



A Scoring Update for USA Climbing Members and Competitors,

Accompanying the release of the USA Climbing Rulebook on September 1st USA Climbing announced that the 2017-2018 Bouldering season Championship events will use a new Multi-Zone scoring methodology. Additionally, a new Redpoint 'Modified' Format has been introduced for the Qualification rounds of the National Cup Series and as an option for Local competitions. This document, in conjunction with the updated Rules video, (<http://www.usaclimbing.org/Officials/Rulebook.htm>) highlights key rules for the Bouldering Championship season and explains the new formats and rules in further detail to help ensure that USA Climbing members are well-informed as we approach the Championship event season.

We encourage all those involved in climbing competitions, including athletes, coaches, parents and our dedicated routesetters, judges and volunteers, to thoroughly review relevant sections of the Rulebook and contact us with any questions.

MULTI-ZONE SCORING:

In a sport such as climbing, athletes must use mental and physical skills to attempt unique challenges on a playing field that is constantly changing. These aspects make competitive climbing uniquely interesting and exciting while presenting distinct challenges in the scoring process. USA Climbing has worked intentionally over the past decade to explore and refine different scoring systems, including the "combined rank" method used in recent years, the "top score" system before it, and approaches used internationally. Always with a goal of constant improvement, over the last two years specifically, the Rules Committee listened to the feedback from our members concerning the issues of clarity of understanding and results presentation of the "combined rank" method and continued significant research on scoring.

Introduced successfully in the inaugural National Cup Series last season, the new Multi-Zone scoring system has been well-tested at those events in the last year and numerous non-sanctioned competitions throughout the country. With direction from USA Climbing's Board of Directors and feedback from USAC athletes, the Rules Committee has formalized the Multi-Zone scoring system in the Rulebook for all onsight competitions, replacing the former "combined rank" scoring. The new scoring is intended to provide clarity and simplicity for competitors and spectators alike. In the context of the inherent complexity with bouldering specifically, the overarching goals of the new Multi-Zone system are to:

- Create a fair ranking of competitors from the perspective of athletes and spectators.
- Present the ranking in a way that is simple to understand and follow, both as the competition occurs and after it is complete.

Multi-Zone scoring focuses on three primary elements of performance:

TOP = 25 POINTS

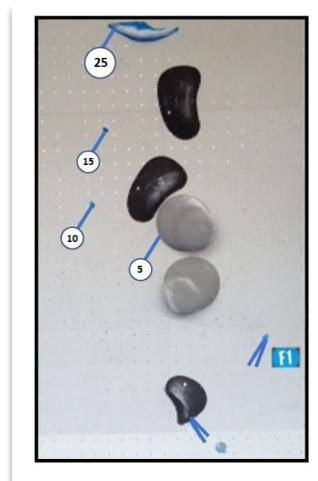
Completing a problem on the first attempt is a score of 25 POINTS. Flashing all four problems in a round with four problems is a perfect score of 100.

ZONES = 5 / 10 / 15 POINTS

ZONE handholds are marked, worth 5, 10 and 15 POINTS, respectively. Competitors who control a ZONE handhold receive the points for that handhold.

FALLS = .1 POINT DEDUCTION(S)

A deduction of .1 POINT(S) for the total FALLS recorded to reach the competitors highest scored point in each problem (either TOP or highest ZONE handhold).



The result of this approach is a radically simpler presentation of competitors' results in the form of a single number. As final and semi-final rounds of major competitions around the US and internationally have traditionally included four boulder problems, the system also creates the opportunity, where a competitor may flash all four problems, to receive 25 + 25 + 25 + 25 for a "perfect score," of 100. This unique aspect is why

the method has also been referred to with the simple label or catch phrase, "100-Point Scoring." As the Youth Regional Championship requires six (6) boulder problems, in that competition a flash of 6 problems would result in a 150-point, perfect score.

The finish handhold of each problem will be marked with a "25." Three Zone handholds shall generally be marked, where the first Zone handhold in the progression of the problem will be "5" points, the second Zone hand hold will be "10" points, and the third Zone handhold should be "15" points. It is important to note that this applies to each boulder problem. When marking Zone handholds, the routesetters' aim should be to choose the marking of the Zone handholds in such a way *that s/he anticipates will most fairly and effectively divide the field of competitors, on each problem.* As shown in the example above, where the routesetter can mark Zone handholds fairly (in a way that is not anticipated to distinctly advantage or disadvantage, competitors of different heights, for example, by a tall climber reaching out of the intended sequence to control a specific Zone handhold), and effectively (in a way that is anticipated to divide the field of competitors based on markedly different performance), s/he should always mark three Zone handholds (5/10/15).

Only in very short problems where there are not enough handholds within the problem to, fairly and effectively, mark all *three* Zone handholds should a routesetter then consider to mark only two, or only one. In the rare instance(s) where only two Zone handholds may be marked, the first Zone handhold shall be valued at 10 points and the second Zone handhold valued at 15 points. If, in a very short problem, there is only one Zone handhold that can fairly and effectively be marked, the value of that Zone handhold shall be 15 points. This approach maintains flexibility in the routesetting and the resulting stylistic diversity of boulder problems in a round of competition. However, the marking of only two or one Zone handholds should only be done in individual boulder problems where it is specifically appropriate. In consideration of these guidelines routesetters have to fairly and effectively divide the field while also maintaining flexibility in stylistic diversity, competitors should simply be aware that while typically a problem will consist of three marked Zone handholds, but within the rules, there may be an instance in which the Routesetter marks only one or two zones.

