

# 2022 Annual Awards Nominees



Please read all nominations and cast your vote!

# Pato Font

Male Athlete of the Year  
Rollins College



Pato has had an incredible season of skiing this year. He has set the world record, the pending collegiate trick record, and skied incredibly in the pro arena and Collegiate tournaments. Because of his athleticism and the way he holds himself as just another person walking around the tournament he deserves to be nominated for Athlete of the Year. One example of Pato's humility that was witnessed at Nationals was when a young skier from a newer team in Division 2 was walking around getting her trick ski signed by all of the athletes who scored very high trick scores. While she was asking Neilly Ross to sign her ski, Neilly asked if she would also like Pato to sign her ski. At the time the fan did not know that Pato too was an amazing trick skier but Pato's reaction was nothing but the most humble and genuine as he then went out of his way to introduce himself and strike up a great conversation about skiing. Witnessing this was an awesome "pass the handle" moment and displayed how deserving Pato is of this award as Athlete of the year on and off the water.

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# Evan Kraus

Male Athlete of the Year  
University of Louisiana Lafayette



Evan is known to be the most dedicated person to the sport and anything related to the sport of waterskiing. He has a unique ability to not let anyone or anything get in the way of what he needs to do in order to ski to his full potential. He will ski in any circumstance, no matter what the weather is, no matter how he is feeling, he is truly one of the most consistent skiers I have ever watched.

Evan has worked tirelessly this season, coaching, studying, driving, and focusing on his own skiing. Anyone watching Evan as an athlete will learn, and will aspire to be able to handle the pressures of our sport the way he does. It is rare to see anyone learn to run 39, and then continue to run it everyday in practice since the first time achieved. He also qualified for Jr Masters after skiing in every LCQ leading up to the event.

Athletic ability aside, Evan is known for his positive support of fellow athletes and mentorship of others. This is a demanding sport mentally; Evan goes out of his way to talk through hurdles with other athletes and support their journeys, not only his own. It was a tough call to decide if Evan should be nominated for Athlete of the year or Outstanding leader as he melds these two roles with humor, humility, honesty and compassion. He is a role model for this sport and for all athletes in general, Evan is truly most deserving of Athlete of the Year.

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# Will Roberts

Male Athlete of the Year  
University of Alabama



With a winning jump of 181 feet at San Marcos River Ranch in Texas, Will Roberts won 2022 collegiate nationals in mens jump. Additionally, earlier this fall, Will had the farthest collegiate jump of the season with a jump of 186 feet.

Only sixteen months prior, at the very site and on the very ramp where he later won collegiate nationals, Will went out the front in the prelims of the Jr. U.S. Open after qualifying for finals as the #1 seed on his first jump. That crash shattered Will's spleen and emergency surgery followed his airlift from the San Marcos Hospital to an Austin trauma center. There a surgery team swept him from the helipad and was able to remove the pieces of his Soren found in his abdomen and stop the bleeding. During this period of transportation and surgery, Will received six units of blood. He was sidelined for two months following his week-long stay at the Austin hospital.

His winning jump at nationals had many parallels to the jump that nearly ended his jumping career. At the Jr. U.S. Open, many people questioned his decision to take that third jump in a wind no jumper would like to jump in. Will had to deal with people challenging his decision-making while juggling his physical and mental recovery from the crash.

This year, at the exact site, jump, and crosswind as last year, Will skied from the dock as the top seed in the last event of collegiate nationals, Will was faced with one of the most high pressure situations any jumper could endure. Pressure from his team, pressure from the competition, but most severely pressure and thoughts from his crash 16 months ago. Despite all of that, Will went out and showed no hesitation, winning the event in convincing fashion and showing himself and everyone who doubted him what he is capable of. His national performance reveals his unmatched mental toughness and perseverance that proves he is more than deserving of Male Athlete of the Year.

Kristen is the definition of perseverance. She broke several Regional Collegiate records this season, one that had been there for over 20 years! Kristen set the 3590 western regional trick record that was achieved in 1999 and Slalom 4@38 passing the record from 2005. She achieved 6th in slalom and 2nd overall at this year's Nationals. She has only had the opportunity to compete for one season due to a genetic hip condition that required major surgery her previous year making this her first and last collegiate season as she has to go in for another.

