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The Shawano Ski Sharks will host the BankFirst Division 2 National Water-ski Tournament presented by Visit Central Florida on Aug. 2-4. Individual and team competitions will be held, with events kicking off at 7 a.m. Aug. 2. GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

Shawano to hold national water-ski tournament

Ski Sharks will serve as hosts for individual, team competitions Aug. 2-4 at Smalley Park

By KEVIN PASSON
Editor-in-chief

The Shawano Ski Sharks will host the BankFirst Division 2 National Water-ski Tournament presented by Visit Central Florida on Aug. 2-4.

Individual and team competitions will be held, with events kicking off at 7 a.m. Aug. 2.

“Friday is a full day of individual competitors from swivel skiing, strap doubles, jump, etc.,” said Dave Passehl, Ski Sharks president. “At Division 2, there are more individual disciplines than they run at a D1 tournament. So at this time, we have a full competition of 81 individuals for Friday.”

Events on the weekend also start at 7 a.m. each day, with both days full of team show competitions, similar to what the Ski Sharks perform Wednesday nights throughout the summer.

“Teams that have registered are coming from Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin,” Passehl said. “Individual competitors are from all over the country, including as far away as Florida.”

All events will be held at Smalley Park.

A tentative schedule is as follows.

Aug. 2 – Individual and team practice starts at 7 a.m.; lunch from noon to 1 p.m.; mandatory team meeting with chief judge from 6-8 p.m.

Aug. 3 – Individual competition begins at 7 a.m. (Swivel 180, Swivel Pairs 360, Swivel Pairs Open, Doubles Intermediate, Doubles Open, Swivel

360, Swivel Open, Women’s Freestyle – Intermediate, Men’s Freestyle – Intermediate, Women’s Freestyle – Open, Men’s Freestyle – Open); team competition begins after completion of individual competition; individual awards to follow last team.

Aug. 4 – Team competition begins at 7 a.m.; awards to follow completion of last team.

For the Ski Sharks, Carsten McHugh and Ava Pleshek will compete in strap doubles, and McHugh will also compete in the freestyle jump. The Ski Sharks team jump will compete in team jump.

Judges, secretaries, safety crew and others are selected and provided by the National Show Ski Association.

This is not the first time the Ski Sharks have hosted the national tournament. In 2021, they placed second at both the state water-ski tournament and the Division 2 national tournament.

Bringing thousands of people to Shawano for a weekend event is no small task.

“Our sponsor list is large, and this tournament cannot happen without all of them,” Passehl said.

Anchor partners are BankFirst, American Marine and Shawano County Tourism. Premier partners are Charlie’s County Market, USA Water-ski and Wake Sports and the National Show Ski Association. Supporting sponsors are Brothers’ Pub, Luigi’s and Cellcom/Nsight. There is also a long list of other support levels.

kpasson@newmedia-wi.com



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Road closures, other parking rules in effect during water-ski tournament

Part of Wolf River also closed to through traffic, beach will be closed throughout the event



Camp Onawahs is the theme for the 2024 Shawano Ski Sharks performances. Led by President Dave Passehl, the water-ski team will host the Division 2 national tournament Aug. 2-4 at Smalley Park in Shawano. Parking will be at a premium during the event, so residents are being made aware of road, beach and river closures, as well as designated parking locations.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

By **KEVIN PASSON**
Editor-in-chief

Parking will be at a premium during the BankFirst Division 2 National Water-ski Tournament presented by Visit Central Florida on Aug. 2-4, and residents need to be aware of road closures and other changes.

Parking will be available in the courthouse parking lot at North Washington and West Third streets, Kersten Accounting and Tax Professionals at 610 W. Green Bay St. and a city lot at North Washington and West Fifth streets.

There are several road closures as well.

West Fifth Street from North Bartlett Street west to the Wolf River will be closed to everyone except residents. Water-ski team equipment trailers will be backed down and out of this road for their setup.

The West Fourth Street cul-de-sac will be closed for street parking but accessible to homeowners. Ski teams will use this cul-de-sac for a

personal water-ski equipment drop-off point, but no street parking will be allowed.

West Third Street from Riverside Drive west to the river will be closed to all except tournament officials and handicapped parking.

For those using the Wolf River, there is also an approved partial river closure.

From the trestle to the dam, the river will be closed to through traffic. There will be a designated slow no wake passage way on the far west side of the river. There will be river closure signs posted, a buoy line installed and the area will be patrolled.

No wake will be permitted from the dam to the trestle during this event. This includes boating activities south of the bridge to the dam. Again, this area will be patrolled.

The beach itself will also be closed during the event. Signs will be posted by the city of Shawano.

