

Wakeboarding's Canadian direction

By Frank Good, Chair of WSWC's National Wakeboarding Committee

To point out the obvious, wakeboarding and waterskiing are two entirely different sports. Although both water sports are done at the end of a rope tied to a boat, the differences between the two are far greater than the similarities. With wakeboarding being the newer of the two sports, it was understandably nurtured under the direction of the national water ski association so that the sport could develop to the point it is now. All of the coaching, judging, and competition programs have come to exist in Canada because of the funding and support provided through Water Ski & Wakeboard Canada, and the hard work and dedication of its volunteers and provincial associations. But with all things that grow, there comes a time for change.

As wakeboarding continues to grow, it has developed a distinct identity of its own. With growth and popularity come issues about control and direction of the sport. This is where some problems can arise — who controls it and what is the proper direction? Snowboarding has gone through this. Many different organizations fought to control the sport, and in the end just created a mess, causing more problems sometimes than benefits.



Luckily, in Canada wakeboarding's official governing body, Water Ski & Wakeboard Canada, recognizes these problems and the separate identity of Wakeboarding. That is the reason for many changes to come that will give wakeboarding a separate identity in Canada, but still be able to enjoy the benefits of sharing infrastructure and funding. The first step has been the creation of a National Wakeboarding Committee (NWC). The NWC is made up of well respected wakeboarders that will create a plan for wakeboarding in Canada to help develop more growth, and provide a map for the future. The underlying goal is to help people enjoy riding even more, and to draw more people to the sport. This will be done with better communication and co-ordination of wakeboarding events and the creation of new programs. Information will be consolidated on an improved website dedicated entirely to Canadian wakeboarding, and through this magazine. Many riders get hooked on the sport and want to find a way to participate more, but find it hard to find a way to do that. The NWC will benefit all riders from novices to international competitors, so that everybody has a good time enjoying a great sport.



The reasons for the change are clear, and the changes are happening now (just look at the name change of this magazine). We would like to urge all concerned riders who want to share in the development of the sport to share their ideas. The National Wakeboard Committee, and Water Ski & Wakeboard Canada would love to hear how we can make wakeboarding better for you!