



Competition Policy

Belaying Policy

The aims of this document, is to supply a framework so as to maximise the safety of participants in climbing competitions. These standards detail the skills and knowledge belayers require in order achieving a competition belayer qualification.

These standards apply to primarily lead and speed competitions. People that volunteer that are not deemed qualified for lead competitions, however are proficient at belaying maybe top rope belayers during competitions.

1 Staffing Structure

- The event organisers must nominate a Belaying Coordinator who has overall responsibility for the belaying during the event.
- The Belaying Coordinator has responsibility for:
 1. Selecting suitable belayers in advance in accordance with this policy
 2. Making all belayers aware of and ensuring belayers are familiar with the belaying policy
 3. Ensuring that all belayers are fully aware of route-specific issues during the event.
 4. Making sure that if there are safety issues the belayers are aware of them.
 5. Belayers are nominated routes and any extra tasks, to ensure the safety and efficiency of the competition.
- A Belaying Coordinator is suitably experienced to conduct belayer training and certify belayers.
- A suitably experienced belayer can be nominated as a Belaying Coordinator by acting as Belaying Coordinator under the supervision of the existing Belaying Coordinator.
- All belayers must be equipped with CE approved climbing equipment and use a manual belay device.

2 Selection of Suitable Belayers

Belayers at competitions must have appropriate belaying experience. The Belaying Coordinator must be satisfied that they have this experience and be satisfied that they can belay competently in a competition context. The coordinator must have personally seen them belay.

Issues for the coordinator to consider include;

- The belayers knowledge and familiarity with the Belaying Guidance.
- The belayers previous experience, prior to volunteering.
- The belayer familiarity and knowledge all equipment used during belaying.
- Fluency of paying rope management and ability in reading the situation with regards to safety.
- Experience of holding unexpected falls



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3 Belaying Guidance

At the start of each attempt on a competition route:

- Each competitor shall be equipped in accordance with the SCA regulations governing equipment (See SCA Competition rules)
- The climbing rope shall be tied to each participant climbing harness using a figure “8” knot which itself is secured with a stopper knot.
- Before the competitor begins their attempt on a route the belayer shall check:
 1. That the harness is properly fastened and adjusted.
 2. That the rope is secured to the competitors harness in as prescribed in point 2 of the belaying guidance.
 3. The rope is prepared for immediate use and the belayer is connected to the rope via a belay device.
- The Belaying Coordinator is responsible for deciding whether a belayer should have an assistant at the beginning of the route to provide additional security for a competitor during the lower part of their attempt on a route.
- During speed competitions. The Belaying Coordinator is responsible for deciding whether a belayer should have an assistant at the beginning and/or throughout an attempt on a route to provide additional security in taking in for a top-roped competitor.
- During an attempt by a competitor the belayer must at all times pay careful attention to the progress of the competitor to ensure:
 - That the rope is away from the legs of the climber at the beginning (move to the side)
 - The participant’s movement is not hindered by the rope being too tight. This may include during moving upwards as well as the participants attempt at clipping a quickdraw.
 - That there is not too much slack in the rope, “too much” would be deemed when a ground fall could possibly occur. Extra attention to slack must be given during the clipping of a quickdraw if this is not successful the slack must be taking in immediately.
 - That all falls are stopped in a timely, safe manner to prevent any injury, ideally during a competition belaying is done in a dynamic manner.
 - That route-specific hazards such as overlaps or aretes that a participant might swing into, or particularly difficult moves prior to the first protection point are noted and precautions taken to minimise the risks to the participant.
- After the competitor has connected the rope to the final protection point, or has fallen, the competitor shall be lowered to the ground in a controlled manner i.e. not too fast. Care must be taken to ensure the competitor does not come into contact with any ground-based equipment.



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- Whilst the competitor is untying the rope from their harness the belayer should pull the rope down at a speed that does not disturb the quick-draws.
- It is the responsibility of the Belaying Coordinator (in consultation with the Head Judge) to ensure that competition belayers are adhering to good belaying practice as outlined in these guidance notes. The Head Judge or Coordinator retains the right and responsibility to intervene and replace a belayer at any time during a competition.



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4 Excerpts from SCA Competition Rules 2015 Relating to Belaying

4.1 Equipment

Any technical equipment used in Official Competitions must meet the relevant EN Standard (or comparable International equivalent) unless otherwise specified by the SCA or, in exceptional circumstances, by the Jury President through the authority delegated to them by the SCA. The relevant standards as at the date of issue for these Rules are:

Applicable Standards for technical equipment used in International Competition Climbing Equipment	CEN Standard
Belay Devices (Locking)	EN15151-1 (Draft)
Belay Devices (Manual)	EN15151-2 (Draft)
Climbing Harness	EN12277:2007 (Type C)
Climbing Holds	EN12572-3:2008
Climbing Rope	EN892:2004
Climbing Structures	EN12572-1:2008, EN12572-2:2008
Karabiners (Screwgate)	EN12275:1998 (Type H)
Karabiners (Self-Locking)	EN12275:1998 (Type H)
Quickdraw/ Tape Slings	EN566:2007
Quickdraw/ Connector (Karabiner)	EN12275:1998 (Type B, Type D)
Quickdraw/ Connector (Quick link)	EN12275:1998 (Type Q)

4.2 Lead Climbing

The following is issues from Sport Climbing Australia policy: “Competition Rules Lead”.

