

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WATERSKI PRO TOUR ORGANISERS 2024

The logo is centered within a white circular background. It features the word "WATERSKI" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, there is a stylized icon of a waterski, consisting of a vertical line with a triangular tip pointing downwards. To the right of the icon, the words "PRO TOUR" are written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font.

**WATERSKI**  
—  **PRO TOUR**

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# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WATERSKI PRO TOUR ORGANISERS

This document is a set of recommendations for Waterski Pro Tour events in 2024. These guidelines are solely to facilitate organizers in their aim to stage the best event possible.

In order to get the most out of this document, it is recommended that you familiarize yourself with the Waterski Pro Tour Framework.

## INCEPTION OF EVENT

### Choice of Disciplines + Divisions

- The organizer can choose whichever disciplines they wish: slalom, jump and/ or trick including the male and/ or female divisions within each.
- We strongly recommend having both Women and Men for any given discipline
- Pro-Am events are a strong part of the Waterski Pro Tour with Pro and Amateur skiers competing in the same event (though different divisions). Indeed, taking entry fees from Amateur skiers is a great way to raise funds for the event.
  - Waterski Pro Tour does not govern event details for Amateur divisions. The organizer can choose a format of their liking, provided it abides to federation standards.

### Benefits of Men + Women

- Each division with both Women and Men is upgraded to an extra star within each discipline. This bonus is not available for Intro events.
- More appealing to webcast audience
- Easier to schedule with continuous action on the water
  - Provides appropriate rest times for athletes, particularly during finals day
- Potentially more appealing to both in and out-of-industry sponsors

### Level of Prize Money + Divisional Split

- Considerations for prize money should account for expenses that improve the overall quality of the event. E.g.:
  - Webcast
  - Bibs
  - Officials
  - On site experience, promotional material, etc
- Starting at Intro levels has a great history of longer-lasting events.
- Avoid overpromising one year and not be able to afford organizing the event the following year
- Equal cash prize across divisions and disciplines for Intro is required.

- Equal cash prize across divisions and disciplines for Star events is recommended. Should differences in cash prize across divisions be considered, please refer to the latest Waterski Pro Tour Framework for rules and guidance (especially point 4.d).
- Event prize purse breakdown is at the discretion of the organizer. However, it is strongly recommended that the purse is not overly weighted towards the top as this has previously lowered total entry numbers. A healthy spread further down leaves everyone happy. At the overwhelming majority of Star level events the top 8 are paid.
  - Please refer to the Waterski Pro Tour ‘Suggested Payout’ [on our website](#).

## Date Selection

- Waterski Pro Tour Star events of the same division (e.g., Men Jump) cannot occur during the same weekend.
  - Please check [Waterski Pro Tour calendar](#) and contact Waterski Pro Tour for confirmation.
- Waterski Pro Tour Events tend to happen in these regions and times of year:
  - Oceania: February - March
  - North America: April - Middle of June
  - Europe and Africa: Middle of June - End of July
  - North America: Mid-August to Mid November
  - Southern Hemisphere: December - February
  - If you are not from any of these regions and want to organize a stop, please reach out to Waterski Pro Tour for date guidance.
- Be mindful of where skiers are in the World when you choose your date
  - Consider Waterski Pro Tour calendar
  - Consider other events (e.g. World Championships, Regional Championships, National Championships)
  - Organizing an event in the same region as the previous/ next event will facilitate the logistics for skiers, officials, and potentially webcast crews.
- Consider “Right of Refusal” rule about date protection for the following year.
  - See point 9.a of the Waterski Pro Tour Framework

## Event Registration Process

- In order to be part of the Waterski Pro Tour Schedule you need to register your event via the [Application Form](#)
  - Registration can occur a maximum of 365 days prior to the event, with a minimum of 45 days.
  - Waterski Pro Tour recommends scheduling your event as early as possible as in some parts of the season weekends are scarce.
  - Registration of the event with Waterski Pro Tour should occur only after the organizer has ensured the feasibility of their event.
- When registering your event, the total cash prize for each division should already be decided.
  - Should the cash prize per division change at a later date, the organizer should promptly inform Waterski Pro Tour about the planned changes.

