

2025 American Barefoot Club (ABC) Bylaws

ARTICLE 1 - Name

The name of the organization shall be "American Barefoot Club" (ABC). This organization is a sports discipline of USA Water Ski & Wake Sports, Inc. (USA-WSWS), the national governing body of water skiing in the United States.

ARTICLE 2 - Purpose

The purpose of ABC is to organize, promote, and govern barefoot water skiing in the United States. As a Sport Discipline of USA-WSWS and through affiliation with the International Waterski & Wakeboard Federation (IWWF) and the US Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC), ABC promotes barefoot water skiing throughout the world.

ARTICLE 3 - Membership

3.1 General Membership

Membership in ABC shall be open to any individual member of USA-WSWS, without discrimination based on gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or sex, subject to payment of dues as prescribed by USA-WSWS and ABC.

3.2 Voting Membership

Voting membership shall be open to individual or family members in good standing with USA-WSWS, aged 18 or older, who are interested in barefoot water skiing. Terms, conditions, qualifications, and dues shall be prescribed by the ABC Board of Directors. Voting privileges will be exercised in the region of the individual's residence as determined by ABC membership files.

ARTICLE 4 - Conflict of Interest and Ethical Practice

4.1 SafeSport Policy

ABC, as an affiliated Sport Discipline of USA-WSWS, maintains a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, unlawful discrimination, abuse, or misconduct, consistent with the USOPC SafeSport initiative. The USA Water Ski & Wake Sports SafeSport Program Handbook is incorporated by reference.

4.2 Conflict of Interest Policy (NEW)

All Board members, officers, and committee chairs must:

- Annually disclose any financial interests, business relationships, or family connections that could create conflicts of interest
- Recuse themselves from voting on matters where conflicts exist
- Refrain from using their position for personal financial gain

4.3 Code of Conduct (NEW)

All members, particularly those in leadership positions, shall:

- Act with integrity and in the best interests of ABC
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive organizational information
- Avoid misuse of ABC resources or information
- Report suspected misconduct through appropriate channels
- Treat each participant in any activity with dignity and respect

ARTICLE 5 - Suspension or Expulsion

The following complaints shall be sent to the USA-WSWS Judicial Committee for resolution in accordance with USA-WSWS Bylaws Article IX:

- Requests for, or appeals of, suspension or expulsion
- Complaints required to be sent to USA-WSWS Judicial Committee per Article 6 of these Bylaws

ARTICLE 6 - Complaint Procedures

6.1 Jurisdiction

ABC has exclusive jurisdiction over complaints relating to the application or interpretation of ABC rules of competition, including administrative rules.

6.2 USA-WSWS Jurisdiction

Complaints relating to denial or threat to deny an individual's opportunity to compete or participate in USA-WSWS sanctioned competitions or as a member of an official U.S. team shall be sent directly to the USA-WSWS Judicial Committee.

6.3 Filing Procedures

Complaints may be filed by any person claiming direct and actual harm. The complainant shall file with the ABC President, copying all Executive Committee members and the USA-WSWS Executive Director. The complaint must include:

- Clear, concise description of the alleged violation
- Specific remedy requested
- Complainant's signature

6.4 Hearing Process

The ABC Executive Committee shall designate a Hearing Panel to investigate and decide complaints, subject to ratification or amendment by the ABC Board of Directors. All parties shall:

- Receive notice of hearing panel appointees
- Have opportunity to object to appointees for conflicts of interest
- Have right to submit relevant documents
- Receive copies of all materials and communications
- Be eligible to participate fully in proceedings

6.5 Due Process

All proceedings shall be administered consistent with due process principles as set forth in USA-WSWS Bylaws. The Hearing Panel shall provide a written decision to the ABC President, Executive Committee, and USA-WSWS Executive Director. The Board of Directors shall ratify or amend the decision (by two-thirds vote if amending) at the next meeting.

6.6 Appeals

- Appeals from membership restriction, suspension, or termination decisions shall go to the USA-WSWS Judicial Committee
 - Appeals from other Board decisions shall go through the United States Olympic Committee appeals arbitration process
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ARTICLE 7 - Regional Organization

7.1 Regional Structure

The United States shall be divided into five regions:

Eastern Region (13 states + DC): Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, District of Columbia

Midwest Region (11 states): Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

Southern Region (7 states): Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee

South Central Region (7 states): Arkansas, Louisiana, Kansas, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

Western Region (12 states): Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

7.2 Regional Modifications

Any state, territory, or possession may be included in or transferred between regions by two-thirds vote of the Board.

7.3 Regional Bylaws

Each region may adopt and amend regional bylaws, provided they do not conflict with ABC or USA-WSWS bylaws. Regional bylaws must be submitted to the Board for examination. Conflicting provisions are automatically suspended and supplanted by ABC or USA-WSWS bylaws.