Safety Checks

5.3.11 The Jury President, the Head Judge and the Chief Route-Setter shall inspect each route prior to the start of each round of a competition in order to ensure the maintenance of safety standards.

5.3.12 The Jury President shall confirm that all belay devices used in the competition satisfy the requirements of Article 5.3.13.

5.3.13 Prior to any attempt on a route, the belayer shall check that:

- The competitor’s harness is properly fastened;
- The climbing rope is connected to the competitor’s harness in accordance with Article 6.3.8; and
- The climbing rope is coiled or arranged in such a manner that it is ready for immediate and proper use.

Belaying

5.3.14 The climbing rope shall be controlled from the ground by one (1) belayer, preferably assisted by a second person. The belayer must use a Manual Belay Device and shall at all times during a competitor's attempt on a route, pay careful attention to the progress of the competitor to ensure that:

- A competitor’s movements are not hindered in any way by the rope being either too tight or too



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loose;

- b) When the competitor attempts to connect the rope to any protection point, they are not hindered in doing so or, if the clipping of the rope to the protection point fails, any excessive slack in the rope is immediately taken in;
- c) All falls are stopped in a dynamic and safe manner;
- d) No excessive fall shall be experienced by a competitor being belayed; and
- e) A falling competitor shall not be exposed to any danger of injury caused by the edge of an overlapping section or any other feature of the climbing wall in the arrest of any fall.

5.3.15 The belayer shall leave an appropriate amount of slack in the climbing rope at all times. Any tension on the climbing rope may be deemed as an artificial aid or hindrance to a competitor and a Technical Incident shall be declared by the Judge.

5.3.16 Belayers appointed by the organisers shall be trained to belay in a manner suitable for Lead competitions. The Judge is authorised to instruct the organisers to replace any belayer at any time during a competition. If replaced, the belayer shall not be permitted to play any further part in the belaying of any competitor at that competition.

5.3.17 After having connected the rope to the final quickdraw or after a fall, the belayer shall lower the competitor to the ground taking care to ensure that the competitor does not come into contact with any ground-based equipment.

5.3.18 While the competitor is untying the rope from their harness, the belayer shall pull the rope down in as fast a manner as possible without unduly disturbing the quickdraws. It is the responsibility of the belayer to ensure that the competitor vacates the Climbing Zone as quickly as possible.

Climbing Procedure

5.9.3 During an attempt on a route:

- a) *The competitor must clip the quickdraws in sequence.*

Note: Clipping the first quickdraw from the ground is permitted.

- b) *Note: A competitor shall be allowed to un-clip and re-clip the last clipped karabiner.*
- c) *The competitor must be in a legitimate position at all times. Subject to Article 5.9.4, this will be the case if:*
 - a. *The competitor's entire body has not moved beyond the karabiner at the lower end of the next unclipped quickdraw; or*
 - b. *The competitor's entire body has moved beyond the first unclipped quickdraw but the competitor is in a position:*
 - a) *from which another competitor in the same category/age group has demonstrated that it is possible to clip the first unclipped quickdraw without it being necessary to haul up the quickdraw with a foot; or otherwise*
 - b) *deemed by the Chief Routesetter as a position from which it is similarly possible to clip the first unclipped quickdraw.*

5.9.4 The Jury President may rule that one or more quickdraws must be clipped from a particular hold or earlier. In which case this information shall be announced to all competitors prior to the start of the round and the particular hold(s) and the quickdraw(s) shall be clearly marked, preferably with a blue cross, and pointed out during the route observation.



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5.9.5 Any movement of a competitor beyond the legitimate position to clip shall not result in a higher score. If a competitor clips the rope into a karabiner in accordance with Article a) above, but a “Z-clip” has occurred, the competitor shall correct the Z-clip. The competitor is permitted to un-clip and re-clip (if necessary, by down-climbing) any of the karabiners involved. After correction, all the protection points shall be clipped in.

5.9.6 The Head Judge may order that a competitor’s attempt be terminated if they decide that further progress on the route would be dangerous.

4.3 Speed Climbing – from IFSC Rules

Safety Checks

8.3.8 Prior to any attempt on a route, the belayer shall check that:

- a) The competitor’s harness is properly fastened; and
- b) The climbing rope is connected to the competitor’s harness in accordance with Article 8.3.6.

Belaying

8.3.9 The climbing rope shall be controlled from the ground by two belayers who shall be situated to one side of the climbing lane. The primary belayer may use either a Locking Belay Device or a Manual Belay Device. The belayers shall pay careful attention to ensure that:

- a) A competitor’s movements are not hindered in any way by the rope being either too tight or too loose;
- b) All falls are stopped in a safe manner; and
- c) A competitor being belayed shall experience no excessive fall.

8.3.10 Belayers appointed by the organisers shall be trained to belay in a manner suitable for Speed competitions. The Judge is authorised to instruct the organisers to replace any belayer at any time during a competition. If replaced, the belayer shall not be permitted to play any further part in the belaying of any competitor at that competition.

8.9.2 On being called to the start of a route, each competitor shall take up an assembly position not more than two (2) meters in front of the wall. A belayer shall attach the climbing rope to the competitor’s harness as set out in Article 8.3.6.