- In order to be part of the Waterski Pro Tour, an event needs to be sanctioned with the National Federation/Association.
- Reach out to your local Federation to know more information about sanctioning your event.
- Some things to consider when sanctioning times comes:
  - Date selection
  - Homologation level
    - We recommend Record Capability (Class R). This ensures the best judging panel and allows for National/International/World Records to be approved
    - Should a Class R sanction not be feasible, the organizer must strive for the highest possible conditions (officials, course accuracy, etc)

## Entry Fees

- Entry fees are one of the ways in which you sustain part of your event
  - Should not be the main source of income for the event
- Entry fee amount should consider:
  - Event Cash Prize
  - Tournament format (guaranteed amount of tournament sets)
  - Services provided to the skiers (e.g., hotel, transportation, included training, etc)
  - Generally, entry fees range from \$0 to about \$300, commensurate to total purse and the points above.
  - Lower entry fees are naturally favored by athletes. However, entry fees typically scale with prize purse as follows:

Purse (per division)	Typical Entry Fee
\$5k	\$150
\$7.5k	\$175
\$10k	\$200
\$12k	\$225
\$15k	\$250
\$18k	\$275
\$21k	\$300

## Webcast

- Waterski Pro Tour requires that all Star-level events have a webcast. Further, it encourages all organizers of Intro-level events to strongly consider having a webcast.

- A webcast is usually a defining factor when it comes to event exposure and provides a great opportunity to obtain sponsorships.
- Investing in a good-quality webcast will help showcase your event and sponsors in the best way possible.
- Going with a lower quality webcast might save money in the immediate, but it will diminish your returns on sponsorship and exposure.
- Check with your webcast provider for available advertising slots and techniques to promote your sponsors (e.g., commercial slots, stingers, graphics, shots of banners on site, announcer mentions, etc).
- The most utilized webcast provider in the sport is currently [The Waterski Broadcasting Company \(TWBC\)](#). Please contact Waterski Pro Tour for more options.

## Bib

- Bibs are required at any Waterski Pro Tour Star-level event. Further, it encourages all organizers of Intro-level events to have bibs for competitors.
- Bibs are a great way to give exposure to your sponsors.
- We suggest having a different color bib for the defending champion (if it applies) and the current Tour leader (if feasible).
  - If your tournament has amateur bibs, make sure they are of a different color compare to pros.
- Always order more bibs than entered competitors (i.e., have spare bibs).
- Define in your tournament rules/format what happens should a skier not wear a bib.
- Some of the bib manufactures Waterski Pro Tour organizers have been using include [Eagle Apparel](#) and [LISKI](#).

## PRE EVENT

### Format

- Several considerations should be made when choosing a tournament format.
  - # of days - Tour events usually occur over two days with qualifying on day 1 and finals on day 2. Occasionally events occur over only one day with finals directly following qualifying. It is not recommended to stretch an event over more than 2 days unless there are multiple divisions involved and time on the water is scarce.
    - Note how, if you are organizing a Pro-am event, you can start the day prior with amateurs only.
  - Period of the year (e.g. hours of daylight)
    - See next section for average set time according to discipline.
  - Amount of participants (including Amateurs if applicable)
- Waterski Pro Tour usually follow one of these formats:
  - Straight final - 8 skiers
  - Head-to-head final - 8 skiers
  - Quarter, Semi, Final (less common)
- Notice how formats might suit some disciplines better than others

- Format can motivate skiers to come to the event (e.g., amount of guaranteed tournament sets).
- Certain formats can reduce potential ties and the duration of the event.
  - E.g., ‘Straight Final’ and ‘Head-to-head’ lend to less chances for run-off for finals than ‘Quarter, Semi, Final’ due to having two qualifying rounds as opposed to one.
- Skiers should be notified of the tournament format ahead of time
- Format should be published online (e.g., tournament website, tournament bulletin) and easily available
  - A pre-tournament meeting can help, possibly involving the Chief Judge.

