

AWSA Announcing Tips

Many of these tips are pulled directly from the Original AWSA Announcers Manual

Thanks to Hank Longo for his work collaborating with top announcers and AWSA staff to create the original manual which can also be found on the USA Water Ski and Wake Sports website.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

As an AWSA announcer, you are the connection between all aspects of the event and the people on shore (skiers, family, coaches, friends, and visitors)

- Be professional, courteous, and informative. Remember this is a family sport; please be considerate of all ages in your commentary. *This is not your stage to practice your stand-up comedy routine.*
- Always maintain a positive attitude! Find the positives in every performance.
- **PUT THE WATER SKIER IN THE SPOTLIGHT!** Make the moment special for the skier regardless of his or her performance.

WHILE ANNOUNCING

- Start the day by welcoming everyone to the _____ Tournament.
- If possible, before the first skier, play the national anthem. If there is an opportunity for a midday break, consider also playing the anthem then. There are usually more people in attendance at that time.
- Introduce the officials working the events during the day. Throughout the day, continue to thank the ski club hosting the event, officials, and volunteers.
- Promote USA Water Ski and Wake Sports Foundation and Hall of Fame Museum and where to learn more at usa-wwf.org.
- Promote Tournament Sponsors regularly. You may have to get approval from the LOC if you are requested to make "specialty" announcements or share new requested information.
- Announce the day's schedule of events.
- Announce upcoming events and the running order of skiers and any scratches. Make skiers aware of the event start time. Continue to update skiers of the running order and the next 5-10 skiers to compete.
- Make skiers aware of getting to the starting dock on time and of equipment check-in requirements.
- Explain each event before it starts. Describe what the skier's performance objective is, the boat speed and how the event is judged.
- Introduce the skier as they begin their opening pass. You can use the opening passes to give bio information about the skier. The time to do so will vary between events, slalom, jump or trick.
- Pace yourself between announcing and listening for scores. The 2-way radio is best used as a "*listen only device.*" Things work better if you *listen* to the radio and *talk* on the microphone.
- **DO NOT** make any judgment calls on a skier's performance; leave that to the officials.

- *DO NOT* commentate after a skier fall or crash. Let the boat crew and safety crew handle the situation. Use this time to be quiet or to make a few low-key general announcements.
- *PACE YOUR ENTHUSIASM* throughout the event. Build the excitement as the event unfolds and you have performances that change the top places.
- *DON'T YELL!* You can get excited with a spectacular performance, cheer and express with excitement the action taking place on the water. *Yelling* throughout the event *is not* enjoyable to listen to.
- *QUIET IS GOOD!* You do not have to talk the entire time you are announcing. Take a break from talking when there is no skiing taking place on the water or there is a pause between events. Take a break and play some music.
- For each event - SLALOM - announce the skier, line length and boat speed on each pass. Conclude their pass with their total score - JUMP - Announce the skier before each jump and previous jump performances and conclude with announcing the longest jump. - TRICKS - Announce the skier and trick pass (trick pass #1 or trick pass #2) as the skier enters the course. In most cases it's best not to announce while a tricker is in their run. Announce the skier's score when scoring provides it.
- For each event keep track of and announce if it is a personal best or places in the top 5.
- *ALL SCORES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL POSTED BY SCORING!*

PREPARATION

- Have a clipboard, pencil, or pen to keep track of the skier's performance. *Announcer Score Sheets* are included in the manual for each event
(pro tip – prior to the tournament get to know the chief scorer. The scoring team is your key to knowing results quickly and getting word of any changes during the tournament. If you ask nicely, they can print Slalom and Jump Judges sheets that come complete with skier name and space to record results.)
- Have a current AWSA/IWWF Rule Book. A great tool for helping explain the event and rules for the event.
- Arrive 30 minutes ahead of time. Introduce yourself to the Chief Judge and Chief Scorer. You will be working with them throughout the entire Tournament.
- Secure a working 2-way radio and identify channel numbers for direct communication with the Chief Judge, Scoring, Event Judges and Event Lakes (if there is more than one).
- Make sure the sound equipment is set up and working properly and compatible for playing music (if possible). Do a sound check for volume levels.
- Collect any skier bio-sheets (if available) and sort into divisions for each event. You can organize the bio-sheets in alphabetical order or running order seeding. In smaller tournaments, where you will be using the same bio-sheets for each event, alphabetical order is easier to use, because you only must organize them once.
- Recruit additional announcers.

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING TO BE AN ANNOUNCER!

Chief Announcer Responsibilities

- Follow the 3 Event Tournament Announcing Guidelines along with the following Chief Announcer Responsibilities.
- Arrive ½ hour to 1 hour before the start of the tournament to get organized.
- Recruit additional announcers.
- Get radios, scoring sheets and running orders to announcers at each announcing site. Have clipboards, pens and pencils.
- Have an easily queueable national anthem to play.
- Have a current AWSA and IWWF Rule Book.
- Have bios ready for each event.
- Provide sponsor announcements; make sure they are read each hour. Make sure sponsoring club, officials and volunteers are thanked throughout the tournament.
- Assign announcers to each event.
 - Make sure announcers get breaks and assign replacement announcers.
 - Distribute announcing assignments based on skill and knowledge of event. Pair new announcers with an experienced announcer when possible.
- Be available to assist with announcing, coach and educate appointed announcers.
- Guide announcers to follow the announcer guidelines, established for AWSA.
- Handle any problems that are related to announcing.
- Make sure you are knowledgeable of the sound system and how it works and have enough batteries for mics, if needed.
- Communicate with the Chief Judge and assist with any official announcements.
- Assist with the awards presentation.
- If you are playing music, make sure it doesn't override the announcer; it's being played at an enjoyable listening level for the spectators and is family friendly music.
- At the end of the day make sure the sound system is shut down and put away and protected from the weather; return all radios on charge as necessary.