



International Rescue & Emergency Care Association

PO Box 431000, Minneapolis, MN 55443 — (612) 314 - 9532

Hello Rescue Competitors and Friends!

Rope rescue techniques are as varied as the human-beings that employ them. Perfecting your craft is time consuming & expensive. For many, many years the “traditional IRECA way” helped standardize equipment selection and training in order to ease some of that burden. However, the rope rescue landscape has changed drastically over the last decade and our competition needs to follow to remain relevant. Below are some questions we think you will have regarding the changes to the 2023 Technical Rescue Challenge. If our answers below do not answer your questions - please reach out to one, or both, of us!

Who are your new Technical Rescue Challenge Chairs?

Chris “Shaggy” Williams and Stephanie “Funk” Hyatt are your new Technical Rescue chairs. We credit our rescue foundation to IRECA where we competed for many years with the Sweeny Complex Rescue Team. Since then we have formed a rescue training company, Vertical Integrity Rescue, and decided that because IRECA meant so much to our growth as rescue professionals, it was our turn to give back to the organization.

You mentioned changes in equipment selection?

Yes - While we kept the mindset of “do more with less”, we recognize the advancement in gear not only in efficiency, but also in safety. We believe it is important to “play” with the same equipment you would normally deploy with in a real rescue. This standardizes gear caches at your home facilities and brings relevance to the IRECA training days where your team, competition members and non, can train on the same equipment and techniques.

What equipment is considered Unquestionably Sound?

Anchor plate, spreader bar, unopenable ring (god ring) and the MAP of a harness are all considered unquestionably sound, meaning those pieces of equipment do not need backup jumpers to a secondary attachment point. For example, two ropes with two carabiners can land on ONE anchor plate, god ring, spreader bar, or MAP of a harness.

Our team uses 11mm rope - can we use that?

IRECA requires 9,000 lbs. MBS on life safety rope. So, yes, if your 11mm rope meets that requirement.

What if we don't have this new equipment?

We feel by allowing teams to rescue “their way” with “their equipment” makes operational and financial sense. We encourage you to compete with the equipment and techniques your team employs in real rescue situations (as long as the equipment and techniques meet the requirements stated in the challenge rules).



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Can we still use the “traditional IRECA Way” techniques?

Absolutely! All 2023 scenarios can be completed using the skills list and equipment list from 2022.

Twin Tension Rope Systems (TTRS) and Reeving systems were requested on the survey sent out last year - what should we expect?

Teams may use TTRS or a slack belay system, at no time will the scenario dictate the type of system you must build.

Reeving systems are “a way” to facilitate a successful rescue. There are other techniques that accomplish similar 2-dimensional patient movement such as cross haul or skate block. No scenario will dictate the use of a specific ferrying technique to accomplish the rescue.

What do you mean rope rescue landscape has changed?

With the advent of safer and faster equipment, techniques are evolving now more than ever. We feel the competition should reflect those changes by allowing teams to use the techniques on which they train.

Has the structure of the scenarios changed?

Here are some examples of the changes in 2023:

There are no required captain speech expectations, we simply want to see and hear how YOU captain a rescue with your team. The captain will be scored on the items listed in the scoresheet.

Time will start when the judge begins reading the scenario to the captain. The captain will then be responsible for relaying the scenario brief to the team based on his/her notes from the judges brief. Teams will not be permitted to listen to the Captain and Judges brief. No briefing documents will change hands.

Time will end when all team members and gear are in the outlined finish box (approximately 10' x 10') near each problem and the captain has told the judge to call time.

Gear does NOT have to be put up and ready for re-use prior to time being called. There will be time in between scenarios for gear repacking and proper inspection.

How will we be scored?

Please see the new sample scoresheet on the website.

Are we still using live patients?

You will see both live patients and rescue manikins during the competition.

How much medical should we expect in the Technical Rescue Challenge?



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The focus of the Technical Rescue Challenge is rescue techniques, but we expect patient care to the level of EMR or greater with basic interventions in play (e.x. splinting, ice packs, etc.). See equipment list for changes in required medical kit loadout.

Is the 4-person challenge adopting these changes as well?

These changes affect the Technical Rescue Challenge only.

Talk to me about the penalty section of the scoresheet

There are four penalty sections:

Number of pieces of gear not recovered

Pieces of gear dropped from a height greater than 6 feet

Number of All Stops due to imminent safety violations

Number of occurrences of travel restraints not used within 6 feet of open hole/edge

How many pieces of gear can we “not recover”?

The 1st - 3rd piece of gear will be -5 pts each, The 4th piece (or more) is considered all gear abandoned which is -50 pts

Give me examples of imminent safety violations

- Non-whistle stop safety - i.e. munter hitch
- Using gear outside of design limitations / intentions
- No second point of attachment to victim or rescuer (taking into account the items regarded as unquestionably sound as mentioned above)
- Piece of equipment loaded incorrectly and put in use

What do you mean Travel Restraints?

All personnel within 6 feet of an open hole or unprotected edge will be required to be positively tied off to prevent the possibility of a fall. Laying on the stomach or on knees at the hole is UNACCEPTABLE as a method of travel restraint.

From the score sheet - what do you mean DCDs locked and tied-off when unmanned when used as a static line?

See examples below:

- If I rig a 3:1 haul with integrating the Clutch/MPD type device. Do I need to tie-off or lock the device for this application?
 - Nope
- If I rappel, will the device need to be tied-off and locked when I climb over the handrail?
 - That is considered a manned device so no need to lock it off while transitioning

Will there still be a Best Captain and Best Medic?

Sure will!



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What happens if we do not turnover the patient within the allotted time?

Your scores and comments will be entered for all sections based on what was completed in the allotted time for your review, but the overall score will be a zero for that scenario.