Her second surgery is this November and will take her out of competition for another year but she is not going to let that stop her from leading her team to the top. She is determined to come back stronger and continue leading her team from Women's team captain for the past 2 years transitioning into the 2023 Vice President in her final year! She is so mentally strong and such a fierce competitor but also the sweetest person and excellent student. Through all her unfortunate circumstances, she is always positive, encouraging and the best teammate. She doesn't dwell on the bad and the fact that her time on the water for ASU is over but looks forward to the season ahead. Even though she will not be skiing she will be putting all of her effort into coaching the Arizona State team and building the Sun Devil Dynasty.

Kristen Baldwin is a fighter, a leader, and an amazing driven individual. She proves that with hard work and perseverance you can overcome some of the biggest obstacles thrown your way. She is the Definition of Athlete of the Year.

# Kristen Baldwin

Female Athlete of the Year  
Arizona State University



# Alexandria Garcia

Female Athlete of the Year  
University of Louisiana Lafayette

Ali Garcia is a phenomenal athlete. She took the Pro tour by storm this season but did not let that get in the way of supporting her team and putting up scores for ULL. On top of balancing her heavy school load and traveling back and forth from Florida all season, she was committed to to train hard and be there for her team with Winning scores and helping out at collegiate tournaments. As a ULL skier, Ali overcame a concussion and won the 2022 collegiate national championship in slalom. She maintained a 4.0 GPA in the honors college.



NCWSA is unique in that both beginners and Worlds competitors come together. Keeping in the spirit of multiple levels of talent pursuing excellence I would like to recommend a non traditional candidate, Allison Hinrichs for Athlete of the Year. From someone who had never seen a course to 2nd overall (D2), her tireless dedication to performance improvement is noteworthy. Here is how far Allison has come in her collegiate career:

Her first tournament at Mo-State Fall Showdown was a comedy of errors. She attempted a 24 mph @ 15 off and took on so much water on her deep water start that she displaced her contacts. Legally blind without corrective lenses she missed one ball. A score of zero.

Allison had never seen a trick ski. Having kneeboarded twice she ran her first trick run on a kneeboard. She fell on a side slide scoring zero again.

Her first jump ever was in competition and just as notable, she was on an edge through the ramp and ended up doing a barrel roll, scoring zero again (photo available upon request).

Crash after crash when she emerged from the water she thought to herself, "That was AWESOME!" A competition skier was born that weekend. Every beginner needs to start somewhere and for Allison, it was in the middle of nowhere Missouri, with a score of zero.

# Allison Hinrichs

Athlete of the Year  
University of Nebraska



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# Allison Hinrichs

Athlete of the Year  
University of Nebraska



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In the weeks, months, and years to follow her personal growth may not be record-breaking at a National or even regional level but it is a record for the Husker team. She is making history at home by accomplishing something no woman Husker has ever done before.

Specific examples of Allison's growth are below:

**First Competition at Fall Showdown, Missouri State, Hartville, Mo. 2017:**

**Slalom: 0**

**Trick: 0**

**Jump: 0**

**Final Competition, NCWSA Nationals, San Marcos, TX. 2022:**

**3 @ 34 22' off (4th)**

**890 pts (4th)**

**Jump: 87' (2nd)**

**Total: 2nd in overall D2**

Although Allison's performance lies in the shadow of other athletes who have mastered intense speed and honed skills, she has broken new ground for herself and set a precedent for the women of Nebraska and all athletes that didn't start 3 event skiing from the time they could walk. It is for this reason Allison Hinrichs should be considered for Athlete of the Year.



