

WATER SKI TOURNAMENT ANNOUNCING

Tips & Suggestions for Effective Commentary

Greetings Tournament Announcers!!

The following tips and suggestions for water ski tournament announcing are a collaborative effort by several of the sport's top tournament announcers. If you have a folder or notebook of information that you take with you to each tournament, insert a copy of this document for future reference. I've been announcing water ski tournaments for more than 30 years. Call me at (863) 604-3860, or (863) 255-0585 if you have any questions or need suggestions for improving your announcing skills.

Remember to sign in for announcing credit on the "Tournament Officials' Record" form!

Hank Longo

General Announcing Guidelines

Be professional, courteous, and informative!

The Skier is in the spotlight. Make the moment special regardless of his or her performance.

Promote each sponsor every Hour.

Always maintain a positive attitude.

Don't be afraid of silence! If there is a break in the action don't talk just because the mike is in front of you. Give the crowd a little silence when nothing needs to be said.

Explain each event before it starts. Describe what the skier's performance objective is, boat speeds and how each event is judged. Continue to periodically explain this to the spectators.

Continue to keep the spectators informed of the event status after each skier. Did the skier's performance affect the leaders? Update the spectators regularly about the top seeded skiers.

Don't yell to build excitement! Use voice inflection instead! Although you want to build excitement, don't get too worked up and ecstatic with the first skiers on the water when you may have 50 to go. Make each event interesting and exciting, but pace yourself so there is something left for an exciting conclusion.

Use the USA Water Ski fact sheet, the Events calendar and your local regional guide for information and upcoming events in your area.

Remember, you are representing USA Water Ski!!

Slalom Announcing

Begin the slalom event by announcing the rules:

- ✓ The skier that skis around the most number of buoys consecutively is the winner.
- ✓ Each event starts at a predetermined speed.
- ✓ A skier is allowed to up his/her Division maximum speed;
- ✓ The skier gets credit for all underlying passes if he makes that first starting pass.
- ✓ When a skier makes a pass at the top speed of his division, the rope length is shortened for the next pass. The rope continues to be shortened as he makes another complete pass.

Stress how important it is to make the first pass. A skier needs to make the pass to keep skiing!

The first pass also gives a skier the opportunity to feel the course conditions and get his jitters out!

Explain how many passes a skier has to make to reach the current leader.

As a skier leaves the dock, announce his boat speed and line length. As he makes his first pass, give bio information as you report his performance.

Explain basic techniques:

- ✓ A skier needs to make good turns and combine good angle through the wakes to be successful.
- ✓ Maintaining body position is essential.
- ✓ It is important to watch body position to determine if that caused a fall or missed pass.

The shorter the line length, the more difficult the event becomes. Explain why shorter line lengths are harder.

Remember to build drama and excitement as you near the top seeds. Place emphasis on shorter line lengths and the number of buoys needed to win.

Tricks Announcing

Begin by explaining the event rules for tricks:

- ✓ There are two 20-second passes.
- ✓ A skier tries to do as many tricks, and score as many points, as he possibly can each pass without falling.
- ✓ The more degree of difficulty, the more points awarded for the trick.
- ✓ The skier who earns the most points wins the event.

Explain how many event judges there are, how they officiate the event, where they are located and why.

It is important to keep track of how many skiers stand up through both passes. It is one of the main criteria you have to unofficially guesstimate your leaders.

Stress how important it is to stand up on each pass to contend for the top five. Build the drama for the event following those who do.

Announce a skier as he/she leaves the dock and provide as much bio info as you can before his first pass.

You must stop talking 10 seconds before a skier enters the course.

(Tricks announcing, cont'd)

Wait 10 seconds after the horn sounds before a skier enters the course before you resume talking.

After the first pass, analyze what the skier did and what he needs to do during his second pass to place.

The drama begins with the first skier; explain how the performances in the beginning will affect the top seeded skiers as the event continues.

Jump Announcing

Begin the jump event by explaining the rules:

- ✓ A skier has three jump attempts.
- ✓ Each jump distance is measured from a video jump computer, or three meter stations.
- ✓ A skier must ride out each jump to receive a score.
- ✓ The longest jump wins the event.
- ✓ Describe the jumping course

Distance is achieved by a combination of speed and lift.

A skier's technique for accomplishing speed and lift are critical elements of the competition.

As a skier enters the course, provide bio information. Compare his personal best performance to what is currently leading the event to build excitement and challenge the current skier and the current leader.

After each jump, comment on the skier's performance and what corrections could be made, if any, to enhance his distance.

Describe the weather conditions and if the conditions will have negative or positive effects.

Comment on how each skier handles the conditions.

Build the drama by explaining what the top seeded skiers need to jump to win the event.