

AMERICAN WATER SKI ASSOCIATION
International Trick Judging Seminar
November 11, 2007

Elite skiers present: Rhoni Barton, Cory Pickos, Jaret Llewellyn, Mandy Nightingale & Brandi Hunt

INTRODUCTION

Goals:

1. Upgrade judging skills, increasing uniformity and objectivity.
2. Reach consensus on how to approach/judge various tricks as to credit/no credit.
3. Merge what the athletes are attempting to do with what the judges are attempting to call.
4. Learn how to teach and inspire others who want to learn to call tricks correctly.
5. Improve the administration of the trick event to add to crowd appeal by marketing the event.

Judge's obligation: It is to be as accurate as possible. "I'm not sure" is not an acceptable approach. Judges need to come as close to the 100% mark as judges expect the trick skiers to achieve in the execution of their tricks.

Objective scoring: A judge should focus on competition among athletes and fairness – not "pet peeves" in their own trick calling. The goal is to have the best skier of that competition on the top of the podium at the end of the day.

Challenges:

1. To become a better trick caller.
2. To promote better trick calling.

PRE-TURNS

Consensus: The ski is loaded and on edge as a skier approaches the wake in initiating a wake trick. In that initiating, there can be close to 90 degrees of angle in the approach (away from the direction of the boat and towards the direction of the turn - the "degree of edging") before the load on the ski is released to begin the trick rotation in the air. In most cases, if the release of load on the edge comes prior to the crest of the wake, it will result in sliding or a pre-turn.

Recommendation: Jaret suggested that “load and release” should be used as the correct terminology to determine the beginning of a trick. Although the attendees agreed that an improper pre-turn results when the release of the load on the edge occurs prior to the crest of the wake (such that the ski slides in the direction of the turn while on the water), there was no consensus on the degree of edging allowable in a creditable trick before releasing the load at the crest of the wake.

Comment: This was probably the major aspect of trick judging that needs more work as agreement was not achieved.

LINE TRICKS

Consensus: To properly perform a line trick, the rope should not be allowed to go in the water in the vicinity of the ski (as opposed to at the boat’s rooster tail) until the rotation of the ski is complete even if the ski has not touched down yet.

Recommendation: The skiers agreed that the line should not go in the water before or during the rotation of the ski as these steps are all part of the execution of the trick, i.e., the "execution" of the trick includes both the initiation and rotation phases of the trick. This pertains to both ski lines and toe line tricks. **The IWSF Tournament Council should revise the Rulebook wording to reflect this agreement.**

Recommendation: **The elite athletes should provide a proposal that better defines the “point of initiation” of a trick.** Execution of the trick may be a better word choice, but needs further definition to ensure the "initiation" phase is clearly included in this definition.

HESITATION between tricks

“Separation” of tricks, involving momentary pressure on the ski in 180 degree position, may be better terminology than “hesitation” to delineate between the completion of one trick and the start of the following trick. A possible better definition of “separation” after a ski line trick would be: At the conclusion/completion of a ski line trick, there is a momentary dispersion/displacement of water before the skier moves on to the next trick.

Note: There was not a consensus as to what truly defines a “hesitation”.

Recommendation: **The elite athletes will write a clarification to present to IWSF tournament council that includes a clear definition describing a hesitation/separation between two tricks.**

FRONT FLIP

Jaret and Cory explained the difference between “inside” and “outside” the rope front flips but added that both methods could result in well executed (credit) front flips.

Recommendations:

1. There may need to be more examples of “credit” front flips in the IWSF rulebook.
2. Some “clean up” of the IWSF rulebook definition of the front flip is desirable (**IWSF TC**):
 - a. Clarifying what initiates the trick.
 - b. Removing the term “direction of travel” in the definition, so that the criteria for performing the trick properly include a requirement that the tail of the ski comes up and over the head during the initiation phase.

Jaret’s key for judging: either it is SUPERMAN or NOT, i.e., a "forward dive" into the trick.

BFLBB

The athletes were more liberal in their perception of when the release or take-off occurs for the BFLBB and reverse for credit to be given, again revolving around the critical issue of the pre-turn.

W7B

Consensus: The W7B is a difficult trick to execute well enough to get credit and is not valued high enough to warrant taking the time to learn to do it correctly.

Recommendation: **The elite athletes will submit a point value** with a rationale to present to IWSF tournament council for this trick to encourage more skiers to include it in their runs. It is a visually exciting trick.

WAKE TRICKS

Consensus: It was agreed that, when performing a wake trick, the skier needs to pass over the crest of the wake.

TIP DRAG

There was a lot of discussion about the current rules that do not allow any part of the ski to touch the water during the execution the trick:

1. Whether incidental contact should be allowed;
2. Whether the tip touching the water during the rotation was helpful or not;
3. Whether getting less air saves time or not.

Some felt that the current wording was too restrictive. There was no consensus.

TWO

Judges should look for a loaded ski at the wake's top and the release at the wake's crest.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:

1. Cory encouraged the judges to keep the event running and do all necessary video reviews after the conclusion of the event.
2. Jim Grew encouraged judges to note all reasons for "no credit" on their judge's form.
3. Nikki Lee suggested that the trick timer make note, on the timer's form, of the "start trick" and the tricks "before and after" the last trick in time to avoid confusion between similar tricks and/or their reverses.
4. Nikki offered, as a way to expedite the trick event, to have the skier's representative look at the trick form after the skier's performance rather than waiting until the conclusion of the event to release the forms for review. There would be a review area away from the judging. There were counter opinions.
5. Jared felt scoring would be quicker if declared trick forms were used again in the elite events. A skier could submit multiple declared runs and say which one he was going to use at the dock.
6. Jared suggested that a trick should be deemed no credit only if three judges agree on the same reason for not awarding credit, hence #2 above. Otherwise, a video review would be appropriate.
7. Jeff Smith encouraged emails to Jeffry Armstrong or himself with suggestions on how to continue with the education and learning process that were started in this seminar.
8. Jeff also encouraged emails to Bob Corson or Jeffry for suggestions to IWSF to make the trick event more marketable. This should include suggestions to

improve "real time" announcement of final scores, as well as the elimination of delays (such as the post-event 30 minute review period) to determining the winner of the event.

Specific Recommendations:

The following suggestions should be incorporated into our educational process immediately.

1. ACJs and CJs should adhere to the rule that allows only one video review per panel of judges as a group per run (as opposed to one judge after another).
2. Judges should note all the reasons for "no credit" on their judge's forms.
3. Trick timers should make note, on the timer's form, of the "start trick" and the tricks "before and after" the last trick in time to avoid confusion between similar tricks and/or their reverses.
4. Clinic members should write to Jeff Smith, Jeffry and/or Jim with suggestions on how to continue with the education and learning process that was started in this seminar.
5. Clinic members are encouraged to email Bob Corson or Jeffry with suggestions to IWSF to make the trick event more marketable.

Recorded by Cyndi Benzel, edited by Jim Grew and Jeff Smith – November 22, 2007