# Joe Gage

Male Outstanding Leader of the Year  
Baylor University



During his freshman year 2021, Joe Gage worked tirelessly to resurrect the waterski team at Baylor University. Joe spent countless hours wading through bureaucracy to get approval from the university to re-establish the team. He recruited members, outfitted the team with supplies, and even found someone to buy ULM's old boat and lease it back to the team. Joe overcame many challenges along the way. Baylor University's legal team was very reluctant to permit the waterski team to return to campus, but I believe that Joe's maturity, leadership, persuasive ability, and determination ultimately convinced them. Joe worked very hard to find a place for the team to ski. After his attempts to get a lake lease fell through, Joe worked with local authorities and the university to install a ski course on the Brazos River. Even for small day-to-day problems, Joe was called on to solve all of them. For example, when the battery in the boat died, Joe was there to push the boat up the river (against the current) in the dark. As a current sophomore and president of the team, Joe has continued to develop as a leader.

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# Joe Gage

Although Joe did ALL the heavy lifting of starting a water ski team from scratch, he wasn't eager to hold onto authority or take all the credit for his successes. Instead, he very effectively delegated some of his roles to other teammates by encouraging them to become boat drivers and officers on the team. A mark of a great leader is their ability to build up other strong leaders around him, and this is a characteristic that Joe embodies. Joe could hold onto power, but he is more interested in building future leaders who will guide the team in future years. Joe displays a degree of maturity and humility at 19 years old that many people will never attain. There are many excellent leaders in the waterski community who lead larger and more successful teams. Joe leads a small team. It will take a few years for Baylor to build up enough depth to make it to Nationals, and by then, Joe will probably have graduated. Joe clearly isn't in it for the feeling of success or the ego boost. He puts in hundreds of hours of work, for which he gets almost no recognition, all because he loves the sport of waterskiing and sharing it with other people.

## Male Outstanding Leader of the Year Baylor University

In short, an 18-year-old from Ohio came to Baylor with a truck, some skis, and a huge passion for skiing and single handedly resurrected the Baylor Waterski Team. He is encouraging, friendly, humble, intelligent, an excellent athlete, a peacemaker, and a magnetic leader. Joe is so humble and quick to attribute his hard work and success to others on the Baylor team but it needs to be recognized that Joe Gage is the reason Baylor Waterski part 2 is back.



# Gage Jarvis

Male Outstanding Leader of the Year  
Arizona State University



Gage had a vision to build ASU into an elite team. He instituted efficient systems in the team's functioning, developing skills of existing members and ensuring healthy and reliable funding. This allowed him to recruit an incredibly talented roster without the allure of famed coaches or scholarships.

He has been the catalyst for all the successes on this team, it would not be nearly what it is without him. Over 4 years, Gage has been involved in changes, including a boat partnership, organized mandatory practices, regular meetings and so much more!

Gage knew that there were changes that needed to be made and he had a vision of what the team could be. He knew what was needed to take ASU to the next level. When joining the team, the boat and dock were in pretty rough condition. Gage knew they needed better. A better boat and a better deal. After reaching out to every watersports dealer in the area he landed a deal with Action Watersports where they receive a brand new Nautique every year.

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# Gage Jarvis

Gage talked early about the goals he set for himself as a leader of this team, and what he hoped they could accomplish - he has absolutely crushed all of our expectations. ASU's program is flourishing, continuing to attract more and more talent each year. They have built a real family of dedicated, competitive, fun-loving student athletes. In Gage's collegiate run he held the position of Men's Captain, President x2, Assets Manager, and is now on the WCWSA board. The foundation Gage built has been a main force in developing the highly competitive team that ASU is today.

Recruitment and fundraising initiatives from the self funded team without a coach were well organized and a huge part of their success, bringing world champion athletes to the team. With Gage leading, the team made a shift that was permanent. Gage inspired everyone to reach for the top of the podium, on and off of the water. Integral to the respect afforded to him so universally was the fashion in which he built an elite team while maintaining their humble demeanor--ASU is abundantly helpful in tournament volunteering and championing the West Coast conference, and their high-performing members do not hesitate to help coach, equip, and generally mentor less experienced members of their own team or others.