In terms of scorekeeping, if a competitor completes the problem a numbered score of 25 will be recorded in his/her scorecard. If a competitor does not complete the problem, a numbered score of 5, 10, or 15 points shall be recorded for the highest Zone handhold controlled. If a competitor does not control any Zone handhold on the problem, he/she will receive a score of 0. Falls will be recorded and .1 will be deducted per fall to a competitor's highest point (Note: Competitors do not lose points for every fall but only falls taken to get to their highest point). For one or more competitors that have the same primary score based on the above factors, the competitors' total number of tops, then total number of flashes (a "FLASH" is when a climber reaches the finish hold in his/her first attempt) will further rank the competitors. To see examples of a scorecard and an example comparative results display, refer to section 15.3 of the Rulebook.

Overall, from the routesetting and judging perspective, the fundamental approaches are similar as in the past, although route maps are no longer necessary and the technical scoring elements of match, bridge, or contingency, for example, are no longer used in bouldering. The information above outlines key aspects of the new scoring system, but Regional Coordinators and Chief Routesetters may receive more detailed information in preparation of Youth Bouldering Regionals, and are encouraged to contact us with any questions.

REDPOINT "MODIFIED" FORMAT

Another new aspect of the Rules for this season is the introduction of a Redpoint "Modified" Format which will be used in all National Cup Series competitions and is an option for host facilities running Youth Local competitions.

As many members will have seen in recent years, the participation growth at USA Climbing Local and Regional competitions has been significant. This growth in membership and participation across all USA Climbing disciplines, although welcomed, creates new challenges including finding a format at local competitions that would be friendly yet challenging for both athletes new to competitive climbing and our more experienced climbers. The Redpoint "Modified" Format can be thought of as a hybrid between the informal yet more traditional redpoint format where competitors climb in a cooperative environment together and have the opportunity to try more problems, and the systematic and more competitive structure of the onsight format where there are far fewer problems, a very limited time to attempt each, and significant times for competitors and coaches in isolation, as seen at Championship events.

The Redpoint “Modified” Format is based off a European model that has proven successful for many years and has been used in many non-sanctioned competitions throughout the US. Experimenting with this format will allow us to better understand the pros and cons as we continue to look strategically towards the future and adapt as competitive climbing continues to grow. Rather than a typical redpoint competition where 40+ problems are set for all competitors in an ordered value, this format is more precise for each category, where between 8 and 12 boulders are set for a specific gender/category. For example, 8 - 12 problems will be assigned to the Female Youth-A competitors to attempt and 8-12 problems will be assigned to the Male Youth-B competitors to attempt; each category will ONLY be scored for the problems designated for the respective category. General redpoint rules are otherwise followed and the goal is to complete the highest quantity of problems and accumulate the most total points possible. Each problem has the SAME value (25 for the Top) and scores on ALL problems are counted. A competitor’s final score is the cumulative value of points recorded on each problem.

For Bouldering, a competitor can be scored one of two ways within the Redpoint “Modified” format. An Event Organizer must choose Option 1 or 2 and Falls will be recorded where .10 will be deducted per fall.

Option 1 – Multi-Zone: Points are awarded for completion of, or progress on, a problem as outlined above. In this case each problem is worth 25 for the top but competitors also can attain points for the Zone handholds on each problem.

Option 2 – Tops Only: Points are only awarded for the completion of a problem where each problem has a value of 25 points.

EXAMPLE: In the example below demonstrating Option 2 - Tops Only, 8 boulders were set for each respective category and the maximum attainable score was 200. On the first problem, the climber fell twice before topping the boulder and therefore was deducted .1 for each fall, thus receiving a final score on the first problem 24.8. The climber also fell 4 times, prior to topping problem #3 and therefore was deducted .4 receiving a score of 24.6. The climber flashed problems 2, 4, 6, 7 & 8, resulting in a score of 25 on each. The climber fell 10 times without topping problem #5, however the climber was not deducted .1 for each fall because the climber did not top this boulder and therefore received 0 points for the problem. The sample below tallies the climbers total score to be: 174.4 out of a possible 200.

											
1	0	0	25	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DS
2	25	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DS
3	0	0	0	0	25	6	7	8	9	10	DS
4	25	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DS
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	DS
6	25	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DS
7	25	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DS
8	25	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DS
Problem 1	Problem 2	Problem 3	Problem 4	Problem 5	Problem 6	Problem 7	Problem 8				Total Score
24.8	25	24.6	25	0	25	25	25				174.4

As competitive climbing grows at a rapid pace, USA Climbing has and will continue to work hard to improve structural aspects of the sport with the intent of further advancing competitive climbing in the US and providing a positive experience for new and experienced climbers at all levels of competition while preparing our elite athletes for success on the international stage.

We appreciate the opportunity to share this information and encourage all members to contact us with any questions and to provide feedback.

Krista Henehan
Director of Operations

Chris Danielson
USA Climbing Rules Committee, Chair