

## 2003 U.S. Water Ski Team Trials to Bring Out Top Competitors

U.S. water ski athletes will compete in at least four international water ski tournaments this season, but the most competitive event of the year just might be the tournament that will primarily decide which athletes will compete in those world-class events — the 2003 U.S. Water Ski Team Trials.

The American Water Ski Association's International Activities Committee (IAC) will select five U.S. Teams at the 2003 U.S. Water Ski Team Trials, July 1-6, in Okahumpka, Fla. More than 75 of the nation's top water ski athletes are expected to compete in the event. "With this being the largest U.S. Water Ski Team Trials to date, the IAC has selected the most qualified officials from throughout the United States, as well as a site that will give our athletes an opportunity to maximize their performances," says Frank Harrison, chairman of the IAC. "We on the IAC are looking forward to selecting



Rhoni Barton was a member of the 2001 U.S. Elite Water Ski Team.

File photo

five outstanding U.S. Water Ski Teams in July."

Teams being selected will be the U.S. Junior Water Ski Team and U.S. 17 to 21 Water Ski Team, which will compete in the Americas' Challenge, July 10-13, in Bogota, Colombia; the U.S. Elite Water Ski Team, which will compete in the Water Ski World

Championships, Sept. 15-21, in Clermont, Fla.; the U.S. Pan American Games Water Ski Team, which will compete in the Pan American Games, Aug. 14-16, in the Dominican Republic; and the U.S. 21 And Under Water Ski Team, which will compete in the inaugural 21 And Under Water Ski World Championships, Dec. 11-14, in San Bernardo, Chile. A sixth team, the U.S. Veteran Water Ski Team, will be selected at a separate event, June 5-6, in Rosharon, Texas. The U.S. Veteran Team also will compete at the Americas' Challenge in July. All of the teams will contain six members with either a 3/3 or 4/2 male-female ratio, except for the Under-21 and Veteran teams, which will be four-member teams with a 2/2 or 3/1 ratio.

Qualifications packets will be sent to athletes in May, or can be obtained by calling USA Water Ski headquarters.

— Scott Atkinson

## U.S. Ski Racing Athletes Set Records At Famed Australian Water Ski Race

At age 52 and 58, respectively, Jon Cole and Rudi Stout aren't ready to slow down anytime soon. If anything, they're trying to go faster. And if the results of the 2002 Sydney Bridge to Bridge water ski race are any indication, the two close friends are on the fast track to accomplishing plenty more water ski racing feats.

Cole, of Calabasas, Calif., and Stout, of Sydney, Australia, teamed up in November for the 72-mile double-up race on the Hawksbury River in Australia. "I like to think that I'm the best over-fifty racer in the United States and he's the best over-fifty racer in Australia," Cole says. "When you put us together you're going to have a good race and a great show."

He's right about that. Cole and Stout finished the sprint in just over 50 minutes, averaging close to 90 mph for the duration to take the checkered flag in the nine-team Unlimited class. Their winning time of 50:44.67 also was good enough for a ninth-place finish overall and a new race record for over-50 athletes. "Not bad for two geezers," Cole says.

Cole wasn't the only U.S. athlete to earn a victory at the famed race. Siblings Dylan and River Frantz of Boulder City, Nev., as well as three-time defending Catalina Ski Race champion Todd Haig of Redlands, Calif., also earned victories in respective classes. Dylan Frantz, 14, teamed with Australia's Christopher Stout to win the Under-16 Boys; River Frantz, 12, teamed with Australia's Brendan Stout to win Under-13 Boys; and Haig partnered with Australia's Shane Clarke to win 141-175 Outboard. Dylan and Christopher raced the 72 miles in 49 minutes to place eighth overall and set a new Junior Boys record. River and Brendan finished in 55 minutes to break the previous race record by more than 3 minutes.



U.S. athlete Jon Cole (left) and Australia's Rudi Stout teamed up to set a Sydney Bridge to Bridge race record for over-50 athletes.

Photo by John Watson of Oz

Other U.S. ski racing athletes who competed in the event were Janine Doherty and John Kompaniez. Doherty, of Discovery Bay, Calif., teamed with Australia's Kerrie Eagle to finish fourth in the Women's class, while Kompaniez, of Huntington Beach, Calif., raced with Australia's Peter Eagle to finish fourth in Super Class and seventh overall.

— Scott Atkinson