

- 3.6 **Freestyle:** A Freestyle event is an event where riders get a chance to show their skills, expertise and acrobatic abilities in executing difficult, challenging and creative maneuvers. One of the truly “extreme sports,” freestyle features some of the most gifted athletes on the beach, performing two-minute routines in an Olympic-style format for a panel of seven judges. Competitors’ routines are made-up from a series of choreographed tricks. Some of the more popular tricks and catch phrases include: Aerial Barrel Roll; Back flip; Hollywood Corkscrew; Kilowatt Flop; Ride ‘Em Cowboy; Bull Doggin’; and many other eye catching tricks.
- 3.7 **Drag Racing:** Drag racing is an event where two competitors compete side-by-side on a straight course of a set distance in length.
- 3.8 **Special Events:** Special Events are other type of watercraft event that meets APBA safety requirements and is not hazardous to participate in. Examples include relay races, Australian pursuit, radar run, timed lap races, and other fun-type events.

## **RULE 4 - RIDER CLASSIFICATIONS**

### **4.1 GENERAL REGULATIONS**

- 4.1.1 **Rider Skills:** The American Power Boat Association does not test the skill of individual participants in APBA sanctioned events, nor does the APBA judge each competitor’s competence and ability to participate in a racing event. Participants are solely responsible for their own safety at events.
- 4.1.2 **Minimum Age Limits:** The APBA requires that riders must be 16 years old or older to race in all classes except Junior Ski 10-12 Stock and Junior Ski 13-15 Stock and Limited. Boating laws in some states require higher age minimums, therefore some classes may not be offered at all events if the special event permit does not allow it. Consult your promoter as to if Junior classes will be offered at the event you will be attending. A birth certificate and/or passport shall be presented to substantiate age.
- 4.1.3 **Skill Classification for Different Divisions:** Riders may have different skill classifications for Runabout, Sport and Ski divisions (i.e.: an Expert Runabout racer may also be a Novice Ski racer). Riders may also have a different skill classification within a Division for Supercourse/ Endurance racing and Closed course with APBA approval.

### **4.2 RIDERS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE**

- 4.2.1 Riders under the age of eighteen (18) are required to have an original Minor Release Waiver on file at APBA National Headquarters before they will be allowed to compete. If one is not on file at APBA National Headquarters, riders must complete a Minor Release form at their next race.
- 4.2.2 A Minor Release form must be filled out once each year when the minor renews his/her membership and at the first race he/she attends each year. A racer will not receive his/her membership packet until APBA National Headquarters receives the signed Minor Release Form at National Headquarters.

- 4.2.3 Riders under the age of eighteen (18) must have a parent or legal guardian with them at rider check-in. If a parent or legal guardian is not able to attend racer check-in, an original notarized Power of Attorney form must be presented with proper ID at rider check-in.
- 4.2.4 Any rider or parent caught falsifying a rider's age or producing false documents will be suspended for one year.

