

A Guide to Running a Christian Surfers Contest

There are certain things that need to be considered before you move beyond the idea of staging a local surfing contest. These are basically the **WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, HOW & WHY**. As high profile surfing events play a large part in our surfing culture, it's important contests are run competently. This includes all areas, from judging to sponsors to obtaining council approval to vacating the site clean and tidy. In any event that represents Christ it is very important that Godliness is not compromised. These basic principles will guide you in the planning and running of successful contest.

Why run a Contest

A surfing contest ran by Christian Surfers has a unique opportunity to go beyond being just a 'good event' and can be an excellent opportunity for outreach. Things like relationships and a friendly God centred atmosphere can be worked towards through deeds and words. What is your aim? Who is your target group(s)? What type of contest will best meet your aim? Will your contest be specific, only accommodating one or two categories or will it encompass many? There are various contest formats range from a highly competitive pro-am event to novelty/fun events, all can be successful in their own right. You need to work out which is best to meet your aim.

Your Leaders

Most importantly, the quality and attitude of your leaders/ volunteers is vital, always make sure that all they are reputable Christians. You need to also care for your leaders seek to ensure they have adequate shelter, food and refreshments. Leaders that are happy and Godly make great leaders. Also be aware that the bigger the event you seek to run means the more calls, administration and meetings during the preceding months which can be very demanding. Count the costs on the leaders and your local Christian Surfers mission before you proceed any further.

Planning a contest

How a contest is run communicates a great deal! Good contests are pre-planned as much as possible. These steps should guide you through you planing a contest.

- 1- Pray and keep praying!!!**
- 2- Set you Aim**, including your target group(s).
- 3- Assign Roles** A team of 4, supporting and encouraging each other is the minimum to run a contest.
- 4- Sponsorship?** If you hope to have sponsorship start praying and then visiting potential sponsors.
- 5- Authorisation-** Select a beach then obtain council permission. See a sample letter in appendices.
- 6- Advertise** at least two weeks prior (ensure sponsors logos are clearly dispalyed if you have them)
- 7- Pre-Contest Meeting-** one week prior to pray, fill any hole you can see and to arrange for prayer support

Where to hold a Contest

When choosing a venue there are many factors to consider. Is the break is contestable? Is it consistent or does it require specific conditions? Take into account public access and visibility (especially if you have sponsors). Is the break safe for your least proficient surfer? Are there other events on at the break? Is it large enough to accommodate a surfing contest? Remember contestants require a practice area. Is the break dominated by a heavy local contingent? Can you get local council permission? Answers to all these questions will help you discover just where you can and could run your surfing contest.

What type of Contest

Knowing your aim and target group(s) will help you select which type of contest might work best for you. Always be prepared to try something different if you find you contest lack something. Following is a brief description of the types of contests used by Christian Surfers missions.

4/6 Man/Women Heats.

This is the basic contest format used by most Boardriders clubs. Surfers are drawn into heats usually of 20 minutes duration unless very inconsistent surf prevails then 25min or even 30min heats may be used. Surfers can catch a maximum of 10 waves per heat with their best 3 waves counting towards their placing (if a surfer interferes with another surf that interference is counted as one of their best waves and is scored as zero). The Progression of surfers should always be at least a 50%, (2 from 3/4 man heats and 3 from 5/6 man heats). This basic format has many variations (see ASA rule book). **Comment:** Good to use with medium and large numbers of surfers.

Surfer on Surfer Format.

As the name suggests, this has surfer against surfer with one progressing with the same basic set up as for 4/6 man heats. In good surf conditions heats may be reduced to 15minutes duration. In a small contest you may wish to use this format with the winners of first round heats progression into round 3 while the losers in round 1 progress into round 2 for a second go at making it through. **Comment:** Good to use with small numbers of surfers.

Tag Team Format.

Tag Team events vary greatly. Here's a basic 4 surfers per team format with 3 waves per surfer. Heat length is 45min or longer in poor conditions. The entire team is to be ready in their tag area for the start of their heat. With the starting siren the first surfer races from the team's tag area to catch their 3 waves and then returns as quick as possible to tag the second surfer of their team. The tag must be done in the tag area. The second surfer then catches their 3 waves and so on until either all surfers in the team have caught their 3 waves each and have returned to the tag area to receive bonus points or until the time has expired. Most tag team events have a double whammy surfer in each team. This double whammy surfer scores double points for their double whammy wave. They indicate which wave is their double whammy wave by immediately waving both arms in the air on completion of that wave. The judges score that wave normally and then draw a square around it. This wave is to be tallied as double points. Every wave of every surfers is tallied together with any bonus points for finishing on time to calculate the places.