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Congratulations!

We appreciate your dedication to the Shawano Ski Sharks



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Spray is the cascade of water generated by a ski cutting aggressively through the surface. The size and shape of the spray serve as a visual indicator of a skier's speed and edge control.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

How well do you know your water-ski terms?

Here are some popular terms used in waterskiing. You might be familiar with buoy, ramp and wake, but what about bevel, flex and whip?

Barefoot – This is a waterskiing style where the skier glides on the water without skis, using only their bare feet. It requires excellent balance and technique to maintain smooth and controlled movement on the surface.

Bevel – The bevel is the area on the waterski that is between the side and the bottom of the ski. Typically, the rounder the bevel, the deeper the ski will sink in the water, making it harder to control.

Binding – The foot attachment on the waterski or wakeboard that secures the skier's feet in place.

Boat speed – The velocity of the boat towing the water skier, crucial for creating the right conditions for different skiing

activities. Faster speeds are used for slalom skiing, while slower speeds suit beginners or trick skiing.

Bridle – The bridle is a part of the rope that connects the handle to the rest of the rope, and is usually in a "Y" shape.

Buoy – In a competitive waterski tournament, buoys are used as markers that float on the surface of the water, indicating the path that the skier (and boat) has to take.

Cross wake – The action of moving from one side of the boat's wake to the other while skiing. It's a fundamental skill that can be used for gaining speed and preparing for jumps or tricks.

Cut – This refers to shortening of the rope length in a water ski competition.

Deep water start – A method to begin waterskiing where the skier starts submerged in the water

with skis on, then is pulled up to the surface as the tow boat accelerates. It's a foundational technique for all skiers.

Dock start – A dock start is the opposite of a deep water start and refers to a skier who begins the competition by standing on a dock or dry ground. The skier will be pulled into the water by the boat. This method is less common than deep water start as the skier is more likely to sink in the water if the boat is not fast enough.

Drop ski – In slalom skiing, this refers to the action of dropping one of the double skis in the water to continue skiing with the remaining single ski. It's a transition step for skiers moving to slalom skiing.

Double skis – Also known as "combo skis," these are a pair of waterskis used for beginner and intermediate levels, providing stability and easier learning. Skiers often progress to a single ski as their skills improve.

Figure eight – A pattern skied by athletes, characterized by carving a figure-eight shape on the water's surface. This maneuver requires skill in managing turns and maintaining momentum while crossing the boat's wake.

Flex – Flex refers to the flexibility of the ski. Typically, softer skis help a waterskier perform tighter turns. Stiffer skis are frequently used by beginners as it does not have as much movement in rougher waters, hence making it easier to control.

Handle pass – During a trick or wakeboarding, a handle pass is the act of passing the tow rope's handle behind the back or over the head to switch hands. It is integral for

TERMS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



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Above, a "jump" typically refers to an event or maneuver where the skier launches off a ramp to achieve distance and perform aerial tricks. In competitive settings, skiers are judged on the length of the jump and the execution of any aerial maneuvers. At left, a team of girls performs during a Wednesday evening show at Smalley Park.



GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA



Several hundred people gather each Wednesday night to watch the Shawano Ski Sharks perform at Smalley Park. The water-ski team has been a mainstay for Shawano's summer entertainment for more than 40 years. GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

TERMS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

complex spin tricks and maneuvers.

Jump – A “jump” typically refers to an event or maneuver where the skier launches off a ramp to achieve distance and perform aerial tricks. In competitive settings, skiers are judged on the length of the jump and the execution of any aerial maneuvers.

Kneeboard – A type of water sports equipment similar to a wakeboard but designed for the rider to kneel on it rather than stand. Kneeboarding involves being towed on a hydrodynamically shaped board at planing speed behind a motorboat.

Monoski – A type of waterski where both feet are placed inline on a single board, providing greater speed and maneuverability for slalom skiing. Preferred by advanced skiers for its aggressive carving ability through the water.

Observer – In majority of competitions, at least three people will have to be involved – the skier, the boat driver and the observer. The role of the observer is to sit behind the boat driver and pass on any signals that the skier might produce, as well as notifying other water skiers if a partici-

pant has gone under water.

Perfect pass – A speed control system used in boats to maintain a constant and precise speed desired by the water skier. This technology helps create optimal conditions for consistent skiing and timing during courses and tricks.

Ramp – An inclined surface on the water used in jump events, where skiers accelerate toward and launch off to achieve distance in the air. The ramp height and angle are critical for maximizing jump length safely.

Rudder – The fin-like device located at the rear of the ski boat, which helps steer and stabilize the craft. In skiing, rudder adjustments are crucial for precise boat handling and creating ideal wake conditions.

