

## 2008 Southern Region Boat Driver Report

2008 was an interesting year for boat drivers. The learning curve in regards to speed controls was relatively short once all the drivers got the opportunity to use the systems. I think that it will eventually aid in enhancing drivers abilities to give the fairest possible ride to each and every skier. The communication lines are always open between the tow boat, speed control and drivers committees. I see the future of these groups, essential to the education of drivers and evolvement of the best possible equipment available to our sport. The coming year should be a little smoother than the past several years.

In 2008, the southern region, gained 41 new trained drivers, 5 new assistant drivers, 6 upgraded from assistant to regular, 3 upgraded from regular to senior status. On the other side, there are 41 pending downgrades. From the looks of the list, there are several that have moved on, several that did not make any effort to retain their rating and 7 people that look like they made a good effort to maintain their status but possibly missed out on a tournament or clinic due to last minute cancellations. I think that, if this is the case, there should be a deadline extension for meeting their requirements. Sometimes it is hard to get a tournament driving assignment when there are multiple drivers attempting to get seat time for rating maintenance.

The Southern Regional Tournament at Jack Travers last July was a busy event for Greg Webb. Greg did a great job covering the chief driver position for the tournament. He was well organized and the tournament went off without a hitch. Les Todd, Lyman Hardy and Gordon West, were great at their driving jobs and all were a pleasure to be included with.

The 2008 Nationals, was a big event. The Chief Driver was Greg Chapman from the Mid-West Region. He did a wonderful job designating assignments and overseeing the drivers. The participating Southern Region drivers were Lyman Hardy and myself.

The yearly end-course videos are coming in by the truck load. I have all but a few. The review of all these tapes, DVD's and CD's is time consuming as usual but there is a lot to learn from watching and some constructive feedback is good. It is my wish that all the end-course videos would come on DVD or CD. There have been several submitted on small video camera tapes. Needless to say, I haven't viewed them as of yet. (but will).

The 2009 season is looming in the near future and I am looking forward to working with all the drivers in regards to advancement and help with maintenance concerning their rating status.

If anyone needs me, I prefer e-mail at [hwallaceii@aol.com](mailto:hwallaceii@aol.com) . I don't check my g-mail account very regularly because it is a catch-all for several addresses. I am looking forward to a great 2009 season.

Regards,

Ham Wallace

