

INTERNATIONAL LIFE SAVING FEDERATION
COMPETITION RULE BOOK
Short Course Pool Events Addendum

2026 Edition
(Effective February 2026)



World Water Safety

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1. PREFACE

The Short Course Pool Events Addendum is based on the standardised events contained in the current edition International Life Saving Federation (ILS) Competition Rule Book (see ilsf.org) and modified for use in 25 m short course swimming pools. The addendum is to be read in conjunction with the (current edition) ILS Competition Rule Book.

The intent of the short course rules is to provide participation opportunities where ILS compliant 50m pool facilities are not accessible and to grow ILS pool rescue competition.

It is also anticipated that, at some point in time, ILS Short Course Life Saving World Championships (LWC), as well as regional, other championships, and sanctioned competitions may be conducted, and World Records recognised.

All event conduct and event rules detailed in the current edition ILS Competition Rule Book apply to short competition and each event unless otherwise specified or varied as detailed with this Short Course Rule Book Addendum.

The ILS acknowledges the contribution of its Federations, the ILS Sport Commission, and the ILS Rules and Regulations Committee for their assistance in producing this Rule Book Addendum.

2. CHANGES TO THE SHORT COURSE POOL EVENTS RULE BOOK ADDENDUM 2026

In this February 2026 Edition, the ILS Sport Commission draws your attention to the following changes to the ILS Competition Rule Book Short Course Pool Events Addendum 2021 Revised Edition:

General: Simplified the wording to have more reliance to the wording in the (current edition) ILS Competition Rule Book. As a result the requirement for future updates to this document will be limited.

Minor corrections, where required, have also been made to the wording contained in the previous edition.

Section 5 Added the Rescue Tow Relay to the suite of short course events that may be conducted.

Note: There is no need to add the Manikin Lifesaver Medley to the suite of short course events as it is similar to the Short Course Super Lifesaver event.

3. FACILITY STANDARDS AND SANCTIONING

Short course lifesaving competitions are designed to be conducted in 25 m swimming pools, and preferably those that meet FINA standards (see www.fina.org).

Should a pool not meet FINA facilities standards (such as starting blocks, automatic timing, sufficient depth for diving or length of pool), then the local organizing competition committee will need to adapt the rules and requirements to ensure safety and provide details to competitors.

Note: For all dive starts and relay dive changeovers, a minimum depth of 1.35 m is required, extending from 1.0 m at least 6.0 m from the starting wall/edge, changeover wall/edge and finish wall/end. If the minimum depth is less than 1.35 m, in-water starts and/or change overs shall apply.

To be eligible for World Short Course Records and/or “world’s best short course times” (see Section 4), competition must be sanctioned by ILS and conducted in facilities that comply with ILS facility standards for swimming pools with the exception that the pool length is 25 m in length ([see ilsf.org](http://ilsf.org)).

Note: Refer to the current edition ILS Competition Rule Book for ILS Facility standards and processes for event sanctioning.

4. WORLD RECORDS AND WORLD'S BEST TIMES

Consistent with the current edition ILS Competition Rule Book, World Short Course Records will only be recognised upon conduct of the first ILS Life Saving World Short Course Championships.

However, pending the conduct of the first ILS Life Saving World Short Course Championships, ILS, at its absolute discretion, may maintain a list of world's best short course times provided that all other criteria (including sanctioning, pool depths etc.) for world record recognition are met (refer ilsf.org).

Note: A negative anti-doping drug test will not be required for the acceptance of any world's best short course times.

5. POOL EVENTS SUMMARY

The following pool events are described in this section:

Obstacle Swim	25 m	50 m	100 m	200 m
Manikin Carry	25 m	50 m		
Rescue Medley	50 m	100 m		
Manikin Carry with Fins	25 m	50 m	100 m	
Manikin Tow with Fins	50 m	100 m		
Super Lifesaver	100 m	200 m		
Line Throw				
Manikin Relay	4 x 12.5 m	4 x 25 m		
Obstacle Relay	4 x 25 m	4 x 50 m		
Medley Relay	4 x 25 m	4 x 50 m		
Pool Lifesaver Relay	4 x 25 m	4 x 50 m		
Rescue Tow Relay	4 x 25 m	4 x 50m		
Simulated Emergency Response Competition (SERC)				

Note: Alternative variations in distance, depths, and equipment may occur due to facility features, safety and to suit the circumstances.

