



Chris Linkletter Women's Surf Relay Rules

Adopted: July 28, 2022
Updated: August 26, 2025

DESCRIPTION: Chris Linkletter Women's Surf Relay (CLWSR) is a race open to the women lifeguards. The teams are organized from the various beaches. It is a five-woman medley relay consisting of two swimmers, two paddlers, and one surf skier.

ELIGIBILITY: Lifeguard teams from Agencies/Chapters in good standing. Los Angeles County Fire Department Lifeguard Division racers may be divided into multiple teams i.e. "A" team, "B" team, "C" team, etc. to accommodate as many teams as possible. Other agencies are encouraged to bring as many teams as possible.

GOAL: Showcase women in lifesaving and display the skills and challenges of the lifesaving profession to the general public in a highly competitive environment that is positive, friendly, and fair.

PURPOSE: To define the rules of the event and establish participation expectations.

DEFINITIONS:

Competition Caps – Team competition caps shall be worn on the head of the Swimmers, Paddlers, and Surf Skier securely fastened under the chin at the start and finish of each event. Competitors shall not be disqualified for loss of their competition cap after the start if they complete all aspects of the event and they did not voluntarily remove their competition cap during the event. Failure to comply may be subject to disqualification.

Handlers– Team members who assist holding in place the ski and/or paddle (competitor's choice) prior to the surf ski leg and catching ski and/or paddle (competitor's choice) at the completion of the surf ski leg.

Start/Exchange/Finish Line – Lane markers, poles placed in a horizontal line on the beach parallel to the waterline.

Start of the Race – The Head Official/Starter will verbally confirm with each lane to make sure the first swimmer is ready. The Head Official/Starter will blow a whistle to indicate the race is about to begin. The Head Official will say “Competitors Ready, Take Your Marks” and will then fire the starter pistol to begin the race.

Start – All competitors are to be positioned behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line before they begin their leg of the race.

Turn Flag Line – Ten distinctive colored flags stretched in a horizontal line. All buoys shall be placed by the ISF under the direction of the Head Official or their designee. Buoy placement must be done prior to the starting of the competition. Distance may vary due to tides, surf, and other conditions. The distance from Start/Exchange/Finish line to the Turn Flag Line is approximately 250 yards.

Turn Flag – A clockwise turn is recommended around any one of the ten flags but not required. If making a counterclockwise turn, the competitor must give way to another competitor who is making a clockwise turn. Note: Surf Skiers must go around all ten flags in a clockwise direction.

Skin-to-Skin Tag – A physical touch person-to-person.

Exchange – A competitor who is completing their leg of the race must make a skin-to-skin tag to the next competitor who is standing behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line.

Paddleboard Exchange – Using the same paddleboard, the competitor who is completing their leg of the race may hand the paddleboard to the next competitor who is standing behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line. (This would be the only exception where a skin-to-skin tag is not required.)

Required equipment – One paddleboard and one surf ski per team.

Paddleboard Specifications – Must meet current United States Lifesaving Association standards (USLA/ILS Length 10’ 6” / Minimum weight 16.53 lbs).

Surf Ski Specifications – Must meet current United States Lifesaving Association standards (USLA/ILS maximum length 19.03 feet / minimum weight 39.68 lbs).

Lane – The area on either side of the Team’s assigned lane pole, e.g. Lane 5 is between Lane Pole 4 and Lane Pole 6.

Lane Assignments – Team Lane assignments shall be made by the Head Official and shall be based on the finish order from the previous year’s results.

Team Captain – The person responsible for management of the team and the contact for the Officials, Lane Judges, and ISF Committee. The Team Captain must be available for a Captain’s meeting prior to the start of the Chris Linkletter Women’s Surf

Relay for any final instructions and/or questions. Team Captains are to submit their contact information to the ISF Official listed on the entry form along with a completed entry form. The entry form must include competitors full, legible, first and last names, and in the discipline they are competing. A team roster should be submitted no later than five days prior to the event.

Disqualification – Elimination from the competition results due to a rules infraction, unsportsmanlike conduct, or inability to complete the race. The decision to disqualify a team from the race shall be made by the Head Official and their decision is final.

“Down in Front” – The Announcer, Lane Judge, and Officials will use this term for any teams that are standing in their area and blocking the public’s view of the event. All competitors have a responsibility to ensure the spectators have an unobstructed view of the competition. Team Captain’s should assist in this endeavor.

RULES:

Each Intracrew Team consists of a 5-Woman Relay Team:

- 2 Swimmers
- 2 Paddlers
- 1 Surf Skier

No team member may compete more than once per relay team without prior approval from the Head Official.

No team member may compete on more than one team.

Each 5-member team is assigned a lane. ALL exchanges (skin-to-skin tags) must be in their respective lane and behind the lane marker pole/Start/Exchange/Finish line.

The Surf Skier may Finish the race anywhere between the #1 pole and #10 pole. It is an “Open Finish.”

All Swim, Paddle, and Ski competitors must wear their team competition cap when competing.

Team Captains are responsible for the conduct of their team during the event. They are responsible for knowing the rules and making sure their team members follow said rules. They are responsible for all issued competition caps and for turning in all issued competition caps to their lane judge or check-in table. Team Captains are responsible for distributing their team T-Shirts once all competition caps are returned.

START:

The first Swimmer shall be in their respective lane behind the Start line wearing their assigned competition cap. The Head Official will call out each lane to make sure they are ready. The Head Official will blow the whistle to indicate the race is about to start. The Head Official will say "Competitors Ready, Take Your Marks" and will then fire the starter pistol to begin the race.

COURSE:

Lane Marker Line - Start/Exchange/Finish Line designated by poles numbered 1-10.

Flag Line - Turn buoy

A Competitor must start in their lane at the Start/Exchange/Finish line, go around one flag on the flag line, return to the beach, and execute a skin-to-skin tag (exception paddlers may skin-to- paddleboard tag) on the next competitor who is behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line in their respective lane.

The remaining swimmers, paddlers, and skier are to be in their lane behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line wearing their assigned competition cap.

COURSE EXCEPTION:

Surf skier wearing the required competition cap must start in their lane behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line. Once skin-to-skin tagged by a paddler, they will run to the water's edge where their handler will be holding their ski and paddle. The surf skier, from their lane, will then paddle their surf ski to the south end of the flag line and execute a clockwise turn. They will then paddle a clockwise course on the ocean side of the entire flag line completing a clockwise turn at the north end of the flag line. The surf skier will then paddle to the beach, drop their ski and ski paddle with their handler and run up the beach to finish crossing the Start/Exchange/Finish line anywhere between the #1 and #10 poles. It is an "Open Finish."

RULES:

A competitor may not purposely interfere with another competitor. When rounding the flag line, all precautions must be taken to avoid any collisions.

During the race, all team members must remain seated to allow the spectators an opportunity to view the race. The Team Captain shall assist in team compliance.

Exchanges are to be a skin-to-skin tag with the next competitor standing behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line. The only exception would be in the paddleboard exchange, skin-to-board tag would be acceptable when the upcoming competitor is standing behind the Start/Exchange/Finish line.

The race ends when the skier crosses the Start/Exchange/Finish line anywhere between the #1 and #10 poles. It is an “Open Finish.”

A team member is permitted to direct a competitor exiting the water to their respective lane as long as they do not interfere with any other competitors.

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