Comment: Good to use with inter-club contests, for good fun between mates, and for building unity.

Teams Challenge Format.

There are so many ways to do this type of contest. Surfers might surf individually to gain points for the team or tag teams might be used in earning overall team points. Just use your imagination. **Comment:** Good for inter-clubs.

Novelty Format

Again use your imagination eg. *Multiple boards (long, kneelo, etc), Fancy Dress, equipment exchange, mixed (parent, grommet, women, etc), etc.* **Comment:** As good as you make it and multi-functional.

Sponsorship

For sponsorship spend time praying about this and about prospective sponsors of the contest. Then approach those possible sponsors being clear on what you can offer the sponsor and what you would like in return. They are running a business not a charity. Follow up any needs of the sponsors before the event and make sure they get the promotion at the contest that they are promised. The sponsorship person handles any sponsors needs during the event as well as the collection of prizes and the distribution of any required sponsor's materials. The sponsorship person follows up the sponsor after the event for feedback.

Who: Teams & Roles

As already mentioned, the quality and attitude of your leaders is very important.. You need to sort out early who is going to organise and run a contest? To be a Godly contest you need Godly people and well run contest you need people who are able to run a contest properly The personnel and lead up work will, to a large degree, determine the success of a contest. Some competitors will know and expect the standards of the current ASA

Rule book to be upheld so get in the know or get some one who is.

Clearly defined roles allow everyone to know what is expected of them. These are the most basic roles divided into to teams. Other roles can be included. The use of two teams is suggested as experience has shown that contest demands swallow up leaders and very little time is spent with the surfers you are seeking to build relationships with and to share the good news of Jesus. You don't have to have two teams.

The Contest team runs the contest in a Godly and proficient way. This requires a minimum of two people but really needs at least 3. People often do more than one role but the roles of Contest Director and Head judge should not be done by the same person. This team works very hard to free up the outreach team.

Contest Director: For smaller contests, it's often good that these two roles as one. In planing the contest this person is responsible for or delegating of, getting council permission and advertising the contest. While the whole team is responsible for seeing the aim meet, the responsibility of ensuring that the contest runs in a smooth and Godly is that of the Contest Director. They also make sure all required equipment need is there and working ie. comp shirts, score sheets, pens, flags, hooter, etc. The Contest Director also picks the bank and where to set up the contest.

Tallier collects judging sheets after each heat, tallies them and then writes the results up. Use a current rule book in breaking ties.

Head Judge The Head Judge is responsible for all judging and any judging decisions made on the day. They are also to ensure that there are enough judges for each heat. It is so very important to have a good head judge as they can ensure a high judging quality by watching the judges and teaching those who need to learn. They also ensure the heats run for the set time with correct flags and hooter/siren use

The Outreach Team spends time with the surfers to share their lives and of God's great love for us, which should have the greatest influence in our lives. People on this team should not be sucked into contest stuff but leave it to the contest team but there may occur situations where you will need to help or the contest will come to a grinding halt. If a person in this team is to judge it is either their turn to judge, or to build friendships with the surfers judging. Remember that contests are only a tool that can be used as a spring board to build friendships and developing a positive profile within the community. Be creative to forester sharing Jesus and His impact on you. Experience has revealed that long formal testimonies and 'preached' messages sometimes lead to a feeling of separation between 'us' and 'them'.

Ideas:

Food Most surfers like you and I enjoy our food. Sausages are still the staple Christian Surfers food but if you're sick of sausages and bread a little but of salad can really improve it or you might like to try pancakes nice and early. Make the pancake mix the night before and take some golden syrup. You will need a flat BBQ for pancakes. The cheapest and easiest way to do drinks it to get a big drink container and use cordial. To raise funds you might like sell cans of drink but this has to be done well or you'll loose money and it takes up time and can be a hassle.

Beach witnessing can be very effective when done by friendly organised trained people. You could use the Grommet's Guide to God with the comic in the front then leave them with it.

Novelty Events can be fun, add interest and also draw in non-competitors and eliminated surfers. Some ideas are: Iron Man, beach volleyball, a tag team contest, surf coaching, footy, expression session, etc.

Grommets Guides to God are great to share out of or to give away to surfers who might read it.

Collects names and addresses so you can send them programs and invite them to church.