## Male Outstanding Leader of the Year Arizona State University

Gage is involved in every aspect of the team's development: From rebuilding the ramp multiple times, putting in an entire new lift system, redoing the team's entire financials, installing a sun shade for the boat, re-carpeting the dock, sitting in on endless sports club meetings fighting for our team, the list goes on... Gage is the West Coast's first call when needing something fixed or when things go astray. He's the most hardworking, always willing to drive, pin, coach, judge, score, scrub and lower buoys, safety.

Along with the endless projects, meetings, and team "consultations" for the West Coast, Gage is always there for anyone who needs help and known to be a friend when you need him most.

Gage has made the team a family by welcoming every skier, regardless of their ability. Gage spends hours at the lake coaching and supporting each member on the team. Gage walks new skiers through every little step, staying patient and encouraging. Gage makes each team member feel like a valuable team mate. Off the water the team is together 24/7, truly a family!

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# Gage Jarvis

Skiers choose to attend ASU not just because they want to be competitive skiers but because they want to be a part of the Sun Devil family. There is certainly not a more cohesive unit on the West Coast and perhaps in the nation, and one of the major reasons for that is because of Gage's superior leadership skills and die-hard dedication to this sport.

It has shown through the teams jump from D2 to D1 in 2018, ASU's winning Team of the Year in 2021. After a disappointing team Nationals finish in 2021, they identified their failures and doubled down to come back with a much better team this year in 2022. Culminating in this year's 4th place finish at Nationals (ASU hasn't broken top 5 in 11 years).

ASU is the pride of West Coast Waterski. Not only does Gage inspire those of us who have watched what he's done first hand--we have heard from young members how the fruits of his labors at ASU have inspired them to follow his example and build our program as best they can. This sort of trickle-down inspiration is the very lifeblood of our community; it is the surest sign of excellence in leadership.

## Male Outstanding Leader of the Year Arizona State University

Gage is an outstanding person, one that everyone looks up to, relies upon, and aspires to be. He is someone who acknowledges the competition at hand but does not let it get in the way of what this sport really is. He looks at the sport as a whole, as a family and strives for everyone to be the best they can be. For everyone who has a Gage Jarvis in their lives, just know you are very lucky to have such an outstanding leader on your side.



# Matthew Leach

Male Outstanding Leader of the Year  
Texas State University



Matthew is an exemplary skier, a natural born leader, and an inspiration on and off the water. He has shown his dedication to the sport by constantly smashing personal best after personal best in all three events, but outside of that, he pours his heart into the other members. As captain of the Texas State Waterski Team he welcomes all levels of experience, encouraging anyone to try their best, and making sure to highlight everyone's successes. Matthew leads by example as he volunteers at All Can Ski and Frameswitch Ski School. Additionally, he was tournament director for the South Central 2022 Regionals.

Did you know that the Texas State Water Ski team added 20 new members in 2022, 11 of those new members competed in NCWSA tournaments for the first time this year? Did you know that at SCR Regionals 2022, TXST competitors skied 16 Personal Best Tournament performances? One would assume that only the new skiers got PBs, but in fact, Matthew Leach skied a slalom PB that tournament as well. Texas State achieved all of this despite losing access to their training site for over 1 year during COVID, losing all but a couple of existing competitive-experienced skiers, losing all financial support from the university, and many other hurdles. Their team leadership nearly completely turned over in 2020/2021. The only remaining officer was Matthew Leach, Team Captain.

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# Matthew Leach

Matthew serves as primary coach for the team and is the interface between the SMMR site and the Texas State team. He is also on the NCWSA Membership committee as the SCR representative. Matthew is a rated official 3 event judge, 3 event scorer, rated safety official, and trained driver. Despite missing team placement by only 80 team points to qualify for Nationals hosted at their home site, Matthew showed up to help work the event anytime he wasn't in classes. His team is constantly putting out positive posts on Instagram and social media. This team is rebuilding fast and furiously, and Matthew is the driving force. He should be recognized for his undeniable commitment to growing this sport.

A natural born skier and leader, Matthew is truly deserving of this nomination as he goes above and beyond on and off the water.