### Schedule (for show, for glare, for jumpers not to ski at 8am, #of pro skiers/ hour, etc.)

- Each event organizer knows their site best. Some of the things to consider when scheduling each phase of the event are
  - Glare / Fog / Wind / Temperature
  - According to participant #s, avoid starting too early/late in the day and finishing too late in the day
  - Account for time for potential ties and run offs for all the stages of the event, especially in slalom.
- Always have Finals as the last stage of the event.
- Avoid having jump divisions in the morning (where possible).
- In order to properly schedule your event, you can consider these indicative times per set
  - Slalom: 6min / skier
  - Tricks: 5min / skier
  - Jump: 7min / skier
- In order for your event to run smoothly, please be mindful of the following:
  - Make sure to stick to your event schedule (e.g., start time, finals time, etc).
  - Consider inherent breaks (e.g., fuel, change of boat crew, trick reviews, etc).
  - Consider appropriate drop times for slalom (45s to 60s according to site).

### Officials’ Credentials / Experience

- There are different rules according to your Nation as far as officials selection
  - E.g., In the USA, organizers can select officials for any homologation level, whereas for the E&A region, officials apply to officiate a R event.
- Officials for a Waterski Pro Tour event should be of the highest credentials as defined by the IWWF. Feel free to reach out to Waterski Pro Tour for advice or recommendations.
- It is the job of the officials to make judgment calls. Remember that the Chief Judge is ultimately responsible, and he/she is the point of contact with the organization.
- The quality and expertise of the drivers is of the highest importance to ensure a fair and well run event. Drivers for a Waterski Pro Tour event should be selected according to a proven record of good driving. Feel free to reach out to Waterski Pro Tour for advice or recommendations.

## Boats

- The importance of the boat towing your event cannot be underestimated. The quality of the boat will be a defining factor in the competitive scores and skier satisfaction.
- It is strongly recommended that boats are fueled by gasoline for pro skiers. Boats with alternative fuels (e.g., Liquid Petroleum Gas, Ethanol) should be switched over to gasoline where possible to maximize performance.
- If using a 'Head-to-head' format it is strongly recommended that the two boats in use are of the same make and model with the same engine and propeller. If you only have one boat of a high quality it is strongly recommended that your event is pulled solely by that boat and the format is chosen accordingly, i.e. 'Straight Final'.
- If applicable, the organizer should have a spare boat ready to be used in case of unexpected and major malfunctions with the assigned tournament boat.

## Ropes

- Good quality ropes are essential equipment for the success of your event.
- Event organizer is responsible for providing Slalom and Jump ropes at the event
  - It is the duty of the TC / homologator to check them for safety and accuracy
- Although Pro Jumpers and Trickers are allowed to use their own rope, the event organizer has the responsibility of providing event rope(s).
- For slalom, Waterski Pro Tour recommends you to have your ropes skied on for a total of 30 sets prior to the start of the event. This ensures the ropes are not bungee and ready to be used for high level skiing.
- Event ropes should be available for official practice.
- Always have spare ropes stretched, homologated, and ready to be used in case one breaks or if it needs to be pulled out of the boat to be measured (e.g., record).
- Some of the most-commonly used slalom ropes on the Tour are:
  - MasterLine Pro (black)
  - Syndicate Knotless Mainline
  - S-Lines X-Series
  - Radar Vapor Mainline
  - Masterline Optimized 2.0 (gray)
- Though all of these ropes may be used it is recommended the event uses only one type.
- Partnering with one rope manufacturer for event exclusivity is an opportunity for sponsorship where a manufacturer trades money in order for their product to be used and highlighted as the event's exclusive rope. This type of sponsorship is increasingly common.
- Feel free to reach out to Waterski Pro Tour for advice or recommendations on ropes.
- For straight final slalom events it is strongly recommended to use only one for all finalists and change handles between skiers.

