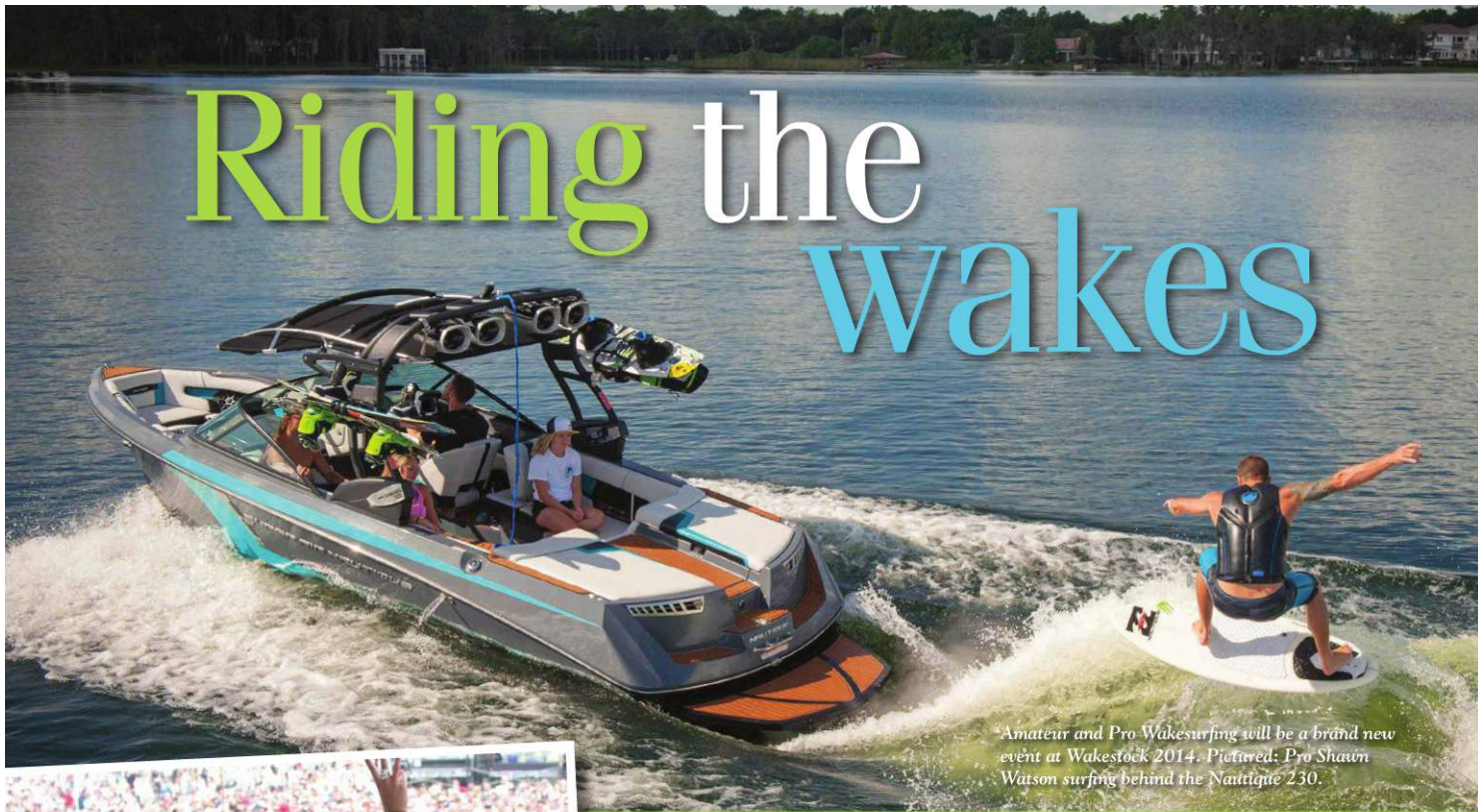
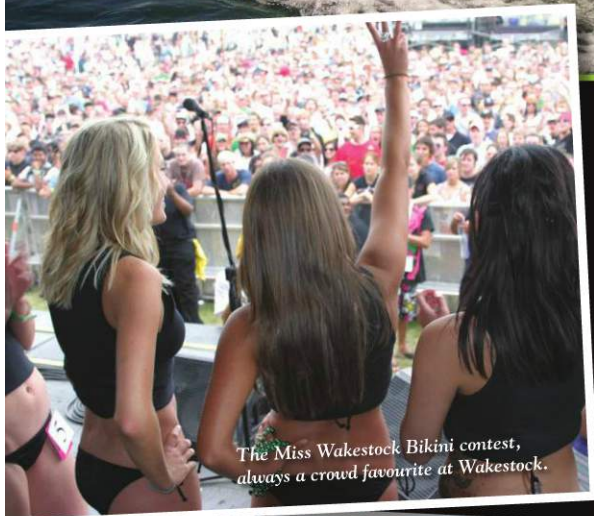


Riding the wakes



Amateur and Pro Wakesurfing will be a brand new event at Wakestock 2014. Pictured: Pro Shawn Watson surfing behind the Nautique 230.



