

American Wakesurf Association

*Competitive
Wakesurf
Rules*

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Significant contributions to the development of this document were made by:

Jeff Walker

Roy Gordon

Dennis Horton

Ed Sullivan

President

Director of Information Technologies

Director

Midwest Coordinator

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Forward

Competitive wakesurfing is relatively new. Rules are needed for both competitor and judge. Until now rules for competitive wakesurfing have not been formally described and published. Starting in the 2006 season the American Wakesurf Association began developing rules. This first published version of rules draws on lessons learned in these early competitions.

The American Wakesurf Association (AWSA) is a collection of wakesurfing enthusiasts. We have developed these rules to support the growth of this new sport. Suggestions, corrections, and new content for this document maybe electronically submitted to the AWSA via Roy Gordon at rgordon@psfe.com , Dennis Horton at wakesurfer@mac.com, Ed Sullivan at Bigshow1960@Yahoo.com, or Jeff Walker at jwalker@jwcpa.com.

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1 Introduction

Applicability of the Rules: The rules set forth here govern wakesurfing competitions sanctioned by the American Wakesurf Association (AWSA). It is desired that these rules be followed as closely as possible. Whenever the masculine is used, the same shall be construed as meaning the feminine where the context so requires.

Exceptions to the Rules: Where compliance with the rules is not feasible, the Event Organizer or the Chief Judge shall, with the approval of the majority of the Judges, make the necessary changes. Such changes will be announced at a riders' meeting and by posting. Where the rules are definite and feasible, a vote of the judges to decide whether to enforce any provision is prohibited.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Any rider (or his representative) or official whose conduct is deemed unsportsmanlike or whose conduct may cause discredit to the AWSA either on or off the competition site, before during, or after the competition, may be disqualified from all or part of the competition.

Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to: use of vulgar language in public, public tantrums, not riding to fullest potential, failure to attend designated functions or events, consuming alcoholic beverages during the competition, competing under false pretences, concealing significant injuries or health problems.

2 Personnel

2.1 Event Organizer

- Secures the venue
- Arranges for event insurance
- Promotes the event
- Solicits sponsors
- Assigns key staff including Registrar, Safety, Drivers, and Judges
- All event personnel will report to the Event Organizer
- Will have the final say in all decisions

2.2 Registrar

- The registrar organizes sanctioning body registration and related paper work

2.3 Dock Starter

- Collects rider names and divisions from the registrar
- Shall review riders and divisions with the Chief Judge
- Shall announce heats and call for riders

2.4 Safety Coordinator

- Safety is the first and most important aspect of any wakesurfing event
- A first aid kit and other safety equipment required as a precaution and as required by a sanctioning body shall be available on site

Responsible to assure that the location of the nearest rescue medical facilities have been posted or available on site
Train required safety personnel (safety swimmers)
The Safety Coordinator shall inspect the tow boats from a safety perspective
The Safety Coordinator shall inspect the course for hazards and unsafe conditions

2.5 Driver

The Driver shall ensure safe operation of the competition tow boat
The Driver pilots the tow boat course in a consistent manner for each rider
The Driver adjusts boat speed as directed by the Boat Judge after the judge receives a speed change request from the rider
The Driver shall not adjust the boat speed to "save" a rider

2.6 Chief Judge

Chief Judge's rulings shall be final
Chief Judge may alter rules to fit the venue as appropriate. All rule changes must be made prior to start of competition after consultation with all officials. Weather or safety concerns can result in rule changes after the start.
Chief Judge shall hold a judges meeting and instructs all judges
Chief Judge shall collect scores and reports final standings
Chief Judge may promote or demote riders in to other competitive divisions (to prevent sandbagging)
Chief Judge may disqualify riders for unsportsmanlike conduct or other conduct disturbing the competition
Chief Judge may deem equipment as unsafe or unsuitable for the competition
Chief Judge shall hear and settles all protests
Chief Judge may delay or cancel the competition to ensure a safe event
Weather or other conditions may be deemed unsafe by the Chief Judge

2.7 Boat Judge

The highest ranking Judge in the competition boat
The Boat Judge may or may not be the Chief Judge
The Boat Judge may offer re-runs if the course presented an unfair interference
The Boat Judge or delegate shall compile the scores of all other judges on board the competition boat
The Boat Judge shall position passengers for the best surfing wake
The Boat Judge may break ties if the judges can not break a tie
The Boat Judge may permit or deny request to repair equipment on the competition boat
Every attempt should be made to provide a reasonable opportunity for a rider to repair equipment