ARTICLE 8 - Board of Directors

8.1 Composition

The Board Members shall consist of:

- **President** (votes only to break ties)
- **Vice President** (voting member)
- **Ten Regional Directors** (2 per region, voting members)
- **Six Elite Athlete Representatives** (voting members, comprising at least 33⅓% of voting power)
- **Secretary** (non-voting)
- **Treasurer** (non-voting)
- **Five Reserve Directors** (1 per region, voting only when substituting for Regional Directors)
- The Secretary and Treasurer may, but are not required to, be a Regional Director or Elite Athlete Representative.

8.2 Eligibility and Election

Regional Directors and Reserve Directors shall be elected annually by the ABC Members of their respective Regions at Regional meetings.

8.3 Terms of Office

- Regional Directors: Two-year terms
- Reserve Directors: One-year terms
- Directors serve as Executive Regional Director in their second year
- Terms begin at the Summer Board Meeting and end when successors are elected

8.4 Vacancies

- Executive Regional Director vacancy: Filled by that region's Regional Director
- Regional Director vacancy: Filled by Reserve Director until next Regional Meeting
- Reserve Director vacancy: Elected by Regional Council

8.5 Removal

The Board may remove Members for sufficient cause by two-thirds majority vote.

8.6 Authority and Quorum

The Board has full authority over ABC affairs, subject to these bylaws and USA-WSWS Board veto. A quorum of 9 voting Board members is required to conduct business. Majority vote is required for passage, except where otherwise specified.

8.7 Supermajority Requirements

Changes to ABC Rules or Bylaws require two-thirds majority vote.

8.8 Honorary Directors

Awarded to past Presidents or persons with five years of Board service (excluding Reserve Director service). Honorary Directors have voice but no vote.

ARTICLE 9 - Officers

9.1 Officer Positions and Election

Officers are President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, elected by majority vote of the incoming Board (including Reserve Directors present) at the Annual Summer Board Meeting at the end of their respective terms.

9.2 Term Limits

President and Vice President may serve only two consecutive two-year terms in the same office, but may be re-elected after a one-term absence.

9.3 Terms of Office

Officers' terms begin immediately following election and end at the annual summer meeting two years later, or when successors are elected.

9.4 Additional Officers and Awards

The Board may designate additional officers and establish special offices (e.g., Historian) or awards recognizing exceptional service.

9.5 Vacancies and Removal

- Vacancies shall be filled without undue delay by the affected Region
 - Officers may be removed by two-thirds majority vote for sufficient cause
 - The Board may temporarily delegate officer duties by majority vote
 - Replacement timing affects re-election eligibility: first half of term = 1 additional term; second half = 2 additional terms
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ARTICLE 10 - Duties of Officers

10.1 President

- Provides general direction of ABC business, subject to Board authority
- Oversees and runs Board meetings (votes only to break ties)
- Appoints ABC representatives to USA-WSWS Board (President, Vice President, or Board-appointed alternate)
- Appoints all standing committees (subject to Article 11) and may appoint special committees
- Calls all regular meetings, may call special meetings, and may call for mail/email ballot votes
- May delegate duties to Vice President, or divide responsibilities as agreed upon by the Board

10.2 Vice President

- Assists President and assumes President's duties during absence/disability
- Follows up on Board actions to ensure implementation and reports failures to Board

10.3 Secretary

- Records and maintains minutes of Board meetings
- Serves as nominal custodian of ABC records

10.4 Treasurer

- Develops financial plans and maintains financial records
- Has possession of ABC treasury
- Treasurer or President signature required on all checks
- Checks over \$500 require majority Board approval (6 members)

10.5 Combined Position

Secretary and Treasurer positions may be combined and filled by the same person.

ARTICLE 11 - Financial Management (SUBSTANTIALLY REVISED)

11.1 Financial Controls

The following financial controls shall be implemented:

Budget Process:

- Treasurer shall prepare an annual budget for Board approval by two-thirds vote
- Budget amendments over \$1,000 require Board approval
- Quarterly financial reports shall be provided to the Board

Expenditure Authority:

- Expenditures under \$500: Treasurer or President authorization
- Expenditures \$500-\$2,500: Two officer authorization required
- Expenditures over \$2,500: Majority Board approval required
- Emergency expenditures over \$2,500: Executive Committee approval with Board ratification at next meeting

Dual Signature Requirements:

- All checks and electronic transfers over \$500 require two authorized approvals.
- Authorized signers: President, Vice President, Treasurer (minimum of three designated)
- No single individual may initiate and approve the same transaction

11.2 Financial Reporting

- Monthly bank reconciliations performed by Treasurer
- Quarterly financial statements distributed to Board
- Annual financial review or audit by independent party.
- Annual financial report presented at Summer Board Meeting

