimum of three judges is required. Larger competitions demand a minimum of four judges, with a scoring methodology that allows for score moderation by eliminating the highest and lowest scores. International events specifically should maintain a panel of at least four judges, with five judges being the ideal configuration for comprehensive and balanced scoring.

5.1 HEAD JUDGE

The Head Judge plays a critical role in maintaining scoring consistency throughout the competition, overseeing the entire judging panel with a focus on ensuring uniform evaluation standards. Their primary responsibility is to monitor and guide the panel's scoring approach, providing constructive feedback to maintain judicial alignment.

In cases of significant scoring discrepancies, where a judge's score deviates substantially (more than two points from the panel's consensus), the Head Judge has the authority to address potential scoring irregularities. However, this intervention is a last resort. The preferred approach is to first provide the individual judge an opportunity to review and potentially adjust their scoring independently. Only if the judge cannot reconcile their score with the panel's collective assessment will the Head Judge consider directly modifying the score to preserve the competition's overall judicial integrity.



6 JUDGING CODE OF CONDUCT

- **Impartiality**

At no time will a judge's score be influenced by personal relationships with any competitor(s), or by having a relationship with any sponsor of an event, competitor, or fellow judge.

- **Punctuality and Attendance**

A judge must always be punctual and meet the attendance requirements assigned within the judging roster, as set by the Head Judge.

If a judge is unable to fulfill their attendance commitment, they must make every effort to notify the Head Judge in advance.

- **Professional Conduct**

A Scoring Judge must remain courteous and respectful, operating under the direction of the Head Judge and performing any assigned judging or official duties as directed.

- **No Distractions**

No judge shall attempt to distract another judge - by talking or other means - while a heat is in progress.

- **Score Integrity**

Judges must refrain from openly copying another judge's scores or discussing scores, unless such discussion is initiated by or involves the Head Judge in cases of uncertainty or missed rides.

- **Competitor Inquiries**

If a competitor requests information about a recently completed heat, they must be referred to the Head Judge. All judges and officials are expected to respect and value individuals in the sport.

- **Safety and Welfare**

All officials must place the safety and welfare of competitors and staff above all else and accept responsibility for decisions and actions made in the context of the competition.

- **Dress Code**

Judges must always wear the appropriate official clothing, as provided by the sponsors, Contest Director, or Head Judge, for event promotion purposes.

- **Confidentiality and Appropriate Communication**

At no time will a judge give to anyone any advice or information pertaining to an event or to the chances of a competitor or competitors, where this information is confidential or outside the scope of the judge at the time.