Slalom – A competitive form of skiing involving a single ski, where the skier navigates through a course of buoys, making tight, controlled turns. Slalom highlights a skier's balance, precision, and timing.

Speed control – A system or technique used to regulate the speed of the boat consistently, providing a steady and predictable pull for the water skier. Effective speed control

is essential for matching the skier's skill level and minimizing falls.

Spray – The cascade of water generated by a ski cutting aggressively through the surface. The size and shape of the spray serve as a visual indicator of a skier's speed and edge control.

Tow rope – The tow rope is the line used to connect the skier or rider to the boat. The rope must be strong, flexible and of appropriate length to ensure safety and optimal performance during skiing or boarding.

Trick ski – A short, wider ski with no fins, allowing for maximum maneuverability during tricks. Trick skis are designed to enable skiers to perform spins, jumps, and other stunts with agility.

Wake – The wave that is created by a boat as it moves through the water. The wake can be used by skiers and riders to perform tricks, jumps and maneuvers. The size and shape of the wake are influenced by the speed of the boat and its hull design.

Wakeboard – A small, mostly rectangular board ridden similarly to a snowboard but on water. It is typically used in

wakeboarding, where the rider is towed behind a boat over its wake and especially up off the crest to perform aerial maneuvers. Wakeboards feature bindings that secure the rider's feet to the board.

Waterski – A water sport activity where an individual is pulled across the water on skis by a motorboat or a cable ski installation. It combines balance, strength, and the thrill of gliding on water.

Wetsuit – A close-fitting neoprene suit worn by water sports enthusiasts to maintain body warmth in cold water conditions. It's essential gear for extended periods of water skiing in cooler climates.

Whip – A sharp, fast turn of the boat that translates into a quick, wide swing for the skier. It challenges the skier to maintain control and use the energy for stunts or a rapid change in direction.

Zigzag – A pattern of alternately cutting left and right behind the boat, often to traverse the wakes and showcase control. This action requires skill in quick directional changes and edge control on the skis.

This information was compiled from various waterskiing websites.



The Shawano Ski Sharks will host the Division 2 national water-ski tournament Aug. 2-4. KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA



GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA



The Shawano Ski Sharks earned a second-place finish at the Wisconsin State Tournament held July 18-21 on Lake Wazeecha at Red Sand Beach at South Wood County Park near Wisconsin Rapids. Hosted by the Wisconsin Rapids Aqua Skiers, the competition featured more than two dozen teams.

KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA

Ski Sharks place second at state tournament

By KEVIN PASSON
Editor-in-chief

The Shawano Ski Sharks earned a second-place finish at the Wisconsin State Tournament held July 18-21 on Lake Wazeecha at Red Sand Beach at South Wood County Park near Wisconsin Rapids.

Hosted by the Wisconsin Rapids Aqua Skiers, the competition featured more than two dozen teams.

The Ski Sharks are a Division 2 team.

“The team skied an amazing show, and our production was so fun,” said Dave Passehl, Ski Sharks president. “We put our best foot forward at the tournament and fell just short by 60 points.”

Passehl said the results were still considered a success for the water-ski team.

“We skied clean, bringing home the largest pyramids of Division 2

(the end pyramid of 4-3-4 was the third-largest pyramid of the entire tournament, including Division 1 teams) and had the highest scoring act in Division 2 with our girls ballet line of 22 ladies.”

That same ballet act also won the best ballet line in Division 2.

The Ski Sharks placed second in most other categories.

“The team that beat us was Badgerland from Waukesha, and they will be at the D2 national tournament as well,” Passehl said.

The Ski Sharks scored 348 for first place in the high individual club act and 348 for first place in ballet.

In the dock and equipment personnel category, the Ski Sharks placed second with 81 points, while Badgerland tied for first with 83.

The Ski Sharks scored a 573 for second place in the tow boat driving category, behind Badgerland’s 606 for first place.

Badgerland topped the Ski Sharks in showmanship (828-795), sound crew total (812-773), production (876-845), overall show (1,715-1,664) and grand total (1,420.06-1,360.42).

The local team was second with 245 points in doubles, second in jump with 260 points and second in pyramid with 315 points.

Shawano’s pick-up boat crews placed third with 209 points. Badgerland was first with 245, and Water Walkers team was second with 234.

The Ski Sharks tied for third with 212 points in the barefoot category. They also tied for third in swivel with 231 points.

The BankFirst Division 2 National Water-ski Tournament presented by Visit Central Florida from Aug. 2-4 will be hosted by the Ski Sharks at Smalley Park in Shawano.

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Congratulations Shawano Ski Sharks

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