Male Outstanding Leader of the Year  
Texas State University



This year Alyssa has gone above and beyond what it means to be a leader on the waterski team in many more ways than just one. Alyssa is our designated social media chair, but mostly she does it all. Starting with our reach, Alyssa has done a complete 180 and transformed our team instagram from when she originally got it. She has gained us 800 more followers in her time in office, and has made our instagram a common point for teammates, family and friends to be informed about current team activities. Alyssa not only does this but also takes most of our photos at tournaments and makes our team member cards that gives spotlight to the skiers skiing that weekend on our instagram story. She answers all of our DM's from companies, family members, and potential skiers interested in learning more about us. She was also recently invited to help run the MCWSA instagram because of her work with our page. She has created a teams page for us to use to communicate and help us organize actions for getting to and from tournaments among other activities. With this she also created a waterski practice sign up sheet that was a great success and really helped us know when and who would be out at the lake ready to pull people and practice.

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# Alyssa Hinden

Female Outstanding Leader of the Year  
University of Kansas





# Alyssa Hinden

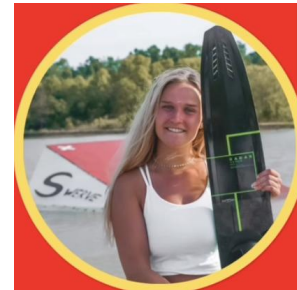
This past spring our team lost a beloved member, Levi Ward, due to a tragic motorcycle accident. Through social media, Alyssa collaborated with Levi's family to respectfully honor his memory. Soon after, the "Ski For Levi" trend arose, and all of the waterski world rallied around his memory. She also helped fundraise eight-hundred dollars for Ski For Levi shirts that our whole team received. Alyssa continued by organizing the creation of "thank you" letters for all the donations that the team received in the name of Levi's memory.

Furthermore, along the lines of growing our team, Alyssa has assisted with the purchasing of our very first team trailer that will accompany us to tournaments in the future. She never fails to show how dedicated she is to our team and how hard she is willing to work in order to provide the right template for our success. Last season, Alyssa introduced Microsoft Teams and re-platformed how our team communicates. This increased organization, scheduling, and efficiency. She is also a team certified boat driver that pulls practice multiple times a week and also helps coach members who need help. Alyssa continues by working on management for our tournaments including transportation, equipment, spirit, and time management.

## Female Outstanding Leader of the Year

During KU Waterski's 'Boat Captain' of the Year competition, Alyssa Hinden secured sponsors and raised awareness for donations that ended up raising three thousand dollars to pay our way to nationals. This extra work she put in saved our student waterskiers hundreds of dollars and made the trip to nationals more comfortable and ultimately, more fun! Keep in mind that she does all this for the team on top of pursuing a Doctorate of Pharmacy and serves as the Class President, STUCO Secretary, and is a Student Ambassador. Personally, I believe that Alyssa Hinden is more than worthy of the title Outstanding Female Leader of The year.

Individuals like Alyssa are the backbone of this sport and it is leaders like her that are going to grow the sport of waterskiing into its full potential. She is a one of a kind teammate that makes an impact on students in ways that will last a lifetime. It is safe to say that KU waterski and KU as a university would not be the same without Alyssa and it is thanks to her that our team has been revolutionized



This year Allison has achieved her vision of competing at the collegiate nationals. The strides that she has made in her accomplishments are noteworthy but the accomplishments she helped the Huskers achieve are record-breaking.

Allison proved that even without a ski background, anyone can jump into the sport and with dedication can learn how to become a water skier. She advocated for the women's team to have quality coaching and take more risks. She is consistently in the boat running practice, working to improve strategy, jump consistency, and will even sacrifice her own practice time to help injured teammates. Her coaching produced the only D2 team to land all men's and women's jumps.

She has worked tirelessly to promote opportunities for all skiers at all levels of talent, helping everyone get more water time and have the resources to reach their full potential. Achieving this meant attending tons of meetings, soliciting sponsors, persuading board members, and learning about individual HOA regulations. Allie recruited and welcomed transfer students, was a shoulder to lean on and was a guide for the protocols of the college scene.