## Skier Qualification Criteria

- As per Waterski Pro Tour Framework, qualification criteria must be performance based. This goes for invitation-only events as well. A few examples:
  - 1 @ 11.25m for Pro Women Slalom
  - Top 15 of current/previous Waterski Pro Tour Standings in Men Tricks
  - Top 20 of the IWWF World Ranking List in Men Jump
  - Defending Champion of the event
  - World Record Holder

## Skier Registration Process

- The registration process could start as early as you would like. We recommend not to open entries too late for a number of reasons, including
  - Preparation (e.g., bibs, promotional materials)
  - Skiers' planning
  - Avoid giving the impression that the event is uncertain
- Make sure to have a date after which registration is closed. This will help you with organization and will create urgency for athletes to sign up at an appropriate time.
  - It will also help to publish the starting list at a reasonable time (see below)
- There are a number of ways to set up the skier registration process. Typically, these are the most common
  - AWSA online or [paper registration](#) (USA only).
  - [EMS portal](#) (worldwide)
  - Ad-hoc built online form (e.g., Google Form, JotForm, SurveyMonkey, etc)
    - If you use this option, make sure the appropriate steps are taken in accordance with your Federation rules
  - Please notify Waterski Pro Tour of your choice so we can communicate it to athletes to facilitate entries.
- To make your life easier and guarantee the success of your event, make sure that you consider an athlete as entered to your event only after the payment of their entry fee.
  - The most typical ways to take entry fee payment are through Paypal or card payment through the event website. Using other methods (such as bank transfer) will make it harder for skiers and potentially decrease entries.
- Waterski Pro Tour recommends protecting spots to the top 10/15 skiers of the Waterski Pro Tour Standing until 45/60 days prior to the event.
- To maximize the presence of entered skiers, even if you don't plan to charge an entry fee it is recommended that you take one as a 'refundable deposit' to ensure the entering skier plans to turn up.

## Start List

- The starting list should be available to the athletes at least 48hrs before the start of the event. This would include having it on your website, email it to the skiers, publishing it on relevant websites (e.g., EMS, iwwfed-ea.org, waterskiresults.com, etc)
- For the first stage of the event (i.e., first qualifying round), the starting list should be based on the most recent Waterski Pro Tour Standings (see Framework point 7.c, “Seeding in Events” for more info).
  - Remember that it is the job of the Scorer to finalize the running order of your event. At the same time, organizers should make sure that scorers are informed and updated with the Waterski Pro Tour Framework.
- For subsequent stages of the event, skiers are to be reseeded according to their performance in the previous rounds.

## Media for Waterski Pro Tour Social + Website etc. (including sponsors logos)

- One of the core missions of Waterski Pro Tour is promotion of your event
- In order to facilitate appropriate promotion, we kindly request the following materials
  - Event details, schedule, and any updates on these that might have changed since registration of the event
  - Event sponsors
  - Event website
  - Event poster
  - A good quality photo of your site
  - A good-quality version of the event logo (preferably vectorial)
  - Any information you would like Waterski Pro Tour to share.
- Further, consider providing the following materials to Waterski Pro Tour if they apply:
  - Previous year action photos and videos
  - Videos of someone skiing at your lake with the tournament bib
  - Any promotional video you might have produced
  - Promotional videos of the site (e.g., walkthrough)
- We also run coverage of your event via our social media channels. Should you have someone in mind that can help us on site, please let us know so that we can coordinate details and compensation.
- Please send any logos in .png format and any photos/ posters etc in .jpg format to [info@waterskiprotour.com](mailto:info@waterskiprotour.com)
- Waterski Pro Tour can help with the creation for some digital and printable materials to assist you (e.g., posters, social media content, etc)
- In relation to the above mentioned points, please see “Considerations for Event Success” section for advice.

