Towed Water Sports for Life
Towed Water Sport for Life (TWS4L)  
(Long-Term Athlete Development)

Since its adoption in 2002, the Canadian Sport Policy has represented the common vision and objectives of 14 governments in the development of sport throughout Canada. Aided by complementary action plans developed by governments, individually and collectively, the Canadian Sport Policy has increased dialogue and cooperation between governments and their respective sport communities thereby focusing attention on sport priorities in Canada.

The implementation of LTAD is fundamental to the realization of the Vision and Goals of the Canadian Sport Policy. LTAD is the framework from which several priorities and actions will be developed.

Sport Community Capacity
1. Develop and implement a long-term sport and recreation infrastructure strategy.
2. Increase the opportunities in coaching, officiating, and volunteer leadership for women, persons with a disability, Aboriginal Peoples and visible minorities.
3. Review the alignment of Multi-Sport Games with LTAD principles.
5. Coordinate F-P/T governments' implementation of LTAD model.
6. Promote linkage/integration with other sectors at the provincial, territorial and national levels.

Enhance Collaboration between Sport Organizations

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) is a systemic approach being developed and adopted by Water Ski & Wakeboard British Columbia (WSWBC) to maximize a participant’s potential and involvement in our sport. The Canadian Sport for Life framework aims to define optimal training, competition and recovery throughout an athlete’s career to enable him / her to reach his / her full potential in towed water sports and as an athlete. Tailoring a child’s sports development program to suit basic principles of growth and maturation, especially during the ‘critical’ early years of their development, enables him / her to reach there full potential and increase lifelong participation in towed water sports and other physical activities.

This document outlines the actions Water Ski & Wakeboard BC will undertake to implement the national general framework called Waking Up Champions which addresses the needs of all participants, regardless of age, ability or interest. It recognizes the need to promote a physically active lifestyle, of making informed healthy choices, and of being “Active for Life.”
Overview

This document presents a provincial framework for optimal skier/rider development. The framework provides guidelines for appropriate training, competition and recovery environments for athletes, based on developmental age – the maturation level of an individual – rather than simply chronological age.

These guidelines have been developed for the sport as a whole. The various sections within this document refer to an overall pathway of seamlessly linked and often overlapping stage through which a skier/rider progresses as he or she matures. Coaches, instructors, parents, educators, officials and participants must apply these guidelines with a degree of flexibility to ensure that the water ski/wakeboard/barefoot experience is optimized for all participants. Each skier/rider has unique physical, mental, emotional and social needs and requires individualized programming and evaluation by qualified, accredited professionals.
LTAD Phases

Active Start (0-6 years)

Starting in infancy, parents need to provide opportunities for daily activity that are enjoyable and which incorporate the four pillars of physical literacy. Physical activity through active play is essential for healthy child development. Parents must encourage the development of basic movement skills – they do not just happen as a person grows older, but develop depending on heredity, activity experiences, and environment. WSWBC recommends a recreational boating experience and an Introduction to Club Programs.

FUNdamentals (6-9 years)

This stage is where participants learn physical literacy: the interrelation of movement skills and sport skills. The skills that participants acquire during the FUNdamentals stage will benefit them when they engage in any activity, regardless of their level of participation. Bypassing the specialized skill development in the FUNdamentals stage is detrimental to the person's future participation in physical activity and sport. Basic sport skill development in the FUNdamentals stage should be well-structured, positive, and done in a FUN and social environment. All programs are structured with proper progression, and monitored regularly by trained coaches, instructors and parents. WSWBC recommends Introduction to Club Training Programs. Introduction to Rip and Ride

FUNdations (9-12 years)

One of the most important periods of motor development is between the ages of 9 and 12. This is a window of accelerated adaptation to motor coordination. At this stage, participants are developmentally ready to acquire the general sports skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development. In late specialization sports such as water ski and wakeboard, early specialization can be detrimental to later stages of skill development and to refinement of the fundamental sport skills. Participants should be introduced and should develop solid basics in all disciplines. Interclub competitions can be introduced for fun, but they should not be the main focus of the program.

