

FWQ: What's Different Between Regions 1 & 2?

<https://www.freerideworldtour.com/>

<https://www.freerideworldtour.com/athlete-handbooks-rules>

<https://www.freeskiers.org/about/handbook-guidelines/item/2020-ifsa-fwq-handbook.html>

Earning a coveted spot on the Freeride World Tour is the ultimate goal for many of the riders who participate in Freeride World Qualifier events across the globe. What many riders do not realize is that there are two distinct regions for FWQ riders based on their nationality. Within these regions, differences exist between some rules and the competition format based on the laws, insurance coverage requirements, and liability within those regions.

Region 1 - Asia, Europe, Oceania (Managed by the FWQ division of the FWT)

Region 2 - Canada, South America, United States (Managed by the IFSA)

A rider's region is determined by their birth nationality unless they have dual citizenship, in which case they can choose the nationality they would like. Riders can change nationality only once. Qualification for the Freeride World Tour can be achieved with points earned in any region, however a rider may only qualify for an FWT spot through their designated nationality.

Region 1 riders and events follow The Freeride World Qualifier (FWQ) Region 1 rules which can differ from the IFSA Region 2 rules and protocol outlined in the Region 2 handbook. Riders are completely responsible for taking the time and effort to educate themselves about the differences between regions.

The Region 1 FWQ Handbook: [CLICK HERE](#)

The Region 2 IFSA FWQ Handbook: [CLICK HERE](#)

A few of the key differences between Regions 1 and 2 are highlighted below to help riders understand and successfully compete in another region.

FWQ ATHLETE INSURANCE

Region 1: Riders must have personal health insurance for the duration of any event in which they are competing. At most European + Japan events the FWT evacuation insurance is in place while in France and Norway a local event insurance is offered by the event organizers. The FWT evacuation insurance covers snow patrol/ambulance/helicopter evacuation costs to the hospital if the private insurance of the rider doesn't cover it which is often the case for freeride competitions. The cost of the FWT evacuation insurance will be included in the registration fee (check registration information for details).

<https://www.freerideworldtour.com/athlete-handbooks-insurance>

Region 2: Riders must have personal health insurance for the duration of any event in which they are competing. Riders must have proof of individual insurance at athlete check-in and have it available for the duration of the competition.

FWQ INSPECTION PROTOCOL

Region 1: Visual inspection is implemented in Region 1 for all event * levels. Riders seen riding a venue prior to the competition will face disqualification.

Region 2: Athletes competing in Region 2 are required to have the opportunity to conduct a soft or physical on-snow inspection within the venue boundary as determined by the event organizer, head judge, and TD.

FWQ INVERT RULE

Region 1: Inverts are permitted at the FWQ Adult level.

Region 2: Inverts will be permitted at the discretion of each event organizer. This rule will vary between event organizers and it is the athlete's responsibility to attend the mandatory athlete meeting to gain information on the rules. When inverts are prohibited by the event organizer, horizontal spins or flat spins are still accepted as long as the feet do not raise higher than the rider's head. Riders executing spins with feet higher than their head when specifically prohibited by the event organizer will earn a DQ score and will be ranked accordingly.

FWQ WEATHER RULE

Region 1: If the competition is stopped due to weather conditions or any other event, the competition director can validate the competition results of a division if 2/3rds of the competitors have completed their runs and earned a score.

Region 2: The technical director may cancel a division or a competition day due to weather and/or visibility. If possible, the announcement of cancelation should be performed at the completion of a division. Each athlete in an entire division must have the opportunity to complete their run for that division's results to be validated. If the competition is stopped due to weather conditions or any other occurrence without completion of a division, those results will be invalid. The decision to halt the competition is made by the technical director with input from the head judge. Results for a division will be validated upon completion of the entire division and this can vary between divisions depending on current conditions, extenuating circumstances or, time constraints. In Region 2, in the event of bad weather or poor visibility, a split judging format may be used. See section below

WEATHER/VISIBILITY & JUDGING FWQ EVENTS

Region 1: Region 1 will often wait for a favorable weather window to run a competition, whereas in Region 2 fewer event organizers provide weather days. Region 1 does not employ a split judging format. If the competition is stopped due to weather conditions or any other event,

region 1 organizers may validate the competition results with the weather rule if 2/3rds of the competitors in a division have completed their runs. If no division has completed their runs, the event organizer may decide based on feasibility, resources and conditions if the competition will be re-run on another day during the weather window, postponed to a new date or cancelled.

