

American Kneeboard Association



2019

DRIVERS' DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

DRIVERS' TRAINING MANUAL

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BOAT DRIVERS' GUIDELINES/POLICIES

PURPOSE ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

The drivers' program is designed to improve, develop, and maintain the skills of both aspiring drivers and those drivers with many years of experience behind the wheel. One of the goals of our program is to ensure knowledge and skills are shared to improve the skill levels of all drivers within the sport of water skiing. Advancement to **assistant**, **regular** and **senior** driver is accomplished through three steps. Step 1 - Education; Step 2 - Participation; and Step 3 - Evaluation.

ASSISTANT DRIVER - Individuals aspiring to be assistant drivers must complete an Assistant Drivers' Application form (called the "GREEN SHEET") by fulfilling the requirements as outlined on the form. Completing the GREEN SHEET prior to attending a clinic is recommended. Once the application has been completed, you should contact your AKA Officials and Drivers Training Chair to attend the nearest clinic for the assistant drivers' practical exam (See section - Application for Assistant Drivers' Rating).

REGULAR & SENIOR DRIVERS - Individuals working towards regular and senior driver levels should follow the steps below:

STEP ONE – EDUCATION ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

Education is provided through drivers' clinics which are conducted in two parts; in a classroom setting and on the water. A clinic is mandatory to initially become an assistant driver and for upgrade to regular or senior driver. The concept of clinics is to provide background and education to apply during step 2 - participation. In addition, all drivers must attend a clinic once every three years to maintain his or her existing rating. (See policies on clinics for further information.)

STEP TWO – PARTICIPATION ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

For each rating level (assistant, regular & senior) there are quantitative requirements that must be met in order to advance. Typically, these requirements are met through experience gained from driving and working tournaments. (See section - Quantitative Requirements for Advancement.) Your record of work at these tournaments is recorded on the Tournament Officials' Record Sheet and mailed to the AKA Statistician. It is your responsibility to ensure your work has been accurately recorded. Also, you should maintain your "Personal Performance Record" so you can follow your progress towards advancement. It also serves as a back-up to AKA's records in case of discrepancies.

STEP THREE - WRITTEN AND PRACTICAL EVALUATIONS ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

Once you have completed all the quantitative requirements for your next rating, **including attending a clinic at least once every three years**, you should contact the AKA Officials and Drivers Training Chair indicating you are ready to be tested for upgrade to the next higher level. The Chair will verify that your quantitative requirements have been completed and then notify you that you are ready for the written and on the water practical evaluations. Your Officials & Drivers Training Chair will then assist you in arrangements for testing.

The written testing for regular or senior driver is an open book, true/false, multiple choice, and fill-in exam. The on the water practical test will evaluate your skills under tournament conditions and will be conducted under the supervision of a Senior AKA Driver as outlined in the section - Testing for Driver's Rating or Upgrade.

APPLICATION FOR AN ASSISTANT DRIVER'S RATING ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

To obtain an assistant driver's rating, the individual must obtain an Application for Assistant Driver form "GREEN SHEET" and complete the requirements at a minimum of two sanctioned tournaments. Once the form is completed, the individual will take the form with him or her to a drivers' clinic where the individual must pass both written and practical evaluations. Upon successful completion of the clinic, the course instructor will issue a temporary Assistant Driver's Rating card. The completed application and written and practical testing must be returned to the AKA Officials and Drivers Training Chair with a copy of the clinic registration.

QUANTITATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADVANCEMENT
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Rating Level	Minimum Age	Clinics	Total Tournaments*	Asst. Chief*	Chief*	Scoring Tournament. (for non-scorers)	Asst. Chief Scorer (for non-scorers)	Minimum Years (to acquire rating)	Written Test	Practical Test	Annual Renewal** of Tournament
DRIVER Assistant	16	1	Use Application						1	1	2
Regular	18	1	6	1				1	1	1	2
Senior		1	14		2			3	1	1	2

All quantitative requirements including the clinic must be completed prior to requesting an upgrade to regular or senior driver. Once the quantitative requirements are completed, the individual should contact the AKA Officials and Drivers Development Chair to request testing for advancement.