5.1 OBSTACLE SWIM (25 m, 50 m, 100 m and 200 m)

5.1.1 Event description – 25 m, 50 m, 100 m, and 200 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims the course passing under the immersed obstacle to touch the finish wall/edge of the pool.

- Competitors must surface after the dive entry before the obstacle; after passing under each obstacle; and after a turn prior to passing under an obstacle.
- Competitors may push off the pool bottom when surfacing from under each of the obstacles. "Surfacing," means the competitor's head breaks the plane of the surface of the water.
- Swimming into or otherwise bumping an obstacle is not a behaviour that results in disqualification.

Note 1: Each competitor will pass under the obstacles as follows:

- 25 m – once
- 50 m – two times
- 100 m – four times
- 200 m – eight times

Note 2: All other event conditions are as per the 200 m Obstacle Swim event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.1.2 Equipment

Obstacles: See Section 8 – *Facility and Equipment Standards and Scrutineering Procedures*. Obstacles are fixed at right angles onto lane ropes in a straight line across all lanes. The obstacle is located 12.5 m from the start wall/edge, in the middle of the pool. The dimensions of the obstacle may need to be adjusted to allow for a narrower lane width and/or a shallower pool depth.

5.1.3 Disqualification

a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.2 MANIKIN CARRY (25 m and 50 m)

5.2.1 Event description – 25 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 12.5 m freestyle and then dives to recover a submerged manikin to the surface within 5 m of the pick-up line. The competitor must surface before diving down to recover the manikin. The competitor then carries the manikin to touch the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 50 m Manikin Carry event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.2.2 Event description – 50 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 25 m freestyle and then dives to recover a submerged manikin to the surface within 5 m of the pick-up line. The competitor must surface before diving down to recover the manikin. The competitor then carries the manikin to touch the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note 1: Competitors do not need to touch the turn wall/edge of the pool when recovering the manikin.

Note 2: All other event conditions are as per the 50 m Manikin Carry event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.2.3 Equipment

Positioning the manikin: The manikin is positioned on its back in contact with the pool bottom, with its head in the direction of the finish.

For the 50 m event the manikin will be placed with the base touching the pool wall. Where the facility design does not provide a vertical wall that joins the bottom at 90 degrees, the manikin must be positioned as close as possible to the wall, but no further than 30 cm from the wall as measured at the water surface.

5.2.4 Disqualification

a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.3 RESCUE MEDLEY (50 m and 100 m)

5.3.1 Event description – 50 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 25 m freestyle to turn, dive, and swim underwater to a submerged manikin located at 12.5 m from the turn wall/edge.

The competitor surfaces the manikin within the 5 m pick-up line, and then carries it the remaining distance to touch the finish wall/edge.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 100 m Rescue Medley event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.3.2 Event description – 100 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 75 m freestyle to turn, dive, and swim underwater to a submerged manikin located 12.5 m from the turn wall/edge.

The competitor surfaces the manikin within the 5 m pick-up line, and then carries it the remaining distance to touch the finish wall/edge.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 100 m Rescue Medley event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.3.3 Equipment

Positioning the manikin: The manikin is positioned on its back in contact with the pool bottom, with its head in the direction of the finish.

5.3.4 Disqualification

a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.4 MANIKIN CARRY WITH FINS (25 m, 50 m, and 100 m)

5.4.1 Event description – 25 m short course

With an in-water start, holding a manikin with one hand and the start wall/edge or starting block with the other hand. On an acoustic signal, the competitor carries the manikin 25 m wearing fins to touch the finish wall/edge of the pool.