## DURING EVENT

### Skiers' meeting before the start of the event

- A pre-event skiers meeting is not always necessary. That said, here are some situations that might grant one
  - Unconventional tournament formats or drastic changes from what was declared
  - Changes in schedule for whatever reason (e.g., weather, equipment failure, etc)
- A skier's meeting can also be embedded within an event of the tournament (e.g., dinner, meet-and-greet with other skiers, sponsorship showcases, media opportunity, etc). This is best scheduled any time before skiing starts so queries can be ironed out.

### Hard Start time for Final (+ other rounds if possible)

- The Final stage of your event is the most important one
- We strongly recommend sticking to a precise start time for the final in order for the on-site and online audience to attend the best part of your event. This will be promoted in all communications prior to the event to create a focal point for ski fans and maximize viewership. A reliable start time is increasingly important to ensure this. This is also highly important for the athletes.
  - It forces you to plan accordingly in order to stay on schedule
- It is also important to give appropriate starting time for the other phases of the event (preliminary rounds, etc). You can use the indicative minutes per ride advice given in the "schedule" section.

### Prize Giving

- Prize giving should happen as closely as possible after the end of the event. However, events with multiple disciplines might opt to give prizes right after the end of that discipline.
- It is nevertheless important to have the prize giving presentation as closely as possible after the action is over.
  - This requires a surprisingly high amount of organization. Make sure that you coordinate with your staff and the scorer before and during the final stage of the event.
- We recommend having the results checked and signed off by the Chief Judge before using them to call up the athletes to the podium.
- Waterski Pro Tour recommends having the Top 3 athletes recognized on the podium.
- Waterski Pro Tour recommends that tournaments are promoted by the total cash prize of the divisions/event (i.e., Stars). Thereby, we discourage the demonstration of prize money won by athletes on the podium (e.g., oversized checks). Alternatives like trophies, flowers, champagne, or checks displaying Pro points are all viable solutions.

## POST EVENT

### Submission of official scores and placements to IWWF + Waterski Pro Tour

- It is the job of the Scorer to submit the results of the event to the IWWF and national Federations.
- Further, Waterski Pro Tour requires a copy of the results and final placements to be sent to [info@waterskiprotour.com](mailto:info@waterskiprotour.com).
  - NOTE: results and final placements might not be the same thing (e.g., head to head tournaments)
  - Make sure that placement information is sent clearly to Waterski Pro Tour. A spreadsheet file with placements listed from first to last down the page is strongly preferred to aid ease of updating Waterski Pro Tour Leaderboard.

### Media for Waterski Pro Tour

- Waterski Pro Tour will promote your event via social media, newsletters, video highlights, and a dedicated podcast by showcasing and promoting
  - Winners
  - Best moments
  - Updated Leaderboard after the conclusion of your event
  - Video highlights of finals
  - Interviews with skiers and key people.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR EVENT SUCCESS

- Event organizers should have a team helping them throughout the event. Giving responsibilities to others will help you accomplish more throughout the event.
  - Don't be afraid to delegate!
- Reach out to other event organizers to share ideas and get advice from the more experienced ones. Waterski Pro Tour members are always available to help you with advice from seasoned Tour athletes and organizers.
- Although most of these have been outlined in the document at various stages, the importance of the following cannot be overstated:
  - Date and Location, with considerations of both Waterski Pro Tour Schedule and what is feasible for you and the hosting site.
  - The experience and credentials of the officials panel
  - Precise and timely communications to all the stakeholders
- It is never too early to start planning and organizing your event! So much can and should be done ahead of time. The closer you get to your event, the busier you will be.
- Although you will be very busy prior and during the event, make sure to find time during the event to enjoy the product of all your hard work!