** To maintain your current official's rating(s), you must participate in the number of tournaments indicated in this column during a calendar year (not to Nationals). You may count one clinic towards one of your maintenance credits. All officials, including drivers must attend one clinic every three (3) years to maintain their rating. When you renew as an USAWS "Active" (insured member), your renewal quantities will be verified by USAWS/AKA and you will be sent a separate official's card indicating your rating(s). Ratings for Driver and Scorer will be for both the Slalom and Trick Events. Time frames and number of requirements listed refers to the total numbers from assistant to Senior ratings.

TESTING FOR DRIVER'S RATING OR UPGRADE [\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Any person wanting to obtain a driver's rating or upgrade his or her existing rating must successfully pass both a written test and a practical evaluation of his or her skills in a boat on the water. A person may test twice during a calendar year for an assistant or regular driver's rating. A person may only test once for a senior driver's rating during a calendar year.

The on the water practical evaluation must be administered by a senior driver. In the event the appropriate level of drivers is not available to hold a CLINIC, an experience Regular Driver may petition the AKA Rules Committee and the Officials and Drivers Training Chair requesting a rules exception describing in writing the situation. Petition does not guarantee a rules exception.

Testing for assistant driver shall be done as part of a drivers' clinic. Upgrade to regular or senior driver shall be done at a driver's clinic or class Q or higher tournament.

Testing for the assistant driver's rating and advancement to Regular or Senior driver must be done using an approved speed control system with automatic timing.

SCORING THE WRITTEN & PRACTICAL EXAMS - Drivers advancing to the next higher rating must pass a WRITTEN TEST. The written test shall be an open book test with a copy of the current AKA rulebook made available. The following are passing WRITTEN TEST scores:

	<u>General Consideration</u>	<u>Slalom</u>	<u>Trick</u>
Assistant	20 correct out of 25	23/28	12/15
Regular	21 correct out of 25	24/28	13/15
Senior	23 correct out of 25	25/28	14/15

Drivers successfully completing the written test will then take the PRACTICAL TEST. All examiners shall rate the driver on those critical factors observed, as outlined in the supplied Boat Driver's Practical Evaluation Forms. Note that these forms and criteria for Assistant driver tests differ from those for Regular and Senior tests (manual vs. speed control driving). Each examiner shall compute a score for each event (slalom, tricks, jump). A score for EACH EVENT will then be computed by averaging the individual examiner's scores for that event. The following minimum scores are required for upgrade:

- Assistant Driver - 3.0
- Regular Driver - 3.5
- Senior Driver - 4.0

Each event (slalom and tricks) must have an average score equal to or exceeding the above numbers in order to advance to the next higher level for that event. Scores should not be rounded and shall be computed to at least one decimal point. A driver must pass in both events to acquire the next higher rating.

INSPECTION OF EQUIPMENT: The examiners will inspect the boat to be used prior to testing to ensure it is adequate to pull the event. Inspection shall also be made to ensure there is no play in the steering, that the throttle operates smoothly, that the speed control system and related instrumentation are in good working order, and that there are no problems with the boat that will affect the results of the practical evaluation.

SKIERS FOR PRACTICAL TEST - REGULAR & SENIOR DRIVER: When giving the practical test for upgrade to regular or senior driver, the candidate must drive the more difficult events. The more difficult means events (mens 1, mens 2, mens 3) should be used. An adequate number of skiers should be pulled to properly evaluate the candidate's skills and abilities; typically at least 10 skiers per event (two events can be combined to obtain a sufficient number of skiers for testing). Also, when selecting a tournament for testing purposes, select one where slalom, and trick performances will be in the range expected for a Regular or Senior Driver.

CLINICS [\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS: All drivers must attend an AKA-sanctioned drivers' clinic once every three years to maintain his or her current rating. Failure to do so will result in an automatic down grade to the next lower

rating. Clinic credit will be given to drivers who drive at the USAWS Approved Tournament Towboat Evaluations. Speed control-oriented classroom-only clinics so approved by AKA Officials and Drivers Training Chair member will meet clinic requirements for maintenance only. All other clinics will consist of classroom and on the water sessions, which will be strongly recommended for advancement credit.

ADMINISTERING CLINICS: Clinics are to be administered by AKA Senior rated drivers. A Senior Judge, Scorer, or Driver may administer the classroom GENERAL portion of the clinic. (others may assist and are often beneficial to prompt discussion with the group). A Senior rated driver must administer the Drivers classroom and on water practical portions of the clinic

SPLITTING CLINICS: A clinic can be split during a calendar year so that the classroom portion can be given at a date earlier than the on the water practical portion or the practical portion prior to the classroom portion. Splitting of any clinic must have the prior approval of the AKA Officials and Driver Training Chair. A clinic cannot be split over two calendar years.

