

# Media Tool Kit

Show Water Skiing is truly a unique and fun sport, and by effectively promoting that uniqueness, your community as well as your team can reap a great many benefits.

The information in this Media Packet is designed to help you plan an effective publicity campaign.

Enclosed you will find information on the following:

- Getting Started
- Types of Publicity Available
- Points of Contact at Various News Agencies
- Sample Letterhead
- Sample Press Releases

As you plan your publicity campaign, keep in mind that most people are not aware of what show skiing really is. Therefore, it is up to you to educate them to the true uniqueness of the sport, and make them aware of the advantages that your organization offers to the people of the community.

Please remember:

**WHEN YOU FAIL TO ADVERTISE - YOU FAIL!!!!**

## **Getting Started:**

As you begin your media campaign there are a few items that you should have at your disposal. While they are not essential for the success of your campaign, they will enable you to promote your team in a more professional manner.

1. Mission Statement – Decide what the team’s goals are for the campaign, such as more membership, enhanced community image, etc. That way you know how aggressively you need to work on promotion. If your team is large enough you may want to establish a publicity committee. However, one person can handle this venture if necessary.
2. Letterhead - Secure a team letterhead (sample enclosed) and use it for all of your correspondence. It will increase your credibility and level of professionalism. You do not have to spend a lot of money on this item. A team member with minimal computer skills can create a letterhead for your team.
3. Business Cards – Business Cards (sample enclosed) also can be designed on the computer with minimal computer knowledge and little cost. They are extremely helpful in enhancing your image as a viable and professional organization.

## **Types of Publicity:**

1. Local Newspapers – Every community has at least one local newspaper. This method is one of the easiest and most effective ways of promoting your team’s activities.
2. Local Cable TV Stations – Many communities have local cable access TV available. These cable stations frequently are seeking community events to film on site, free of charge and air at a later time.
3. Local Radio Stations – Radio stations frequently have a segment in their programming, which is devoted to “Community Calendar” or “Coming Event” items.
4. Posters/Flyers – Flyers placed in prominent locations around your town will help to publicize your event.
5. Brochures or Promotional Booklets – Brochures promoting your organization can be made up fairly easily and passed out at community events.
6. Promotional Video/Slide Series – Promotional Videos are a little more challenging to put together, but they can be very effective in securing off-site shows or sponsorship for your team.
7. Web Site – The Internet is an extremely effective tool for promoting any organization, and while this may be a little more difficult to accomplish, it will prove to be well worth the effort.

## **Points of Contact:**

1. Newspapers:
  - A. In small town local newspapers you will contact the editor
  - B. Larger papers you will speak to the person who is in charge of the “Coming Events” or “Community Events” editor. Every paper will probably have a different name for the individual who handles this type of story.

Once you establish your point of contact, introduce yourself and explain who you are representing. Discuss the idea of the paper writing a “feature article” about your team and its activities. Mention the fact that the team is made up of local individuals and families and therefore, would make a great “human interest” story for the paper. Most papers seek out just these types of articles for their readership. Be prepared to give a very brief overview of what show skiing entails. One suggestion would be to promote the uniqueness of the sport. All communities have soccer, baseball and football teams, but not every community has the distinction on having a show ski team. Be prepared to mention the positive aspects of show skiing as well, such as families working and playing together, etc. In general, this should be enough information for them to proceed with an article.

The editor will then either set up a time to do the in-depth interview, or will assign another reporter to the story. At that interview, they will want pictures from previous shows or will have a photographer come to your site and take their own pictures. If they have no previous knowledge of show skiing it may be helpful to invite them to come to a full dress rehearsal or show for their pictures and interview.

Suggest to the editor that it might be interesting to his/her readers for the paper to do a follow-up story during the course of the season.

In addition to feature articles, you will use newspapers to advertise your weekly shows. This is done by submitting a simple press release (sample enclosed) to the “Coming Events” or “Community Calendar” editor. This press release will contain information pertinent to your show, such as the “who, what, when and where” of the event. To ensure that your press release is submitted at the appropriate time, make sure you ascertain the weekly cut off insertion date and time.