Build the Skills (12-16 years)

This is a window of accelerated adaptation to aerobic, speed and strength training and for maximum improvement in skill development. As well, good training habits are developed during this stage. Technical and fitness training programs should be individualized. While formal competition is included, the focus remains on learning the basics through training, with competition being of secondary importance. Activities should remain as high volume, low intensity, with lots of time on-water to develop an ease of skill performance. Training volume will increase as the athletes progress through the stage. Towards the end of this stage, athletes will likely begin to specialize in one discipline (e.g. water ski, wakeboard, barefoot). Introduction to Club Training Programs & BC Development Team.

Learn to Compete (15-20 years)

All of the objectives of the Build the Skills stage must be achieved before the objectives of Learn to Compete can begin. Optimize fitness preparation and skills to specialize in a discipline. Training is individualized to the athlete's particular needs in skill development, mental preparation, fitness and recovery. Training volume increases, as does training intensity. Competitions and tournaments become more important and the focus shifts to performance. Emerging performers are introduced to the international competitive stage. Athletes learn to prepare for competition, and learn to handle competitive pressures in any situation. Training season is longer, may be year-round, and is discipline- and event-specific. Consolidate individual strengths and rectify weaknesses. Introduction to BC Team

Train to Compete (17-23 years)

Training volume remains high while intensity increases with the importance of competitions. Training is usually 10 months of the year and is discipline- and event-specific. Athletes will be training outside of Canada in a warm-weather environment. Training is individualized to the athlete's particular needs in skill development, mental preparation. Fitness and recovery. Consolidate individual strengths and rectify weaknesses. Introduction to National Championship, National Junior Team and International Competition
LTAD Phases

**Becoming a Champion (19-26 years)**

Transition period between national level podiums and international level podiums. This is the final phase of athletic preparation. Maturation is complete and all the performance factors should be fully established to optimize performance in international competitions. The athletes in this stage will be the top international performers in the next four years and beyond. It is important to build a winning strategy with these athletes, and to individualize training and recovery programs to prevent over-training. National Team with International Competition

**Top of the Wake (22+ years)**

Performance-on-demand is the criterion standard. This stage builds on the progression from the “Becoming a Champion” stage. The athlete has gained experience in competing in pressure situations at the highest possible level. S/he will continue performing, and winning consistently at a high level for an extended period of time. All aspects of training are directed toward ensuring consistent performances at the highest level. Injury prevention and recovery strategies are crucial in this stage.

**Active for Life (Any Age)**

WSWBC is structured to allow participants to continue competing in age group levels up to any age, at the local, national and international level. Clubs welcome and encourage participants of all ages and abilities, and there are many opportunities for adults and seniors to continue to enjoy the sport at their own level of performance.

In this stage participants are also encouraged to try a different discipline of the sport. Make a transition from competitive to recreational activities, participate in age group competition such as Master’s Games. Enter sport-related careers such as coaching, officiating, sport administration, small business enterprises, or media “Give back” to the sport through volunteering. A positive experience in sport is the key to retaining athletes after they leave the competition stream.

![LTAD Phases Diagram](image-url)
Pathway

A / Recreational Cottage and Boat Owners, Families

Throughout its history towed water sports has closely paralleled the development of recreational boating in its appeal to the general public. Over the years it has shown continuous, sustained growth. Surveys of sports participation show that there are roughly 1 million towed water sports enthusiasts in the Canada. Towed water skiing is both a recreational activity and a competitive sport. The majority of Water Ski & Wakeboard's members ski or ride for fun and to keep fit. They may participate by skiing on two skis, one ski, riding a wakeboard, wakeskate, wakesurf or a kneeboard, barefoot, or on a disc or other means of keeping afloat!

B / Introduction to Ski and Board Schools

The majority ski/ ride at clubs affiliated to Water Ski & Wakeboard, but there are also many who ski on the sea or lakes or rivers with no formal club structure. Our policy is to promote towed water sports as much as possible through clubs who can then control the activity and make sure it is carried out safely and with respect for other water users. It is incumbent on our members to adhere to the various Codes of Practice for safe riding.

