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PALM BEACH COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION

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Palm Beach County Wins Bid for 2012 Water Ski National Championships

WEST PALM BEACH, FL – USA Water Ski and the American Water Ski Association announced that the 2012 Water Ski National Championships will be held at Okeehetee Park in West Palm Beach, FL. Hosted by the Ski Club of The Palm Beaches, the 70th Nationals are tentatively scheduled to take place in August 2012 (exact dates TBD).

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission works closely with the Ski Club of the Palm Beaches in bringing water skiing events to the county. The USA Water Ski National Championships were held in Palm Beach County in 1995, 1997, 1998, 2005, 2008 and 2009. “It is with great pleasure that we anxiously await the return of the largest three-event water ski tournament in the world,” said Charlotte Melchers, president of the Ski Club of The Palm Beaches. Historically, this event has generated anywhere from 1,500 to 3,600 room nights with an estimated economic impact of over \$1 million.

The American Water Ski Association, one of nine sport discipline organizations of USA Water Ski, approved the bid from the Ski Club of The Palm Beaches at its mid-winter board of directors’ meeting on January 29. The bid approval also includes an option for the Ski Club of The Palm Beaches to host the 2013 Nationals.

The Ski Club of The Palm Beaches has hosted 11 Water Ski National Championships, five Southern Regional Water Ski Championships, two Florida State Water Ski Championships and the 1989 Water Ski World Championships – in addition to a handful of professional cash-prize tournaments and hundreds of other amateur water ski tournaments – over the past 25 years. It most recently hosted the 2008 and 2009 GOODE Water Ski National Championships, and it will host the 2011 Big Dawg Slalom Series Championship, Sept. 23-25. For more information on the Ski Club of The Palm Beaches, visit www.okeeski.com.

“It is always exciting to watch the best water ski athletes in the nation compete at a world-class facility such as Okeehetee Park,” said Gene Davis, president of the American Water Ski Association. “The Ski Club of The Palm Beaches always provides a great venue and atmosphere for the competitors and their families, and we are very much looking forward to returning to West Palm Beach in 2012.”

More than 800 of the nation's top water ski athletes from across the United States will compete for national titles in slalom, tricks, jumping and overall in respective age divisions and two Open divisions. Advancement to the Water Ski National Championships – the world's largest three-event water ski tournament – is primarily earned through placement on the national rankings list. Athletes also can qualify for the Nationals by placing in the top-five at Regionals or by placing in the top-five at the previous year's Nationals. The 2011 GOODE Water Ski National Championships will be held August 7-13 at Waters Edge Estates in Wilmington, IL.

About Palm Beach County Sports Commission

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission is a private, not-for-profit organization contracted by Palm Beach County to promote and market the county as a sports and sports tourism destination. The Commission brings sporting events and activities to the county, enhances economic impact, stimulates bed tax revenues (primarily in the off-season) and maximizes utilization of county facilities. The Commission offers a full range of event service support, corporate partnerships, sponsorships and a local membership program that supports its goals. Local, regional, national and international marketing efforts are ongoing by the Commission with sports organizations and event owners. The Commission also produces sports-related programs for the residents of Palm Beach County including the Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame, the Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award and the Kids Fitness Festival of the Palm Beaches and awards. For more information on the Palm Beach County Sports Commission go to www.palmbeachsports.com.

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