2. Local Cable TV Stations – Contact the station and ask to speak to the individual in charge of the Community Calendar and Video Productions. In many towns these stations have two methods of advertising.
  - A. Community Bulletin Board – This method requires that you write a simple press release announcing the date, time and place of your show. The station will normally insert this announcement a week before the event, and it is shown on the station daily through the time of the event. Make sure that you find out the insertion date and time.
  - B. Video Productions – This method will require you to allow enough lead time for the cable representative to schedule the video company to come to your site. This may be as much as a month or two in advance of the date that you would like to have the show taped. Additionally, this method will require more paperwork on your part, but the results are worth the extra effort.
3. Local Radio Stations – Contact the station to determine if they have a “Coming Event” segment built into their programming. Once you have determined that they do, submit a simple press release to be read at the appropriate time. Make sure that you find out necessary insertion time and date.

4. Posters/Flyers – Create several eye-catching posters announcing the date, time and place of the upcoming show. Place them in strategic areas around your community, such as banks and grocery stores. Make sure that you get permission to put up the posters.
5. Brochures/ Program Booklets
  - A. Brochures can be made up fairly easily and inexpensively by someone with computer ability. These brochures should be interesting, appealing and informative. They should contain information about your team, your goals and objectives, your show schedule and any other items that you and your associates deem appropriate. You should have them ready and available to be passed out at all of your shows.
  - B. Program Booklets – This is a method that can be used as a fund-raiser as well as a method of promoting your team. Like the brochures mentioned above, these should be interesting, and informative. Gather the names of local area businesses, and contact the business owners or managers and sell them advertising space in the booklet. This booklet should be printed professionally for the best results, and it does have the capability of being a significant fund-raiser for your organization. At the end of the season, provide your advertisers with a picture of one of your premier acts with a thank-you note attached. It creates great public relations.
6. Promotional Video/Slide Series - Secure a member of your team - or anyone who is willing to help - who is skilled with audio-visual equipment. Have that individual tape your best show acts (this may occur over the course of several shows) and then put together a promotional tape with music and graphics. Additionally, a similar type of computer slide presentation can be done. These audio-visuals aids can be used to promote your team to potential sponsors or to secure off-site shows, which can produce significant revenue for your organization
7. Web Site - Enlist the assistance of a team member who is computer literate and have this individual develop a team Web site. Make sure that it contains pertinent information – show schedule, team history, etc. - regarding your team. It also should contain pictures of your team members performing acts during your show. Once you establish this site, make sure that your Web address is included in all of your correspondence to various media.

Additionally, you should establish an e-mail address and publicize it on the Web site. This will enable individuals to contact a team representative directly with any questions or suggestions. It is important that any questions that are posed through this media be answered promptly to enhance your team's credibility.

# Lake Mohawk Ski Hawks

120 Summit Road  
Sparta, NJ 07081

## SAMPLE NEWSPAPER PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

### WATER SKI SHOW

Forget the chores, gather your family and friends and treat yourselves to a special afternoon of water ski wizardry. For your enjoyment the \_\_\_\_\_ will be  
(Team name)

performing \_\_\_\_\_ a special water ski show. At this unique event  
(Show Title)

you will be treated to barefoot skiing, ski jumping, swivel skiing, and wakeboarding.

This fun and unique event will be held at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Site) (day -date - time)

For more information call \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Contact #)

# Lake Mohawk Ski Hawks

120 Summit Road  
Sparta, NJ 07081

## SAMPLE COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD PRESS RELEASE (Cable TV)

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

The \_\_\_\_\_ will be performing \_\_\_\_\_ a  
(Team Name) (Show Title)  
special water ski show on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Day & Date) (Time) (Ski Site)

You will be treated to barefoot skiing, ski jumping, wakeboarding, swivel skiing and much more.

Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.  
(Contact #)

Either of the above press releases can be used for the radio stations also