2.8 Judge

Judges shall evaluate rider performance based on the scoring guidelines
Judges shall work with the Boat Judge to compile a composite score for riders in a division

2.9 Rider

- Anyone willing to compete in a sporting manner may enter a competition
- Shall enter a competitive division at appropriate with skill levels
- Shall see the Dock Starter for heat and estimated start times
- May submit protests
- Ride in a safe manner
- Shall follow Chief Judge's directions and safety guidance

3 Safety

Safety is the first and primary objective of AWSA sanctioned events. If any rule or guidance in this document jeopardizes the safety or well being of a rider or event personnel, then exceptions will be taken, putting safety first.

4 Divisions

Divisions at AWSA sanctioned wakesurf tournaments shall be made by age, gender, and style. Open divisions will only be separated by style and gender. As needed, any division may be split into skim style, surf style, or nose riding style. The Skim, Surf and Nose Riding divisions are not meant to be exclusionary, only to aid in the consistency of judging. If Surf, Skim and Nose Riding divisions are used they should be judged by the style of riding and not by the surf board being used in the competition. Classifying boards as surf, skim or nose riding is not recommended and should be discouraged.

The heat size should be from 3 to 10 riders. The minimum heat size shall be 3 riders. The Chief Judge shall inform all participating riders as soon as feasibly possible if there are insufficient riders within a division.

A rider's age as of January 1 of the current year will be used to determine age bracket, as below:

1. Mini-Kahuna – boys and girls under 12
2. Boys – 12 to 16*
3. Girls – 12 to 16*
4. Men's – 17 and over
5. Women's – 17 and over
6. Open Skim - no age restriction, may add gender
7. Open Surf – no age restriction, may add gender
8. Big Kahuna - 40 years old and over, may add gender
9. Nose Riding – no age restriction

* If there is no Mini-Kahuna division this will change to under 17

5 Running Order and Heat System

5.1 Heat System

Wakesurf competitions will use a heat system, if the number of contestants warrant and time allows. The Event Organizer will and Chief Judge shall determine if multiple heats or a single heat format will be used and how many riders should advance from each heat to the next.

5.2 Seeding Heats

Heats may be seeded randomly or on past performance. The Event Organizer and Chief Judge will determine the method used to seed heats. Only qualifying rounds may be seeded. The number of riders in each heat is dependent on the total number of riders entered. A fixed number of the riders from each heat will then go through to the, semi-finals and finals. The Event Organizer and Chief Judge will determine the number of riders to advance to the next heat. The Chief Judge may use his discretion to advance a rider from the first round of heats to the next heat. An example of when this might happen is if two randomly assigned heats are very unbalanced. The goal is for the best riders to advance to the next heat. This discretion should only be used for the first round of heats.

5.3 Last Chance Qualification

Last chance qualifiers may be used to help fill a heat. When time permits last chance qualification round may be used with talented riders not normally advancing to the second round.

5.4 Tardy Riders

If a rider is tardy, the Dock Starter may recommend his disqualification to the Chief Judge; however, the Dock Starter may grant a one minute delay for equipment repair or other emergencies prior to a ride.

5.5 Following Disqualified Riders

In the case where a rider has been disqualified or has been scratched, a one-minute delay shall be granted to the next rider in the starting order if he was not on the starting dock at the time of disqualification. If more than one rider has been disqualified or has scratched, the time allotted to the next rider shall be one minute for each rider disqualified or scratched.

6 Entry Requirements

AWSA wakesurfing tournaments shall be inclusive - meant for all. However, riders must not enter a competition with a medical or physical condition which precludes them from vigorous activity which would put their well being at risk. Riders must agree to the terms of the event and the objectives of the event. Agreeing to terms of the event may include an entry fee and signing a liability waiver. The objectives of the event include the safe and sportsmanlike conduct for the enjoyment of all.

7 Equipment

7.1 General

The equipment of all competition personal and riders shall be subject to the review of the Chief Judge. Equipment shall be reviewed at the Chief Judge's discretion. Review of equipment shall not be construed as approval of that equipment. Personnel and riders shall be responsible for their own equipment and safety.