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# Allison Hinrichs

Female Outstanding Leader of the Year  
University of Nebraska



# Allison Hinrichs

On campus, she served as an officer for four years (captain for two and president for two). She helped host adaptive ski clinics and led community events. Her tremendous work ethic and vision for success extend beyond her personal accomplishments to her team. She is the type of person that genuinely takes pride in the process of building others up and helping them reach their full potential-whatever their starting point may be.

At tournaments, she's always energetic and positive while cheering on her team in ridiculous outfits running up and down the lake. She's great at getting athletes out of their head when the pressure is on, laughing and dancing with them as a distraction. She refuses to let the team down, even if that means getting an emergency toenail removal in order to continue competing.

Outside of Nebraska, she works at Bennetts, quickly becoming a favorite youth coach. Her experience helping with collegiate events prepared her to be the main organizer of LA Night Jam in both a physical and professional role. She helped install, take down equipment, drive a skid loader and is not above digging fence posts by hand to have a safe ski event up and running. As an organizer, she stepped out of her comfort zone speaking with the Mayor and other officials to make events happen. She procured vendors, t-shirts, decals, and VIP arrangements-all for the sake of the event.

## Female Outstanding Leader of the Year University of Nebraska

From a true beginner to pushing herself into the AWSA scene, making history for the Huskers, or doing the thankless behind the scene work that it takes for events to happen, Allison Hinrichs has shown she is a true leader. She genuinely gives of herself and her talents so others may have an opportunity to do the same. By all she has done to help promote the sport and build athletes she has defined herself as a leader.



During her time on the Clemson Waterski Team, Abbie Skeen has spent countless hours as a leader and skier of the Clemson Waterski Team. Before and during college, she was heavily involved with USAWS and the SC Waterski Federation of AWSA by acting as a three-event judge and serving in its governance. She served on the SAC Board of Directors while at Clemson and is entering her 4th year on the South Carolina Waterski Federation Board.

She has had a leadership position on the Clemson Waterski Team since her freshman year. As a first-year student, she took two leadership roles (PR and Merchandise) which now remains a standard on the team. She produced merchandise for her team and the SAC and in turn, donated the money back to the region during the pandemic. She also created the Clemson Waterski Spirit Award video series at the 2019 collegiate nationals, which contributed to the 2019 spirit award won by Clemson.

She continued her leadership journey as Vice President during her sophomore/junior year and leading the only SAC tournament in the spring during the post-covid season. She acted as tournament director and the Assistant Chief Judge in both of the tournaments she hosted by Clemson.

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# Abbie Skeen

Female Outstanding Leader of the Year  
Clemson University



# Abbie Skeen

Next, she ran for president while taking 21 credit hours of classes to graduate early. Abbie became president in January of 2022 and came in very motivated with a list of goals for the year, one of them being the improvement of her team's performance. In the summer, she was challenged with disposing of an old jump ramp while working with Clemson alumni to acquire a new one. She created an entirely new branding for the team and club that complied with university trademark licensing rules. She increased club and team membership by 9% while raising dues. Many roles of her leadership include managing this 100-member club, 2 club-owned boats, year-round club slots for members with club-certified drivers, and an overall budget of \$65,000 and assets of over \$150,000.

During the fall, with a focus on improving scores, Abbie led by example. She picked up jumping to fill the 5th women's spot while coaching her teammates. The team moved from 11th in 2021 to 8th at the 2022 Collegiate Nationals.

## Female Outstanding Leader of the Year Clemson University

As president, she also worked with SAC leadership to host a “how-to” session on recruitment weekends, helped the SAC board during the bid planning stage, and worked with other teams to be more active during the regular tournament season. She assisted other teams within the SAC on various topics, including budgeting, leadership, planning, and tournament directing.

Abbie has left her mark on the team, creating new reporting systems to keep the boats in the water, modifying leadership roles to develop a system that develops leadership in the positions, and so much more. Her leadership skills have shown that she will take on challenging tasks and handle them with grace.