5.4.2 Event description – 50 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 25 m freestyle wearing fins and then recovers a submerged manikin to the surface within 10 m of the turn wall/edge. The competitor carries the manikin to touch the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note 1: Competitors need not touch the turn wall/edge of the pool when recovering the manikin.

Note 2: All other event conditions are as per the 100 m Manikin Carry with Fins event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.4.3 Event description – 100 m short course (50 m Manikin Carry)

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 50 m freestyle wearing fins and then recovers a submerged manikin to the surface within 10 m of the turn wall/edge. The competitor carries the manikin 50 m (two 25 m laps) to the finish. After the turn at the 75 m mark competitors must have the manikin in the correct carrying position within 10 m of the turning wall/edge. The event is complete when the competitor touches the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note 1: Competitors need not touch the turn wall/edge of the pool when recovering the manikin.

Note 2: Competitors must touch the turning wall/edge with any part of the body at the 75 m mark.

Note 3: At the 75 m mark turn competitors may push off the turning wall/edge with their feet.

Note 4: All other event conditions are as per the 100 m Manikin Carry with Fins event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.4.4 Equipment

Positioning the manikin: The manikin is positioned on its back in contact with the pool bottom, with its head in the direction of the finish and its base touching the pool wall.

Where the facility design does not provide a vertical wall that joins the bottom at 90 degrees, the manikin must be positioned as close as possible to the wall, but no further than 30 cm from the wall as measured at the water surface.

5.4.5 Disqualification

a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.5 MANIKIN TOW WITH FINS (50 m and 100 m)

5.5.1 Event description – 50 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 25 m freestyle with fins and rescue tube. After touching the turn wall/edge, and within the 10 m pick-up zone, the competitor fixes the rescue tube correctly around a manikin and tows it to the finish. The event is complete when the competitor touches the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 100m Manikin Tow with Fins event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.5.2 Event description – 100 m short course (50 m Manikin Tow)

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 50 m freestyle with fins and rescue tube. After touching the turn wall/edge, and within the 10 m pick-up zone, the competitor fixes the rescue tube correctly around a manikin and tows it 50 m (two 25 m laps) to the finish. The event is complete when the competitor touches the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note 1: Competitors must touch the turning wall/edge with any part of the body at the 75 m mark.

Note 2: During the turn at the 75 m mark the manikin's face must remain above the surface of the water.

Note 3: At the 75 m mark turn competitors may push off the turning wall/edge with their feet

Note 4: All other event conditions are as per the 100 m Manikin Tow with Fins event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.5.3 Disqualification

a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.6 SUPER LIFESAVER (100 m and 200 m)

5.6.1 Event description - 100 m short course

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 25 m freestyle and then dives to recover a submerged manikin. The competitor surfaces the manikin within the 5 m pick-up zone and carries it 25 m to the turn wall/edge. After touching the wall/edge, the competitor releases the manikin.

Competitors need not touch the turn wall/edge of the pool when recovering the submerged manikin.

In the water, at the 50 m mark, the competitor dons fins and rescue tube and swims 25 m freestyle. After touching the wall/edge, and within the 10 m pick-up zone, the competitor fixes the rescue tube correctly around a manikin and tows it to the finish.

The event is complete when the competitor touches the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 200 m Super Lifesaver event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.6.2 Event description 200 m short course (50 m tow)

With a dive or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the competitor swims 75 m freestyle and then dives to recover a submerged manikin. The competitor surfaces the manikin within the 5 m pick-up zone and carries it 25 m to the turn wall/edge. After touching the wall/edge, the competitor releases the manikin.

In the water, the competitor dons fins and rescue tube and swims 50 m freestyle. After touching the wall/edge, and within the 10m pick-up zone, the competitor fixes the rescue tube correctly around a manikin and tows it 50 m (two 25 m laps) to the finish.

The event is complete when the competitor touches the finish wall/edge of the pool.

Note 1: Competitors need not touch the 75 m turn wall/edge of the pool when recovering the submerged manikin.

Note 2: Competitors must touch the turning wall/edge with any part of the body at the 175 m mark.