Programs; Have club programs to give to everyone.

Equipment

All equipment should be of a decent quality and checked before the contest to make sure it's working.

Essential equipment

Comp shirts, Current ASA Rule Book, Judging Sheets, Tally Sheets, Judging Boards, Pens, Heat Draw board,

Flags, Heat timer, Flags (Red, Yellow, Green & Contest Area), Horn/Siren, and First Aid Kit.

Optional Equipment

Prizes, Trophies, Tent, Scaffolding, PA System and/or Megaphone, Music, Chairs, BBQ/Food, Video and Competitor's Shirts and what ever else you like.

When

Deciding when to run a surfing contest is an important decision. Try to know what other contests are scheduled to go ahead around the same time and try not to clash. Also allow enough time to advertise as short deadlines only amount to frustration and disappointment. Sponsorship will also need you to do this.

Presentations

Work out what will work best for your local surfing community. A good wrap up with thanks to sponsors, judges, competitors and awards given out with a minimum of ceremony will be appreciated in most situations. A short testimony or something about God's great love revealed through Jesus can work well if it is done well. A presso that night does work in some surfing communities but not for others. Be prayerful. Having a presso at the beach straight after a contest capitalises on the atmosphere, has the winners present. And is much easier to organise. For the first comp you might like to keep it simple.

Judging Hints

Any contest is ultimately only as good as its judging and tallying. Try to ensure that all judging is fair, unbiased and as good as possible. You might wish to use the Christian Surfers judging video to assist your surfers to learn to judge. Try to have five judges and one spotter. If this is not possible then three judges can be used. Scoring in full and halves is all you'll need to use.

Who Judges?

In smaller to medium local contests it's often helpful to use competitors as judges. Its good to have them judge the heat ONE AFTER THEIRS ie: they have one heat to dry off and get ready. This way you can call the upcoming judges and the competitors. Seek to only use experienced judges for Finals and bodyboarders judging bodyboarders and so on. If you are seeking to run a huge event with heaps of prizes and money up for grabs try to get qualified and experienced judges for the entire event. See ASA rule book.

Tallying

In the event of a tie on the judges score sheet, simply record as is ie: 1 1/2 for the tied 1st, or 2 1/2 for tied 2nd, or 2 1/3 for triple tie 2nd, followed by a 4th etc. If the tally sheet records a tie, it must be broken. Use current rule book format to break ties.

Running a Contest

This fourteen steps to running a contest should help you.

1. **Pray-** It's great to meet early for breakfast and prayer at church or a leaders home.
2. **Set Up-** Arrive at the beach ½ hour early, the Contest Director picks the bank and all leaders helpset up.
3. Collecting Names and Money. See appendix for what you might like use to collect these.
4. **Draw up the heats.** Get the contest going! Find which division has plenty of entries and randomly select surfers from that at division to surf the first heat tell them get ready as it starts in 5min . Then do more of the draw.
5. **Welcome** 5minutes after speak to the surfers in the first heat have the welcome. Say Hi and outline rules and at the end it's often good to pray then after that the surfers in the first heat can paddle out.
6. **5 min to go-** Head judge gets judges for the first heat while the Contest Director completes the heat draw.
7. **Contest begins-** Hooter blast with a green flag and it's off. Then yellow flag with 5min remaining then hooter and a red flag. to signify the end of the heat
8. **End of heat** The Tallier collects score sheets then tallies these and then writes the results up and then does this for every heat throughout the day.
9. **Progression of Surfers** The contest director works out the progression of surfers
10. **Outreach team-** Helps get things started then settles down to focus on the surfers and anything planned..
11. **Leadership Maintenance-** Make sure the Contest Director and Head judge get a break.

12. **Presentation**- This can take many forms from simple congratulations to prizes and trophies.
13. **Pack up**- It is important that all leaders help as you will all be tired.
14. **Wash** and dry the comp shirts.

SAMPLE ENTRY FORM FOR HIGH PROFILE EVENT

The _____ is being held on Saturday 5th November 1995 meeting at 7.00am at Main Beach Warilla (opp Surf Lifesaving Club on Stevens St.) to decide a venue between the Farm and Port Kembla.

Openings for 16 Juniors (U19 at the 1/1/95), 24 Opens and 16 Women.

A.S.A. Rules with four man, 20 minute heats, best three waves. Heat to commence on Green flag and hooter, 5 minute yellow flag (next heat paddle out), finish with Red flag and hooter. Unlimited waves.