# Parker Stange

Female Outstanding Leader of the Year  
University of Louisiana Lafayette

Parker Supports and pushes her team to be the athletes and people they can be on and off the water. She holds them all to a high standard and leads by example, Parker would never ask anyone to do something she wouldn't do herself. She supports everyone through their highs and lows and makes the Cajun family a family! She recruits her heart out and encourages everyone to bond with their region! She can function on barely any sleep and gives great speeches.

She decided at the last minute to step up and become team captain. She is easy going and she is always there to listen to what people need. You know you can count on her because she will always get the job done. I am very proud of all the hard work she puts in. She for sure deserves this award!



# Arizona State University



Team of the Year

Waterski at Arizona State is a different kind of team. They are a team of underdogs that joined together to put the team back on top and prove that a team as close as family and true love of waterskiing along with hard work and dedication can put you in the Top 5.

ASU is a self funded organization that receives very little funding from the school. The athletes on this team are the most humble , supportive members that are just genuinely happy to be able to spend their time at the lake and ski together. This team has always had a strong family dynamic and mindset that skiing should always be fun regardless of scores but they knew with their strong foundation that they could also achieve greatness which is exactly what they did this season.

A few years ago, the team was training on an older boat with quite the wear from many years in the salt water of “the Dirty Bird”. The dock needed a rebuild and money was tight. Today, they have a financially secure team, incredibly motivated members, a hugely improved dock and lift, and a 2020 Ski Nautique with a 2023 boat on the way. This was only possible with the team’s hard work of getting creative with Major fundraisers, team members with majors in engineering working together to build the team their own boat lift and putting in manual labor to rebuild the Lake’s dock for not just the team but for all of the Members of Firebird.

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# Arizona State University

The improvements have come from an intentional effort to grow the Sun Devil Family. They have been recruiting, hosting alumni reunions and family weekend events all on top of training and going to school! This team of kids are amazing not only by their athletic ability but also by the 200 hours of charity work they spend doing in their community. They have an incoming freshman mentor program that is outstanding, giving all new members a sense of belonging. From ASU tailgating, to intramurals like soccer, flag football and Battleship; this team does it all...together! They spend their breaks with one another's families, hike and camp and do all of their ski training together, too. They work hard and study hard together and it's just such a great feeling as a parent to have them all together looking out for each other!

The team isn't only represented by their current members, but also a long line of alumni who refuse to leave and are always looking to support the team and help them rise to the top. The ASU Alumni help at tournaments and travel to cheer on the team all to support their alma mater and to give back to a team that gave them so much.

## Team of the Year

This alone can prove how amazing their community is and how much of an impact this team has on people, even 20-30 years later.

This team's efforts have supported the whole region, with fellow West Coast teams looking to ASU for friendship, coaching and guidance on how to run their programs. At Nationals ASU not only cheered on their own team but cheered on the other West coast teams too. The entire West Coast as a whole is a strong family, a large part of that is because of team ASU.

In 2022 the team had multiple event records broken in their West Coast tournaments. Kristen Baldwin broke the Trick and Slalom record in one tournament, only to have the Slalom record broken again the very next weekend by Luisa Jaramillo, both jaw dropping performances from out West. Above any scores and skiing, we are a family before anything else. Many members will never forget the bus ride the morning of Nationals when the President brought them all in and stated that "we are here as a family and that is the only thing that matters so just ski and have fun."

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# Arizona State University

They went on to take 4th place at Nationals, for the first time in 13 years, breaking up the typical top 5 rankings

ASU is a team out of pure grit. They are self made, self coached and humble about their accomplishments on and off the water. They are what every team strives to be and display what collegiate skiing is all about which is why they deserve team of the year.