Note 3: During the turn at the 175 m mark the manikin's face must remain above the surface of the water.

Note 4: At the 175 m mark turn competitors may push off the turning wall/edge with their feet

Note 5: All other event conditions are as per the 200 m Super Lifesaver event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.6.3 Disqualification

- a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.7 LINE THROW

5.7.1 Event description

- a) As per the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.8 MANIKIN RELAY (4 x 12.5 m and 4 x 25 m)

5.8.1 Event description – 4 x 12.5 m short course

Four competitors in turn carry a manikin approximately 12.5 m each.

- a) **The first competitor** starts in the water holding a manikin with one hand and carries the manikin and passes it to the second competitor within the 5 m changeover zone between the 10 m and 15 m mark.
- b) **The second competitor** carries the manikin to touch the turn wall/edge and passes the manikin to the third competitor.
- c) **The third competitor** carries the manikin and passes it to the fourth competitor in the 5 m changeover zone between the 35 m and 40 m.
- d) **The fourth competitor** completes the event by carrying the manikin to touch the finish wall/edge with any part of the competitor's body.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 25 m Manikin Relay event detailed in the LS Competition Rule Book.

5.8.2 Event description – 4 x 25 m short course

Four competitors in turn carry a manikin approximately 25 m each.

- a) **The first competitor** starts in the water holding a manikin with one hand and carries the manikin 25 m to touch the turn wall/edge and passes the manikin to the second competitor.
- b) **The second competitor** carries the manikin 25 m to and passes it to the third competitor.
- c) **The third competitor** carries the manikin 25 m and passes the manikin to the fourth competitor.
- d) **The fourth competitor** completes the event by carrying the manikin 25 m to touch-the finish wall/edge.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 25 m Manikin Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.8.3 Disqualification

- a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.9 OBSTACLE RELAY (4 x 25 m and 4 x 50 m)

5.9.1 Event description – 4 x 25 m

With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 25 m freestyle passing under an obstacle. After the first competitor touches the turn wall/edge the second, third, and fourth competitors repeat the procedure in turn.

- a) Competitors must surface after the dive start entry or in-water start before the obstacle and after passing under each obstacle. “Surfacing,” means the competitor’s head breaks the plane of the surface of the water.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Obstacle Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.9.2 Event description – 4 x 50 m short course

With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 50 m freestyle passing under an obstacle on each lap. After the first competitor touches the turn wall/edge the second, third, and fourth competitors repeat the procedure in turn.

- a) Competitors must surface after the dive start entry or in-water start before the obstacle and after passing under each obstacle. “Surfacing,” means the competitor’s head breaks the plane of the surface of the water.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Obstacle Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.9.3 Equipment

Obstacles: See Section 8 – *Facility and Equipment Standards and Scrutineering Procedures*.

Obstacles are fixed at right angles onto lane ropes in a straight line across all lanes. The obstacle is located 12.5 m from the start wall in the middle of the pool. The dimensions of the obstacle may need to be adjusted to allow for a narrower lane width and/or a shallower pool depth.

5.9.4 Disqualification

- a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.10 MEDLEY RELAY (4 x 25 m and 4 x 50 m)

5.10.1 Event description – 4 x 25 m short course

The first competitor: With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 25 m freestyle *without* fins.

The second competitor: With a dive start or in water start after the first competitor touches the turn wall/edge, the second competitor swims 25 m freestyle *with* fins.

The third competitor: With a dive start or in water start after the second competitor touches the start/finish wall/edge, the third competitor swims 25 m freestyle *without* fins towing a rescue tube.

The fourth competitor: The fourth competitor, in the water wearing fins with at least one hand on the turn wall/edge or starting block, dons the harness. The third competitor, playing the role of “victim”, is towed 25 m by the fourth competitor to the finish.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Medley Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.10.2 Event description – 4 x 50 m short course

The first competitor: With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 50 m freestyle *without* fins.

The second competitor: With a dive start or in-water start the second competitor swims 50 m freestyle *with* fins.

The third competitor: With a dive start or in-water start the third competitor swims 50 m freestyle *without* fins towing a rescue tube.