FEES & MATERIALS: Upon completion of a clinic, the registration form and \$10 per attendee should be sent to USA-WS Headquarters' Competition Department. Instructors are not required to pay a registration fee but do receive clinic credit.

Driver applications (GREEN SHEETS) written tests and completed Practical Evaluation forms should be sent to the AKA Officials and Drivers Training Chair to receive credit for clinic attendance.

AKA's sanction fee is \$5 per person attending the clinic. This fee and the registration form should be sent to the AKA treasurer.

TOURNAMENT CREDIT ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

Chief Driver - The chief driver shall receive credit for driving a tournament even if he or she does not actually drive in the tournament. The chief driver must complete all TOWBOAT CHECKIN FORMS and return them to the Chief Judge within 10 days of the event.

Assistant Chief Driver - The assistant chief driver will NOT receive credit for driving a tournament where he or she does not drive in the tournament. However, credit will be given for advancement purposes in meeting the requirement to serve in the capacity as assistant chief driver.

For upgrade purposes, work towards fulfilling the quantitative requirements as chief driver or assistant chief driver of a tournament may not also count towards the required number of tournaments to be driven. For example, serving as chief driver of a tournament counts towards work as a chief driver or towards tournament quantity, but not both.

Other Drivers - Appointed or assigned drivers will receive credit only for those events driven in a sanctioned tournament.

Driving in a novice tournament counts as full credit for maintenance purposes only - not for upgrade.

Driving in a Fun (Class "F") tournament does count toward maintenance or upgrading.

REINSTATEMENT ([Return to Table of Contents](#))

Assistant Driver - If a person has held a valid **Assistant** driver's rating which can be found in AKA statistical archives, the individual may re-instate his or her rating by attending a clinic and successfully completing both the written and practical portions of the assistant driver's test at that clinic. The clinic registration form should clearly indicate that the person is a re-instatement so AKA can verify previous tournament credits. Upon successful re-instatement, the driver will be able to use any tournaments driven in the past as credit towards advancement.

Regular Driver - If the person has held a valid **Regular** driver's which can be found in AKA statistical archives the individual may re-instate his or her regular driver's rating by first attending a clinic and taking the Regular Drivers written and practical exams. Upon successful re-instatement, the driver will be able to use any previous experience and tournaments driven as a regular driver as credit towards advancement.

Senior Driver - If the person has held a valid **Senior** driver's rating the individual may re-instate his or her regular driver's rating by first attending a clinic and taking the regular written and practical senior drivers tests. A senior drivers rating is not allowed. To achieve a senior drivers rating the person must work the required quative requirements for advancement to a senior rating.

HARDSHIP [\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

The Drivers' Committee has the responsibility to ensure that all drivers have the current skills necessary to guarantee skiers the best ride possible. A skier should not have to ski behind a driver who has not practiced his or her skills. Driving skills require continual work during practice and tournaments. The requirements for maintaining a rating are minimal and necessary to ensure our skiers receive the best driving available.

There are, however, situations beyond a driver's control which would prevent him or her from meeting the minimal renewal requirements. An excusable hardship is an event or condition over which a driver has no control. In other words, the event or condition is not self-imposed and personal choice has not been exercised.

Each request for hardship will be considered on its own merits. Hardships will not be granted for ability, prior qualifications, personality, or length of service. Hardships are not renewable.

Refer to the Official Training Manual GENERAL SECTION for further information on hardships.

DEFINITIONS [\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

ASSISTANT DRIVER - An Assistant Driver may drive any Class Q, C or lower tournament.

REGULAR DRIVER - A Regular Driver may drive any tournament, including record capability tournaments. A Regular Driver may be the chief driver of a Class T or lower tournament.

SENIOR DRIVER - A Senior Driver may drive any tournament and may be chief driver of any tournament.

ASSISTANT CHIEF DRIVER - The Assistant Chief Driver of a Class C or lower tournament can be an Assistant, Regular or Senior Driver.

CHIEF DRIVER - The Chief Driver of a Class C shall be a Regular or Senior Driver. The Chief Driver of Class Q or lower shall be an Assistant, Regular or Senior Driver. The Chief Driver is responsible for assigning all boats and drivers to events. The Chief Driver is responsible for completing all necessary towboat documentation and other paperwork related to drivers assignments.