C / Introduction to Rip and Ride

Rip 'n Ride is a national grassroots program developed by Water Ski and Wakeboard Canada to encourage a greater number of Canadians to learn and enjoy the world of towed water sports. Rip 'n Ride is well suited for all ages, and especially for children aged 6 to 16. Water skiing, wakeboarding and its different activities are something that anyone can learn, and can enjoy for a lifetime of fun and fitness.

The program consists of two main elements: Rip 'n Ride initiation clinics and a progressive skill development system.

Initiation clinics are a very successful ways to provide a fun and exciting setting in which to share the experience with others looking to get out on the water for the first time. Participants receive expert instruction from a qualified Rip 'n Ride Instructor, a certificate, stickers for different levels of achievement, a cool report card, possible other prizing, and memories that will last a lifetime!

Starting at the clinic and then afterwards, Rip 'n Ride is a roadmap for the different fundamental skills of any one of the variations of towed water sports.

Now that the program is in place Water Ski & Wakeboard BC is promoting Rip n”Ride in the different regions of the Province.

D / Introduction to Club Programs

There are now over 12 affiliated members clubs throughout BC which range from a small group of members who meet up at a local lake to large water sports leisure centres with exceptional facilities and several hundred members. All our clubs offer a yearly membership and some of the larger centres will offer different grades of membership e.g. membership bands which give different levels of access to the range of facilities on offer. Either way when you join a club you will automatically be registered as a member of Water Ski & Wakeboard BC and receive the various member benefits.
D / Introduction to Club Programs

As the provincial governing body of organized towed water sports in BC, WSWBC plays a vital role in the awareness and growth of its nine sport disciplines. There are thousands of towed water sports enthusiasts who are not involved competitively that spend their weekends behind the boat. Programs from its local organizing clubs connect with the recreational water sports enthusiasts.

These programs are designed to be a fun, family-oriented experience for all water sport enthusiasts. WSWBC looks to grow organized towed water sports at the grassroots level by providing a turnkey package that encourages LOCs to host GrassRoots events through budget relieving incentives, and offering various marketing tools to help attract new participants to their events.

E / Introduction to Club Training Programs

If you love the water, the sun, fun, and boats, then a Water Ski / Wakeboard Club is for you. No experience or personal equipment is necessary. Anything you enjoy on the water is usually provided water skis, wakeboards, jumpers, wake skates, kneeboards, wake surfs, tubes, barefoot, trick skis, etc. Most have a slalom course, jump ramp, Sliders and experienced skiers that are available to coach you.

F / Introduction to Competition

Interest in competitive towed water sports has grown considerably over the years and continues to attract many more enthusiasts. WSWBC sanctions more than 20 tournaments each season. These range from small, local events for novices to national and world-level tournaments for more experienced competitors. Male and female skiers / riders of all ages can compete in traditional three-event water skiing (slalom, tricks, jumping) tournaments, as well as in tournaments for wakeboarding and barefooting and disabled water skiing.

G / Introduction to BC Summer Games

The BC Games are a stepping stone to higher level competitions for many young athletes who go on to represent their sport on BC Teams at the Regional or Canadian Championships and/or to compete at other national and international events. The External Sport Credentials Program initializes as the Athlete 10 Program must have been on BC Summer Games Team. Letters are sent out by WSWBC and are eligible for 4 credits in Athlete 10.

H / Introduction to BC Development Team

Mission Statement: To prepare towed water sports athletes technically, physically and mentally for Provincial and Western Canadian competition.

Goal: To place towed water sports athletes on the podium in Provincial and or Western Canadian Championships and to prepare and provide a pathway for these athletes to become members of the WSWBC Team

Eligibility: To be eligible for the Development Team an athlete must be a member in good standing with WSWBC, be a competitive license holder in current year, compete in the Provincial and or Western Canadian Championships as well as two other competitions.

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for the team will be biased towards towed water sports athletes who meet the minimum performance standards in one or more disciplines as layout by the discipline committee. The discipline committee will name a minimum of four athletes and a maximum of eight athletes. Priority and consideration will be given to ensure, where possible, to have gender equity.

The External Sport Credentials Program moves to Athlete 11 Programs must have been on BC Development Team. Letters are sent out by WSWBC and are eligible for 4 credits in Athlete 11.
I / Introduction to BC Team

Mission Statement: To prepare towed water sports athletes technically, physically and mentally for national and international competition.