Prizes include

OPEN	JUNIOR	WOMEN
1st \$400 & Billabong Steamer	1st Gorilla Grip and \$100 Clothing	1st \$100 Gift voucher
2nd \$100 & \$100 Quicksilver Order	2nd \$100 Quicksilver clothing	2nd \$50 Gift voucher
3rd Billabong Springsuit	3rd Deck Grip	3rd Gorilla grip
4th Gorilla Grip full deck Grip	4th \$40 gift voucher	4th Ocean & Earth product

Trophies for all place getters and special awards

\$25 entry includes B.B.Q. lunch and t/Shirt

Special Tag Team Event for those eliminated

Free Slash Stix surfboard give away for participating spectators and competitors N.B. finalists, organisers and their immediate relatives not eligible.

Complete the entry form below and return by October 25th to P.O.Box 360 Windang 2235 with \$25 non refundable entry. Beach starts available if vacancies \$30.00. Cheques payable to 'Windang Spring Classic'. For further details contact John McAllister (042) 65 3456.

Name: _____

—

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Date of Birth ____/____/____

Division entered (circle): Open Junior(U19) Women

T/Shirt Size (circle): XXL XL L M S XS XXS

I will abide by the decisions and rules laid down by the organisers. I take full responsibility for assessing the conditions prior to entry and will not hold the organisers and personnel of the Windang Spring Classic or Windang Council, liable for any injury incurred and freely enter at my own risk. I also give permission for medical help to be given in the unforeseen event of an accident.

Signature/Guardian if U18 _____ Date: _____

SAMPLE ENTRY FORM FOR SMALLER PROFILE EVENT

Bored stuck in Wollongong for summer???

Wollongong Theos and Christian Surfers present

The 'Gong Summer Junior Tag Team

A special Junior Tag Team Event will be held in the best surf on North or South Wollongong beach Thursday 19th January 1995 meeting at North beach S.L.S.C. (opp Novotel) at 6.30am to decide a venue. All you need to do is round up three mates and have a go! No contest experience necessary, surfers and bodyboarders available to help make up teams.

Openings for three man/women teams in both Bodyboard and surfboard divisions. All competitors have to be Juniors (U19 at the 1/1/95).

A.S.A. Rules with three man teams, four teams per heat, 35 minute heats, each surfer scores four rides, nominated double whammy surfer. Heat to commence on Green flag and hooter, 5 minute yellow flag (next heat paddle out), finish with Red flag and hooter. Limited waves.

Prizes include accessories from Beach Street, Nichol, Skipp, and Ocean Extremes and trophies for the winning tag team in each division. Special prizes for spectacular manoeuvre heat. A free "Ocean Extremes" surfboard and free "Manta" (include sponsors logos) bodyboard will be given away as a random draw from each of the divisions.

\$10 entry includes B.B.Q. lunch

Special Novelty Iron Man/Woman Event for the those game to have a go! Beach volleyball and heaps of fun.

Complete the entry form below and return by January 12th to P.O.Box? Wollongong with \$10 non-refundable entry. Beach starts available if vacancies. Cheques payable to `Wollongong Theos Tag Team'. For further details contact Al Hewetson?(042) blah blah blah.

Name: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Date of Birth __/__/__

Division entered (circle): Bodyboarder Surfer

I will abide by the decisions and rules laid down by the organisers. I take full responsibility for assessing the conditions prior to entry and will not hold the organisers and personnel of Wollongong Theos, Christian Surfers or Wollongong City Council, liable for any injury incurred and freely enter at my own risk. I also give permission for medical help to be given in the unforeseen event of an accident.

Signature/Guardian if U18 _____ Date: _____

Sample letter to council

Joe Blow
Kool Christian Surfers
Contest Co-ordinator
my address
my town and post code
Date

To Whom it may concern

I am writing on behalf of Kool Christian Surfers to seek Kool Council's approval for holding the Y2K Komp on Saturday 1st of January 2000 at Kool Beach. We wish to set up at 6:30am with the contest starting at 7am and finishing by 3pm. If approval is granted we will erect two tents and have a BBQ for competitors. We will abide by local council requirements and we have public Liability coverage of five million dollars.

Christian Surfers Australia is a non-profit association and any money received through entry fees is directed back into running the event. None of the people who organise and work for this event are paid, we are all volunteers.

I look forward to hearing from you and if you have any enquiries please call me on 1 800 KOOL.

Your Sincerely

Joe Blow

Joe Blow
Contest Co-ordinator