Region 2: If weather or visibility is unfavorable, the technical director and head judge may opt to utilize a split judging format. If judges are separated throughout a venue, radios will be used to communicate and establish a clear venue. In split judging, each judge will score all categories, including line, in their respective zone, one or more scores will be turned in per zone. Weather days are only required for FWQ 4* level events in Region 2.

EARNING FWQ POINTS FOR CANCELED EVENTS

Region 1: If an event is canceled, riders who were confirmed will score the following minimum points:

SKI MEN: rank 50

SKI WOMEN & SNOWBOARD MEN: rank 25

SNOWBOARD WOMEN: rank 20

Region 2: If an event is canceled, riders who were confirmed for the event will not earn any points.

TRAINING ON FWQ COMPETITION VENUES & VENUE CLOSURE

Region 1: Due to the fact that many FWQ faces in Region 1 lie in backcountry terrain, event organizers may opt to close venues up to 30 days in advance of an FWQ competition (or after the latest forecasted snowfall prior to the event date). Riders seen riding a venue prior to the competition will face disqualification.

Region 2: Due to the fact that nearly all FWQ faces in Region 2 lie within resort boundaries, it is nearly impossible in Region 2 to mandate the closure of a venue 30 days prior to competition. Venue closure is determined at the discretion of each event organizer, though the IFSA strongly recommends closing the venue after the latest forecasted snowfall prior to the event date.

FWQ ATHLETE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Region 1: All riders are required to wear a helmet, CE-certified back protection (backpacks with integrated protection are not valid), a backpack equipped with a probe and shovel, and an avalanche transceiver switched on with sufficient battery power. All riders will receive a RECCO reflector to be worn during all competitions.

A safety harness is also a required piece of rider equipment. FWQ riders in Region 1 must take their harness when attending a competition, but it is only mandatory at the event organizer's request.

Before the start, all athletes and event staff will be checked for their avalanche transceiver. This check will be performed either at the bottom of the hike or in the pre-start area. It will also be

verified that riders are wearing back protection and have all mandatory equipment on their person. Riders missing any of the mandatory equipment will not be allowed to start and will earn a Did Not Start (DNS) score.

Region 2: Helmets manufactured and certified for snow sports and back/spine protectors are required at all times when inspecting, competing, or riding within the venue.

The IFSA strongly recommends additional protective gear when training or competing in Freeride. Due to the various hazards involved, all athletes should utilize added protective gear including, but not limited to: hip, knee, and elbow pads, chest protector, and a mouth guard.

The event organizer has the right to require additional protective and/or safety equipment including protective gear such as an avalanche transceiver, probe, shovel, avalanche airbag, or avalang device. Athletes failing to meet equipment requirements set by the event organizer will not be permitted to start and will be awarded a Did Not Start (DNS) score.

WILD CARDS

Region 1: Five Wild Card spots are reserved per event, three are given out by the hosting resort and two by FWT administration. Some events will have additional Wild Cards for riders who placed first in a preceding event at the same resort, i.e. winners of the Les Arcs 2* get a Wild Card in the Les Arcs 4*.

Region 2: Five Wild Card spots are reserved at 2* and 3* events. These Wild Cards are to be distributed by the hosting resort. At most 4* events, nine total Wild Cards are reserved, five to be distributed by the hosting resort and four to be given to the 1st place winners of each division from the preceding 2* event. Any rider can apply for a Wild Card spot by sending a freeride resume (past results, social media, edits, and a brief paragraph to make you stand out) to the contact listed on the [event page](#) for the specific event.

PRIZE MONEY

Region 1: The required prize purse for 3* events is €5,000 and €10,000 for 4* events. There are no prize requirements for other levels of competition.

Region 2: The IFSA strongly encourages a prize purse of at least \$4,000 for 4* events. There are no prize requirements for other levels of competition.

CATEGORY MINIMUMS

Region 1: The minimum number of athletes needed to run a division at the adult level is three. If there aren't three competitors, the division will be canceled. The athletes from the canceled division can choose to compete in the other gender's division in a mixed gender competition.

Region 2: If there is not a minimum of four athletes in any division at a 3* or 4* competition, the division will be cancelled. There are no minimums required for 2* events.

If riders cannot locate answers to specific questions in either the Region 1 or 2 Handbooks, they must take the initiative to contact the appropriate region administrator for more information. This list is by no means comprehensive and if riders have questions, they should reach out to the appropriate contact at the IFSA or the Region 2 FWQ Administrative Team for clarification.

Region 1: fwq@freerideworldtour.com OR juniors@freerideworldtour.com

Region 2: info@freeskiers.org