### 4.3 SKILL LEVELS

- 4.3.1 **Beginner:** First time racers have the option of racing in the Beginner's classes. This entry level division is restricted to Stock and Limited equipment only. The Beginner class is open to all Novice competitors that have competed in three or fewer races. In the case of a series, the rider may compete in the entire series prior to moving to the Novice class, if allowed by the regional promoter of the series. Otherwise, in a rider's fourth race, he/she must compete in the Novice class. A Beginner rider also has the option of moving up to the Novice level at any time prior to his/her third race.
- 4.3.2 **Junior:** The Junior Ski 10-12 class is open to riders that are 10-12 years of age as of January 1, 2009. The Junior Ski 13-15 classes are open to riders that are 13-15 years of age as of January 1, 2008. The age a rider is on January 1, 2009 will determine what class a rider is eligible to run for the 2009 season (example: If you are 12 years old on January 1 you are eligible to run the Junior 10-12 class the entire season). Once a racer turns of age to race in a higher age bracketed class (example: a racer turns 13) the Junior rider may also race in the higher age class and still race in the lower age bracketed class for the remainder of the season. The 2009 APBA race season ends September 1, 2009.
- 4.3.3 **Novice:** Novice riders are competitors with minimal racing experience. First-time competitors must participate in Novice or Beginner classes. When a Novice rider decides to move up to Expert class, they can advance by notifying the APBA in writing or by e-mail, or by entering an Expert class at an APBA sanctioned event. Once Novice competitors have entered the Expert or Pro Class they will not be allowed to revert back to Novice, unless officials determine the rider's skills are such that they affect the safety of the rider and other riders in the class. Based on their demonstrated skill, Novice class riders may also be reclassified as an Expert class rider at the discretion of the APBA.
- 4.3.4 **Expert:** Expert riders are those who demonstrate a skill level that has exceeded beyond that of a Novice class rider who are looking to improve racing skills. APBA officials have authority to move an Expert rider to Pro if the rider is displaying obvious riding and racing skills well above other class riders. A rider can also be moved back to Novice if it is determined that the rider is creating a safety hazard. In order to advance to the Pro class, Expert class riders must contact APBA in writing for prior approval. An Expert competitor may request to be reclassified as Novice by requesting a change of classification in writing to the APBA.
- 4.3.5 **Amateur:** The Amateur class is defined as a combined Novice and Expert class.

- 4.3.6 **Professional (Pro):** Pro riders have substantial riding and racing experience and have developed advanced racing skills. A Pro competitor may request to be reclassified as an Expert by requesting a change of classification in writing to the APBA. A Pro rider may be moved back to Expert if it is determined by the APBA that his/her riding skill is not at the Pro class level.
- 4.3.7 **Pro-Am:** The Pro-Am class is defined as a combined Expert and Pro class.
- 4.3.8 **Veteran:** The Veteran Ski class is open to riders that are 30 years of age or older. The Veteran Runabout class is open to riders 35 years of age or older. Veteran Ski class competitors may race a Stock, Limited, or Open watercraft. Veteran Runabout class competitors may race Stock, Limited or Open class watercraft. Veteran Ski and Veteran Runabout classes are open to Novice and Expert riders only - no Pros.
- 4.3.9 **Masters:** The Masters Ski class is open to riders that are 40 years of age or older. The Masters Runabout class is open to riders that are 45 years of age or older.
- 4.3.10 **Open:** There are several classes that are open to riders of all skill levels (Novice, Expert and Pro). Currently the four Open classes are Women's Runabout, Runabout 800 Open, Sport Modified and Sport Spec.

## 4.4 CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

- 4.4.1 The APBA reserve the right to reclassify any rider as deemed appropriate in the best interest of safety, competition, and/or sportsmanship. A rider may not be reclassified until after the Watercross Nationals and/or World Finals. Any Novice classified rider that wins a title during the Watercross Nationals or finishes #1 in APBA National Highpoints will automatically be classified as an Expert rider as of January 1st the following year. Reclassification may be appealed in writing by contacting APBA National Headquarters.
- 4.4.2 **Early Advancement of Junior Male Riders:** Male Junior riders may petition APBA to be able to compete in other skill level Ski classes provided they meet the criteria below.
- a. **Male rider must be 14 years old and provide birth certificate proving proper age.**
  - b. Have a minimum of 2 years APBA racing experience.
  - c. Submit the proper paperwork to APBA and minor release form.
  - d. **A 14 year old male rider must race Novice for at least one season. At 15 years of age the rider may petition the APBA for approval to move up to Expert, however, only if the racer has completed one year as a Novice. Note: A Novice rider is also eligible to race Amateur classes which are defined as combined Novice and Expert classes. There is currently only one class that is available which is Amateur Ski Open.**
  - e. **Once a male Junior racer moves out of the Junior classes he is NOT eligible to continue to race in the Junior classes.**
  - f. **If after advancing to the Novice class the racer feels that he did not make the correct decision, the racer may petition the APBA to be reclassified as a Junior. The racer would forfeit all points earned in the Novice classes he entered.**