The fourth competitor: The fourth competitor, in the water wearing fins with at least one hand on the turn wall/edge or starting block, dons the harness. The third competitor, playing the role of victim, is towed 50 m by the fourth competitor to the finish.

Note 1: At the turn at the 175 m mark the victim (No.3) **is not** required to touch the turning wall/edge with any part of their body.

Note 2: At the turn at the 175 m mark the victim (No.3) is permitted to push off the turning wall/edge with their feet.

Note 3: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Medley Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule book.

5.10.3 Disqualification

a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.11 POOL LIFESAVER RELAY (4 x 25 m and 4 x 50 m)

5.11.1 Event description– 4 x 25 m short course

The first competitor: With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 25 m freestyle *without* fins.

The second competitor: With a dive start or in-water start the second competitor swims 25 m with fins and dives to retrieve a submerged manikin.

The third competitor: The third competitor who is in the water (without fins) takes control of the manikin and carries the manikin 25 m.

The fourth competitor: The fourth competitor (with fins) then carries the manikin 25 m to touch the finish wall/edge.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Pool Lifesaver Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.11.2 Event description– 4 x 50 m short course

The first competitor: With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 50 m freestyle *without* fins.

The second competitor: With a dive start or in-water start the second competitor swims 50 m with fins and dives to retrieve a submerged manikin.

The third competitor: The third competitor who is waiting in the water (without fins) takes control of the manikin and then carries the manikin 50 m.

The fourth competitor: The fourth competitor (with fins) who is in the water then carries the manikin 50 m to touch the finish wall/edge.

Note 1: At the turns competitors may push off the turning wall/edge with their feet.

Note 2: After touching the turning wall at the 125 m and 175 m marks, the competitor's head may be in front of the manikin but must be in the correct carrying position 5m (for the third competitor) and 10 metres (fourth competitor) respectively after leaving the turning wall.

Note 4: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Pool Lifesaver Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.11.3 Disqualification

- a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.12 RESCUE TOW RELAY (4 x 25 m and 4 x 50 m)

5.12.1 Event description – 4 x 25 m short course

The first competitor: With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 25 m freestyle *without* fins.

The second competitor: With a dive start or in-water start the second competitor swims 25 m freestyle *with* fins.

The third competitor: With a dive start the third competitor swims 25 m freestyle with fins towing a rescue tube. The third competitor (who plays the role of rescuer) touches the turning wall/edge. The third competitor does not need to surface before touching the turning wall/edge.

The fourth competitor: The fourth competitor (playing the role of victim) who is in the water is then clipped into the rescue tube and the third competitor tows the fourth competitor 25 metres to the finish wall/edge.

Note: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Rescue Tow Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.12.2 Event description – 4 x 50 m short course

The first competitor: With a dive start or in-water start on an acoustic signal, the first competitor swims 50 m freestyle *without* fins.

The second competitor: With a dive start or in-water start the second competitor swims 50 m freestyle *with* fins.

The third competitor: With a dive start the third competitor swims 50 m freestyle with fins towing a rescue tube. The third competitor (who plays the role of rescuer) touches the turning wall/edge. The third competitor does not need to surface before touching the turning wall/edge.

The fourth competitor: The fourth competitor (playing the role of victim) who is in the water is then clipped into the rescue tube and the third competitor tows the fourth competitor 50 metres to the finish wall/edge.

Note 1: At the turns competitors may push off the turning wall/edge with their feet.

Note 2: At the turn at the 175 m mark the victim (No.4) **is not** required to touch the turning wall/edge with any part of their body.

Note 3: At the turn at the 175 m mark the victim (No.4) **is** permitted to push off the turning wall/edge with their feet.

Note 4: All other event conditions are as per the 4 x 50 m Rescue Tow Relay event detailed in the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.10.3 Disqualification

- a) Refer to the ILS Competition Rule Book.

5.13 SIMULATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMPETITION (SERC)

5.12.1 Event description

- a) As per the ILS Competition Rule Book.