#MostFunWins



## Team of the Year



# Clemson University



Team of the Year

It's safe to say that everyone is aware of who the tigers are after their loud appearance this year at the 2022 NCWSA Collegiate Nationals. There is nothing but praise for this family, as one has never seen such growth, passion, and commitment to a team. In 2021 Clemson came to nationals ranked 9th and placed in 11th. This year they placed 8th and we could not be more proud, while also bringing home their biggest accomplishment, the spirit award. They had a full team of amazing skiers that were determined, not only to have fun, but prove that they're strong and hold their own. All of their athletes skied either a PB or above their tournament average, and throughout the season they all improved tremendously. Multiple skiers had PBs at every tournament this season and Clemson continued to show up and show out this season! Besides the team, CUSKI is completely student run, and also holds the largest national club of 150+ members, which includes two boats, two trailers, a dock with electric lifts, and a club that runs M-F 7:30-7:30. This team, while training, also continues to share the love of waterskiing by passing the handle to countless Clemson students and the surrounding community. Proving once again, the outright love for the sport. After 4 years on this team, members don't know how to spend a weekend away. Anyone can tell you that this small school, from upstate South Carolina, will always scream C-L-E-M-S-O-N at the top of their lungs, paint up in orange and purple, and support their team until the end. Go tigers.

# University of Alabama



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## Team of the Year

**This team has shown nothing but charisma and passion this entire year. Placing second at Nationals the past two years in a row without any help from the school, having all 4 of their top men's jumpers going 180 at some point this season as well as 2 first place finishes in both men and women's jump. They achieved the highest placement this season in Alabama history and that is something to be proud of.**

**The officers play an important role in getting everything done, but in reality, it is a complete effort by the team. I have never seen a team work so well together and truly enjoy the sport the way it is meant to be enjoyed. This team is large in passion and that is proved by the countless new members they have joining their team. That being complete beginners to some intermediate skiers.**

**They have worked extremely hard throughout the course of the season. Done everything in their power to grow the sport and get more people involved in the amazing sport of waterskiing. They have spent countless hours getting new people to learn how to run the slalom course, jump, and trick. Not only this but they have battled adversity through dealing with injury, covid, and flu. At some points in the season they didn't even have a full team to compete and they still made the most of the situation. They have honestly been one of the biggest ambassadors of the sport as a team and for this reason they are more than deserving for this award.**

# University of Louisiana Lafayette



Team of the Year

The Ragin Cajun waterski team has had an unbelievable year this year, with a 5-0 record and having been undefeated since spring 2019 making their win streak 18 consecutive wins.

They have the utmost respect for each other and are always willing to help not just their teammates, but the local community within Lafayette as well. They work with the office of veteran services at UL Lafayette to assist in hosting many fundraising events; Notably their annual “Stuff the Boat” which works with homeless veterans within Lafayette by collecting non-perishable goods. They also work with the healing house in Lafayette during their “Family Adventure Day” where family’s travel around Lafayette and they give grieving kids boat rides and host a “Meet and Greet” with the team members.

They are all high level athletes but pull and coach each-other with the shared goal of helping one another improve, and work to support other teams in their region. This team advocates for collegiate skiing as a whole, and loves to host fleur de ski every year!

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# University of Wisconsin Madison



Team of the Year

In just a few short months, The University of Wisconsin Madison team has made a massive impact. This school has shown the ability to perform this year in the toughest of environments. They won all four of their tournaments leading up to nationals. They continue to find success, despite only having the ability to practice at school for about 2 months out of the year and they are a growing team that has a lot of new members. For being a club team, they did amazing at nationals which should be recognized.

This team has brought a whole new world full of wonderful people into eachothers lives that we didn't even know existed until everyone joined the team. They are very inclusive in every way and are a high spirited group of individuals willing to take in anyone new to the sport and turn them into a rocking ski member of their team. They are always making the sport fun no matter how well you do, and will push you out of your comfort zone to help you be the best you can be. Even off the lake they are always hyping everyone up with their school spirit and philanthropic efforts by volunteering to work the concession stands at basketball games and show their support for other club sports.

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# University of Wisconsin Madison

University of Wisconsin Madison is not quitting while they are ahead, they have plans to grow the team even further by hosting a collegiate ski booth this summer at Show ski state in Wisconsin Rapids with the goal to communicate with younger skiers in Wisconsin and connect them to schools with collegiate teams! This team is here to grow, grow the sport, and most importantly grow the spirit of waterskiing which is why they are a great candidate for Team of the Year!

Team of the Year



[Click HERE to cast your vote!](#)