7.2 Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

While on course, i.e. in the water, all competitors must wear a PFD. It is the responsibility of personnel and riders to ensure their life vest floats them. There shall be enough PFDs on the tow boat for each person on the boat to have a PFD.

7.3 Damaged Equipment

A rider is fully responsible for his personal equipment. The Boat Judge will have the final say as to whether the equipment has failed.

8 Protests

Protests in any competitive event are inevitable. These challenges will be handled as follows:

- a. Protests shall be granted, when the majority of judges agree, that the rider had unfair conditions. The protested run will be performed when the Chief Judge decides.
- b. No protest shall ever be permitted on a subjective judgment decision by the Judges.

9 Use of video

Due to the subjective scoring nature and spirit of wakesurfing, video footage of any kind shall not be used by judges, riders or representatives to resolve any disputes.

10 Competition format

10.1 General

While on course each rider may perform any routine he chooses. Each pass ends either when the rider exits the course, or falls for the second time. Riders are allowed two falls in each direction for a total of four falls per run. Unused falls may not be carried forward. The organizer and chief judge can adjust the allowable fall total to meet event requirements and may limit all riders to one pass due to venue or time constraints. Judging of the routine begins when the rider enters the course or drops the rope, whichever occurs later and ends when the rider exits the course, or falls for a second time. Riders are encouraged to perform a smooth flowing routine with a wide variety of tricks. Each trick should be executed as cleanly as possible and taken to its limit. Judges will score riders based on their overall opinion of how well the rider performed his routine, compared to other riders. Falls are NOT reflected in Execution and Composition scores.

10.2 Judging Panels and Heats

Within a round of heats the performance of all riders shall be evaluated by the same panel of judges.

11 Execution, Intensity and Composition

The complete rules for scoring and judging are found in the AWSA Judge's Training Course documents. An extensive list of wakesurf tricks can be found in the AWSA Wakesurf Tricks List.

Surfing criteria is the measure by which a surfer's performance is judged. An understanding of the criteria is important to both judge and competitor. This judging course defines elements of surfing criteria. Wakesurf judging is subjective, a "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" assessment. For a competitive event this evaluation must be converted into a score or ranking. The elements of surfing criteria are an aid to convert a subjective evaluation into a score or ranking. The elements of surfing criteria include execution, intensity, and composition. Each of these elements should weigh equally toward the composition of a score.

11.1 Execution

Execution criterion is an assessment of how well the wakesurfing maneuver was performed. Execution should be applied to the body of maneuvers a surfer completes or attempts. Successful tricks poorly executed should be judged lower than successful tricks masterfully executed.

11.2 Intensity

The intensity criterion is an assessment of aggressiveness of the performance. Higher Aerial tricks are more "intense" than tricks completed with less air. Carving maneuvers that are performed more rapidly, in tighter arcs, throwing more water are more difficult and intense. Other attributes may also be attached to intensity.

11.3 Composition

The composition criterion is an assessment of how well rounded the performance was. Good composition should include a range of tricks, total number of tricks completed, style appropriate tricks, division appropriate tricks, compound tricks, unique tricks with grabs, personal flair, or other embellishments.

12 Scoring

Scoring will use a scale from 1 to 10. Judges score each rider after each riders run. Care should be taken to watch the riders run as tricks are performed quickly. At the end of each heat, judges will give scores sheets to boat judge. Each judge should review his score sheets to insure they have scored each rider and written that on the score sheet before relinquishing control of the score sheet. Judges notes should support their ranking. Subsequently the boat judge sums the points for each individual rider. This summation process should be completed at the conclusion of each heat. The boat judge then ranks each rider in descending order based upon total points: First Place, Second

Place, etc. In the event of a tie in total points, the judges will check their notes and collaborate on the final ranking. Once this is complete, a summary sheet is prepared. The Division will be listed as a section heading and then each rider's name and ranking will be listed in descending order. Each rider in each division will be included. This summary sheet will be transmitted to the organizer/chief judge or individual responsible for presentation of awards. Care should be taken to insure proper control of the Judges score sheets, the summation ranking sheet and the summary sheet used for presentation.