Goal: To place towed water sports athletes on the podium at Western Canadian, Canadian National and or selected International Championships.

Eligibility: To be eligible for the BC Team an athlete must be 20 years and under as of January 1st if the year. One must also be a member in good standing in Water Ski and Wakeboard BC and be a competitive license holder.

Yearly Training Plan: Each selected athlete will be required to submit a YTP each year they are on the team.

Athlete Obligations: Train and compete throughout the Competitive season and attend the Western Canadian and or the National Championships.

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for the team will be biased towards towed water sports who meet the minimum performance in one or more disciplines. In the event there is not enough athletes who meet the criteria the Committee reserves the right to select from the next closes athletes.

The External Sport Credentials Program Athlete 12 must have been on BC Team. These letters are sent out by WSWBC and are eligible for 4 credits in Athlete 12.

J / Introduction to National Junior Teams

The National Development Teams program provides introductory access to various WSWC sport science and technical training programs and to the services of the National Team Coach to enhance and improve the development and performance of younger athletes. These criteria may be found in the WSWC web site and are updated from time to time.

K / Introduction to International Competition

Goals of WSWC’s National Team Program

1. To place classic water skiers on the podium at the World Championships, Pan American Games and other notable international competitions.

2. To develop high performing classic water skiers in World Championships and Pan American Games podium finishers.

3. To offer support to athletes non-financially, as well as through Canadian multi-sport organizations like Athletes CAN and Canadian Sport Centres who offer benefits and programs to National Team athletes.

4. To involve the National Team members in WSWC fundraising activities and assisting mentoring, supporting and promoting towed water sports in Canada.
**Talent Identification**

A / Spearheaded by WSWBC

B / Constant communication with Ski and Board Schools

C / Recognizing talent thru Rip and Ride Programs

D / Constant communication with clubs to recognize talent

E / Feedback and Interface with athletes at provincial competitions

F / Recognize and further develop skill thru BC Development Team Program

G / Recognize and further develop training and competition skill thru BC Team Program

**Training Ratio**

Training Ratio for Recreational / Rip and Ride / Club Program / BC Development Team / BC Team Skill Development to follow Outline in WSWC / LTAD Waking up Champions.
Ensure coaching excellence for all participants

Coaches/instructors must have more information on LTAD and must become more flexible in their teaching and coaching strategies. Coaching must be treated as a legitimate profession and clubs must be educated to value their coaches as assets.

Why Become a Coach?

Coaches are role models
Coaches get to watch self-esteem being developed
Coaches are essential to athlete development
Coaches gain skills that can be used in all aspects of life
Coaches promote physical activity
Coaches influence participants' enjoyment of sport
Coaching benefits your community
Coaching is a fulfilling experience
NCCP and the LTAD

WSWBC will be working to integrate LTAD into the new NCCP contexts that are being developed. The LTAD will be an integral part in the development and direction of the New NCCP contexts; allowing the two to coincide and lend support to one another. Through the new NCCP coaching contexts, coaches will gain the skills to implement the LTAD stages.

The new NCCP model is made up of three streams and a total of eight contexts, each with its own coaching requirements. Each sport is responsible for identifying how many of the eight contexts are relevant to their sport.

Stream 1 - Community Sport
Coaches in the Community Sport stream typically become involved on a voluntary (and often short-term) basis because their children participate in a sport. They tend to work with participants of all ages who are new to the sport. This initiation coach coincides with the FUNdamentals stage of LTAD. In place is the “Learn To” instruct workshop

Stream 2 - Competition
Coaches in the Competition stream usually have previous coaching experience or are former athletes in the sport. They tend to work with athletes over the long term to improve performance, often in preparation for provincial, national, and international competitions. This introduction coach correlates to the “Build the Skills” section in our LTAD model. A program is in development for the 08-09 year.

Stream 3 - Instruction
Coaches in the Instruction stream must have sport-specific skills and training, whether coaching at the beginner or advanced skill levels. Many are former participants in the sport. This instructor intermediate focuses on the FUNdations section of LTAD. Water Ski and Wakeboard Canada piloted a “Coaching Foundation” in the summer of 2009 and continues to move forward for approval.
There are 3 stages to becoming a coach:

In Training - when a coach has completed some of the required training for a context. This happens once you register and start the coaching process. A “CC” number is issued and your portfolio is started.

