

Wakesports Canada 1998

Join the club! Plenty of reasons to be in a ski club by Jacquie Gazley

Water skiing is a great social sport, as we know. Unlike cycling or snow skiing, it's just not possible to do the sport alone. And as opposed to tennis or squash, you don't need someone to compete with. What you need is a boat driver and a spotter, and if they ski too, that's great! When you join a water ski club, you immediately have connections to people who are willing to be your boat driver and spotter, and oftentimes, coach and friend too.

Do you use a slalom course? Would you like to learn how? How about a jump? A group of club members can share in the cost of purchasing a slalom course, and/or jump, and can share the responsibility of looking after those items. One of the best benefits is that while you ski with your fellow club members, you'll both learn more yourself, and teach your fellow skiers.

Do you need permission to use the waterway that you're skiing on? Is someone trying to limit access to that body of water? Then forming a club or joining an existing one is a very important step in dealing with these issues. Organised clubs have credibility that an informal group of friends doesn't. And the more members a club has, the more influence they can have on regulating bodies and governments.

In any sport, joining a club is a great way to enhance your enjoyment of the sport, and contribute to that sport as well as your community. Some friends of mine recently joined a wa-

ter ski club; not only will they have access to a network of people who can drive, spot, and coach them, but they'll also learn invaluable lessons about cooperation and teamwork.

There are all kinds of activities that a club can embark on which need volunteer manpower: coaching other members, finding local sponsors, recruiting new club members, organising clinics, running tournaments, etc. My friends are going to have a great opportunity to learn some new skills as their club develops and engages in some of these activities.

When you join a water ski club, you'll have simple, easy access to a wealth of water ski related information. Communication from Water Ski Canada and the Provincial Sport Organisations (PSO's) usually makes its next stop at member clubs. Clubs then pass on information to their members. If you're not a member of a club, you have to rely on the communication in your provincial newsletter, or here in Ski Nautique News, to keep you up to date. Some of the things you might not get from those sources are late-breaking news about clinics/camps being held, information about hosting a camp or clinic at your ski site, information for coaches, officials, competitive athletes, etc.

Water ski clubs have many and varied purposes. By joining a club you can assist the club in achieving some of the goals you both share:

- To promote water skiing and boating safety in your commu-

nity.

- To provide more opportunities for people to participate in organised recreational and competitive water ski activities.
- To develop better relationships between water skier and other interest groups/individuals who use the waterways in your community.
- To introduce your community to organised water ski competition.
- To provide a controlled, competition-calibre site on which to conduct organised water ski activities.
- To provide a link with the Water Ski Canada and your PSO for skiers in your area.

Clubs vary widely in their activity levels. You might not have lots of spare time to devote to club activities, but there are clubs whose only priority is skiing, made up of other people who've come together for that purpose. For those who want a bit more social contact, and who are interested in getting more involved in their community or their sport, there are highly organised clubs who put on tournaments, who take Big Brothers/Big Sisters groups skiing, or who work with their local Parks & Recreation boards to teach kids to ski for the first time.

No matter how involved you wish to get, you and your family or skiing partners will find plenty of good times and fun skiing when you join a water ski club.