12.1 Benchmark

The first rider in each division will be used as a benchmark. Each judge will score said rider and at the end of the run the panel of judges will confer and agree upon a score. As such, the first rider in each division will have an identical score from each judge. Subsequent riders, in the division, will be scored using the benchmark described above. To allow subsequent riders in the division to be scored higher or lower than the benchmark every effort should be made to place the benchmark score at a point that will allow higher and lower scores than the benchmark.

It should be understood that EACH division needs a separate benchmark. As such, a score of 8 in the men's open is NOT equivalent to a score of 8 in the boy's division.

13 Score Tally

At the end of each heat the scores for all riders must be tallied and ranked by each judge. When the heat has completed, riders and spectators should exit the boat while the judging panel remains on board until results have been compiled.

The Chief Judge will collect and compare rankings developed by each panel judge. In the likely event that rankings differ, the panel will discuss results and produce a single final ranking. The Chief Judge will lead the discussion. Judging notes can be invaluable tools for discussion.

A judges' meeting should be held prior to the competition. The criteria for each division should be discussed and agreed upon. Ranking discussion should fall within the agreed criteria. The pre-competition judges' meeting and ranking discussions present developmental opportunities for judges.

14 Speed

Speed is at the discretion of the rider but must be within the maximum and minimum tolerances allowed for the site and equipment. A judge or a surfer not competing should take a test surfing run. Test runs verify adequate ballast set up and establish an adequate baseline speed. The best assessment of the baseline speed and wake should be provided at a riders meeting. Once this information has been provided any speed change remains the responsibility of the rider. Preventing sharing speed information is too difficult to manage in any practical sense. As a result teams and individuals may share speed information. The boat driver may report the speed at the end of a run. A speed protest may only be filed if the driver severely over or under shoots the requested speed while on course.

15 Limitations

Any trick started outside of the course or while holding the rope will not be scored. A trick started on the course but finished off the course will be scored.

After falling riders may only swim to their board. Swimming back up the course to increase ride time, can result in disqualification.

A rider must choose which side they will ride (starboard or port) at registration. . The Chief Judge may choose to disallow any subsequent request to change sides. The rider must complete his entire run on the boat set up for their selected side.

The Contest Organizer and Chief Judge may disallow tricks, which leave loose equipment on the course. It is the riders' responsibility to inform the Chief Judge of a trick which will result in loose equipment on the course.

The rider under normal conditions will be disqualified for intentional contact with the boat once underway. An exception to this is if the boat abruptly slows down or the wake abruptly changes and the rider is thrust toward the boat, the boat judge may determine to not disqualify the rider.

Swim platform starts and exits shall not be permitted.

Only one rider shall be allowed on the course at one time (e.g. no tandem riding).

16 Schedule Changes and Cancellation of Events

Riders should be aware that timetables are subject to changes. Changes in the schedule during the competition shall be made only for weather, water conditions, safety, or a similar reason. The Dock Starter shall announce these changes as appropriate.

17 Event Setup Guidelines

The Event Organizer will determine exact tournament setup dependent on number of participants and venue particulars, such as size or configuration of lake or spectator areas. The following guidelines are provided:

17.1 Course

A two-leg out-and-back course is recommended. The first and second legs are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2. The course legs are symmetrical. The course includes a boat start (yellow triangle), a course start (green circle), a last fall (red square), and a course end (red octagon). The distance from boat start to course start is 150 feet. The course distance should be 800 to 1,500 feet. The distance from the last fall to the course end is 300 feet. The course can be compressed into a set of six markers as shown in Figure 3.

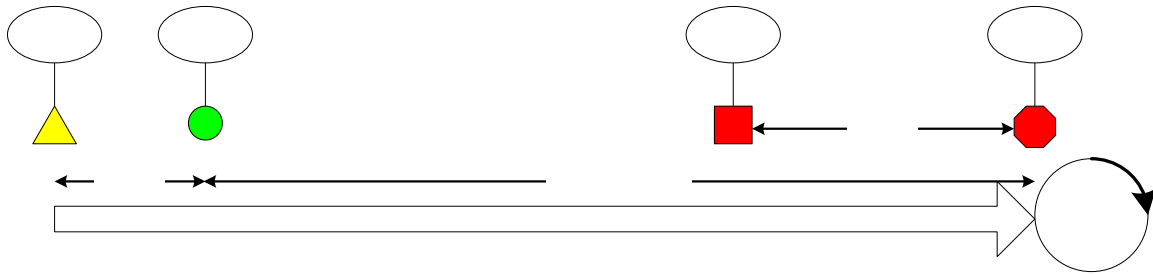


Figure 1. Leg 1 of the recommended course.