11.3 Asset Protection

- ABC shall maintain appropriate insurance coverage (liability, directors & officers, property)
- All ABC assets shall be inventoried annually
- Electronic financial records shall be backed up regularly

11.4 Credit Cards and Procurement

- ABC may issue credit cards to authorized officers with spending limits approved by Board
- Monthly credit card statements must be reviewed and approved by an officer other than the cardholder
- Competitive bids required for purchases over \$5,000
- Related-party transactions must be disclosed and approved by Board

11.5 Reimbursement Policy

- All expense reimbursements require itemized receipts

- Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 60 days
- Travel expenses follow USA-WSWS guidelines or Board-approved rates
- Reimbursement approval by officer other than requestor

11.6 Reserve Fund

- ABC shall maintain a reserve fund equal to 3-6 months of operating expenses
 - Reserve fund usage requires two-thirds Board vote
 - Annual review of reserve fund adequacy
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ARTICLE 12 - Committees

12.1 Standing Committees

The President shall appoint committee chairmen (subject to Board approval) and approve committee members selected by each chairman, all from ABC members in good standing. Elite athletes shall constitute at least 20% of committee membership and voting power.

Standing committees include:

- Records Committee
- Rules and Bylaws Committee
- Officials Committee
- Awards Committee
- Marketing and Social Media Committee
- Technology Committee
- Team Select Committee
- Skier Development Committee
- History Committee
- Executive Committee
- **Finance Committee (NEW)**

12.2 Finance Committee (NEW)

The Finance Committee shall:

- Assist Treasurer in budget preparation and financial planning
- Review quarterly financial reports
- Recommend financial policies and controls
- Coordinate annual financial review or audit
- Consist of Treasurer (chair), one officer, and 2-3 Board members

12.3 Athlete Advisory Council

The Athlete Advisory Council shall broaden communication between ABC and athletes and represent athlete interests to the Board. Subject to Board approval, the Council may establish its own bylaws and operational policies.

12.4 Athlete Board Representation

At least 33⅓% of Board voting power shall be with "Elite athletes." The Athlete Advisory Council shall elect 6 Advisory Council Directors to the ABC Board.

12.5 Elite Athlete Qualifications

Elite athletes qualify by:

- Representing the United States in international water ski competition within the preceding 10 years (World Championships, Pan American Championships, Pan Am Games), OR
- Demonstrating active amateur competition within the preceding 2 ski years by competing in ABC National Championships Open Division, Elite Team Trials, or finishing in top half of ABC Open Division Ranking List

ARTICLE 13 - Duties and Authority of Committees

13.1 Standing Committees

Duties determined by Board of Directors from time to time.

13.2 Special Committees

Duties determined by President.

13.3 Ratification

Committee proposals, decisions, and actions are valid only when ratified by the Board at a meeting or by mail ballot.

ARTICLE 14 - Meetings

14.1 Summer Board Meeting

The summer meeting shall be held at the National Barefoot Tournament (or during August if tournament is held at another time) at a time, date, and place designated by the President. Ten days advance written notice and agenda shall be sent to each Officer and Director.

14.2 Attendance Requirements

All Regional Directors and Reserves (incoming, incumbent, and outgoing) shall attend. Outgoing Directors attend to verify their votes were recorded correctly on previous mail ballots and may remain with voice but no vote.

14.3 Summer Meeting Agenda

Incumbent Board:

- Call to order
- Establish quorum and approve minutes
- Officer reports
- Committee reports
- Old business
- Election of officers by new Board (every two years)

New Board:

- Call to order by new President
- Establish quorum
- New business
- Adjourn

14.4 Meeting Access

Board meetings may be recessed and reconvened as required. Meetings may be open to ABC members as determined by President.

14.5 Special Meetings

The President may call special meetings. When requested by three or more directors, the President must call a special meeting within 30 days. Seven days written notice (mail or electronic) of time, place, and purpose must be given to each director unless waived in writing by all directors.

14.6 Quorum

Quorum consists of 51% of voting Regional Directors and at least 9 total votes. Reserve Directors serve only in absence of either Regional Director and have full voting privileges when serving.

14.7 Electronic Discussions

The Board may use mail, email, social, or other electronic media for discussion and business ("Electronic Discussions"). Electronic Discussions are not special meetings and need not comply with special meeting notice requirements. All Board members shall have access. The Board may adopt special rules governing Electronic Discussions by majority vote.

ARTICLE 15 - Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

ARTICLE 16 - Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order (newly revised current edition) shall govern ABC proceedings where applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws or special rules adopted by ABC.

ARTICLE 17 - Final Disposition of Funds

Should ABC dissolve, the entire treasury shall become the sole property of USA-WSWS, a 501(c)(3) corporation.
