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PRESS RELEASE

World Junior & Senior Barefoot Water Ski Championships Begin Wednesday in Winter Haven, Fla.

Ninety-five athletes from 12 nations to compete in biennial event

POLK CITY, Fla. — The 2003 World Junior & Senior Barefoot Water Ski Championships begin Wednesday at Lake Elbert in Winter Haven, Fla. Ninety-five athletes from 12 countries will compete for world titles in slalom, tricks and jumping events. Athletes competing in all three events will be eligible for the coveted world overall titles. The biennial event will run through Sunday, Oct. 12.

"We are thrilled to hold the 2003 World Junior & Senior Barefoot Water Ski Championships in central Florida — the water ski capitol of the world," said Steve McDermeit, USA Water Ski's executive director. "We encourage local residents to come out and cheer the U.S. barefoot athletes on to victory."

Junior and Senior teams from the United States, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and Republic of South Africa will vie for the coveted world team titles. Competition will begin daily at 7:15 a.m. A complete schedule of events is available at www.worldbarefootchampionships.com.

The 2003 World Junior & Senior Barefoot Water Ski Championships is being hosted by the West Florida Water Ski Club. Central Florida's Polk County Sports Marketing is sponsoring the event.

In 2001, the U.S. Junior Barefoot Water Ski Team tallied 5,694.60 points to win the Junior Worlds in Otaki, New Zealand, while the U.S. Senior Barefoot Team finished runner-up to Australia in the 2001 Senior Worlds.

USA Water Ski was formed in 1939 as a non-profit organization promoting water skiing in the United States. USA Water Ski is affiliated with the IWSF (world governing body) and is recognized by the United States Olympic Committee and Pan-American Sports Organization as the national governing body of organized water skiing in the United States. With more than 40,000 members, USA Water Ski is the largest water ski federation in the world.

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