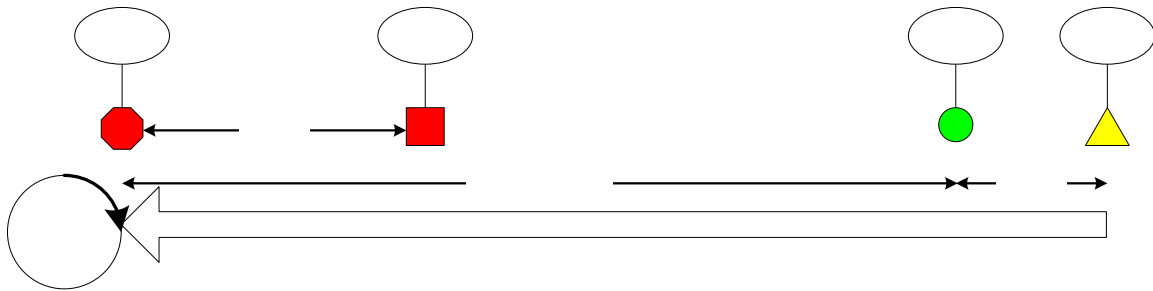


Figure 2. Leg 2 of the recommended course.

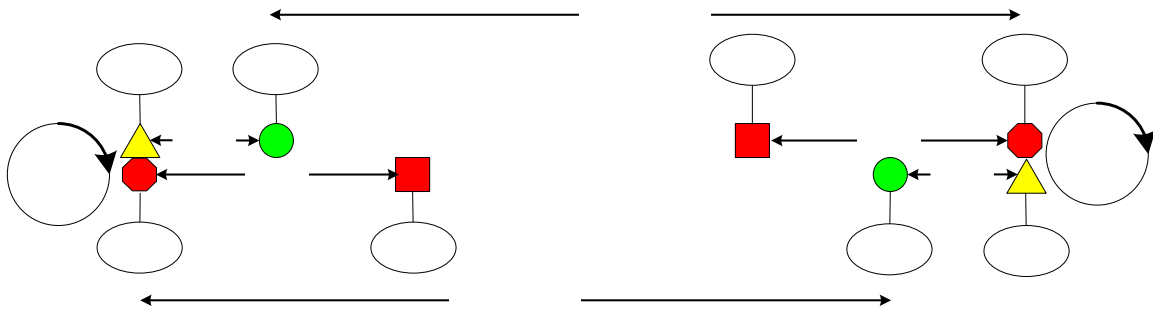


Figure 3. Combined course markers.

17.2 Recovering Riders

At the end of the first leg of the course the tow boat shall come to a stop, bring the tow rope to the rider then restart the rider for the second leg. The tow boat may tow the rider to the start point for the start of the second leg of the course. At the end of the course the boat crew shall not throw the rope back to a rider and pull the rider through the turn at the end of the course. At the end of the second leg of the course or after the last fall the tow boat or pick up boat shall recover the surfer.

17.3 Weighting Tow Boats

Competitive events should strive to provide quality port and starboard wakes. If only one wake is to be provided an announcement well in advance of the competition should be made.

When possible, two separate boats should be used. One weighted to the starboard side, the other weighted to the port side. In order to assure fairness, the resultant wakes should be within 80% of each other in terms of height and length.

When both wakes are to be provided every effort should be made to make the wakes as comparable as possible. If there will be a considerable difference in wakes due to different tow boat hulls and manufacturers the difference should be minimized.

Weighted wakesurf tow boats can be slow and cumbersome. Where available rescue craft should be provided and located in a suitable position to quickly assist injured riders.

17.4 Wakesurf Tow Ropes

Wakesurf specific ropes should always be used. Acceptable ropes shall have a T-handle or a small Y-Handle. Dropping the rope beside the rider should be discouraged. It is more preferable to gently toss the rope to the far wake and have boat crew recover the rope. The rope shall be thrown to the opposite side of the wake and the rope will be pulled in by a designated person on the boat.