Trained - when a coach has completed all required training for a context;

Certified - when a coach has completed all evaluation requirements for a context. This includes the “Making Ethical Decisions” evaluation.

The new NCCP model distinguishes between training and certification. Coaches can participate in training opportunities to acquire or refine the skills and knowledge required for a particular coaching context as defined by the sport. To be certified in a coaching context, coaches are evaluated on their demonstrated ability to perform within that context in areas such as program design, practice planning, performance analysis, program management, ethical coaching, support to participants during training, and support to participants in competition.

Certified coaches enjoy the credibility of the sporting community and of the athletes they coach because they have been observed and evaluated “doing” what is required of them as a competent coach in their sport. They are recognized as meeting or exceeding the high standards embraced by more than 60 national sport organizations in Canada. Fostering confidence at all levels of sport, certification is a benefit shared by parents, athletes, sport organizations, and our communities.

Rip ’n Ride

Rip ’n Ride is a national standardized grassroots program created by WSWC. It provides a ready made skills program, materials and delivery tools, and is available to all NCCP certified coaches.

Rip ’n Ride is structured to simplify and regulate the teaching of skills. Through the Rip ’n Ride program coaches have access to facilitator’s manuals, report cards, participant certificates, and apparel. These tools can help coaches increase participation numbers and set the path for continued enjoyment and progressive skill development in towed water sports.

As a coach the program enables you to create a consistent framework for teaching and monitoring participants’ achievements. The consistency of the program allows participants to benefit from the curriculum regardless of their geographic location. Furthermore, clubs, camps and/or clinics are able to provide a professional, organized approach to learning.

External Sport Credit Program - COACH 11 and 12 Criteria
Student coaches who have completed all requirements of the Coach 11 & 12 categories must send their proof of completion to the Sport and Recreation Branch. The Sport and Recreation Branch representative will review the submitted documentation for the particular coach level and issue a verification letter if the student has fulfilled all the requirements. Check the WSWBC web site for more info.
Officiating

The WSWBC Officials Program provides resources, training and certification for officials at levels 1 & 2 from club tournaments to provincial competition. Your participation as an official ensures our athletes have an opportunity to compete fairly and equitably with other athletes at water ski tournaments.

The program for competition, has several roles for officials, including judges, boat drivers, calculators (scorers), technical controllers (homologators), and Chief of Competition.

Judges ensure the competition on the field of play, is run according to the rules of the event and sanctioning body (WSWC or IWSF), and is scored fairly. Boat Drivers are required to operate the towboats, with a high degree of skill and consistency. Calculators track and document the scores achieved by the athletes. Technical Controllers ensure the technical specifications of the site and of all associated equipment meet the Rules. Finally, the Chief of Competition has the responsibility to oversee and run the entire event or tournament.

As you gain experience, you should also document that experience on the Record of Experience or ROE form. This ensures you can advance to a higher level you may aspire to and to formalize your credentials, particularly for more advanced events such as National, International, or Professional competition.

If you become involved and earn an appointment to a major event in Canada, officials are also expected to meet certain obligations of performance. These are designed to ensure events are properly managed and will meet the expectations of the athletes.

WSWBC Officials Level 3 for the sport of Water Ski/Wakeboard and thus meets the standards for the External Sport Credentials Program. Students are eligible to receive four credits for Official 12 which may be applied towards secondary school graduation.

The succession plan for officials varies depending on the discipline (water ski, wakeboard, barefoot or adaptive). However, they all involve offering officials courses, on an on-going basis in order to encourage new individuals to participate as officials. The majority of our officials were already involved in the sport as parents of athletes or as athletes themselves (or both) before becoming officials. Once they have become officials, they are encouraged to participate as officials in as many events as possible to increase their levels, as moving from level to level in the officiating program is based upon completion of clinics as well as time spent officiating at tournaments. An additional factor involves the mentoring of lower level officials by higher level officials at tournaments.