The Miss Wakestock Bikini contest, always a crowd favourite at Wakestock.



PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD ROTH

Muskoka is one of the world's wake sports hotspots. This summer, a full slate of wakeboarding and wakesurf events are set to show off the skills of the best pros and amateurs from across Canada and the world.

Wakestock World Series
One of the top wakeboarding events in the world will return to Bala from August 7-10 for the first time in more than 10 years.

"Wakestock's roots are in Muskoka and we're really excited to be sponsoring its return with Nautique boats," says Tom Bailey, marketing coordinator with Pride Marine Group. "We've always been a huge supporter of wakeboarding and it's great to see the sport returning to our back yard." Muskoka hosted Wakestock from 1998 to 2002 but it

moved to Wasaga Beach in 2003, making later stops in Toronto Island and then Collingwood.

It promises to be an adrenalin-fueled, jam-packed weekend with some of the world's top wakeboarders competing in this Pro Wakeboard Series stop. Top finalists from 2013 like Florida's Phil Soven and Australia's Harley Clifford, will be back to defend their titles and keep the weekend action-packed. They'll throw down their best tricks like the switch osmosis 720, crow 7, pete rose, or moby dick 540 to vie for points toward this year's overall standings.

In addition to the Pro Wakeboard Series, the weekend's events will include:

- The new Nautique Series for Pro Women Wakeboard,

Junior Pro Wakeboard, and Pro Wakeskate

- The new Wakestock Wake Park Pro-Am on a straight-line cable with rails and jump features

- The new Wakestock Wakesurfing Championship, the largest amateur wakesurfing event in the world

- The Nautique Amateur Wakeboard & Wakeskate Championships, Canada's largest amateur championship

- The Rip Curl Grom Search, a pro qualifier

The new wakesurfing event takes place in Bala Bay, where the original Wakestock was held. The Kee to Bala will act as the hub for on-land activities including a huge block party and live music throughout the weekend.



Canada's only World Series Wakeboard event, Wakestock will bring the world's top wakeboarders to Bala, Muskoka this August 7-10, including top ranked Bob Soven of the USA (pictured).



Tom Bailey,
Marketing Co-ordinator
with Pride Marine Group

Wakestock's return to Bala enhances Muskoka's status as a wake sports mecca

"We are going to be broadcasting the wakesurf events live from the boat to big flat screens at The Kee," says Tom. "It's going to be amazing to see."

The remaining water events – wakeboarding, wakeskate and wake park – have been moved to Bush's Watersports Park, two kilometres north of Bala. "We've partnered with Bush's for the world-class site they provide," says Tom. "Their private lake will guarantee calm water and ensure quality riding during the event. It's going to be awesome for the wakeboard community."

Canadian National Wakeboarding Championships

Right on the heels of Wakestock, Bush's Watersports Park hosts the 2014 Wakeboard Nationals from August 14-16. "The nationals are the pinnacle

of domestic competition, an opportunity for the best riders in the country to display their skills, and for the Canadian wakeboard community to celebrate the sport," says Blake Rowsell, manager of sport development at Waterski and Wakeboard Canada.

The nationals are open to riders of all ages and all abilities. "There are no qualification requirements," says Blake. "I would encourage anyone interested in wakeboarding to enter or at least stop by the family-friendly event to get a feel for the fun and excitement that the sport has to offer."

Roots Wakeboard Series

Wakeboarding competitions aren't just for pros and highly-skilled amateurs. The Roots Wake Series is a collection of grassroots events started by riders in Ontario to provide

new athletes a place to compete and grow their skills. The events are categorized by ability rather than age, giving both newcomers and pro-level riders the opportunity to compete.

"Wake sports continue to gain popularity and we're always happy to support the wake sports community in growing the sport," says Tom. Pride and Nautique sponsor two of three boat events and all three of the cable events, including the final cable and boat stops in Bala on July 26 and 27. The same boat used in pro competitions – the Nautique G23 – is used for everyone participating in the Roots series.

Wakeboard schools

But you don't have to compete to get the feel of riding behind a world-class boat. Wakeboard schools can help you improve your

skills, whether you are new to the sport, want to try a competition, or just want to get better.

"It's not often you get the opportunity to ride behind one of the world's best wakeboard boats," says Tom. "We have partnered up with three wakeboard schools throughout the province to provide Nautique boats for pulling lessons."

Muskoka Wake, run by top Canadian wakeboarders Robbie McMillin and Andy Milovanovic, offer private clinics on Lakes Muskoka, Rosseau and Joseph and on

Lake of Bays. Bush's Sports Center, the same location for Wakestock, runs two Nautique boats and a cable park. Spray Lake Watersports just outside of Newmarket also runs two Nautique boats and a cable park. All have lessons for both beginners and experienced riders.

"Whether you're new to the sport as a participant or observer, or you're a seasoned rider, this is going to be one of the best years ever for wake sports in Muskoka," says Tom. "The sport just keeps getting better and better." **DS**

BY DAWN HUDDLESTONE

pride
marine group

(800) 991-3006
sales@pridemarinegroup.com
www.PrideMarineGroup.com
www.wakestock.com