

Brendan Paige, the 19-year-old Australian national freestyle barefoot champion, practices at Lakes of Katy for the upcoming Katy Ski Jam

# KATY'S WATERSKIING SECRET

Lakes of Katy residents keep the sport alive with thrilling events

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When you think about Katy, images of friendly neighborhoods, historic train depots, excellent schools, and even the city’s rice-farming history may come to mind. Have you ever thought of Katy as a waterskiing capital, though? The Lakes of Katy community is working to change that, organizing events that bring the sport home, like the Katy Ski Jam in October.

### Sharing a Passion for Water Sports

Although small, the northwest Katy community lies along four interconnected lakes and has quickly become a great neighborhood for any family that loves water sports and the great outdoors. Residents take pride in sharing their love of waterskiing and life on the water with others.

Hosted by the Lakes of Katy WaterSki Club, the Katy Ski Jam will take place Oct. 14 and 15 and will feature some of the world’s best competitive skiers, including some from Katy. “We wanted to get the city involved and bring the public out and entertain them in a world-class event,” says event organizer Chuck Gleason.

Although a private community, Lakes of Katy invites the public to attend the event and see firsthand the talent their neighborhood has to offer. The waterskiing club plans to go one step further in connecting the community, turning the event into the chance to help those fighting cancer in Katy. With admission set at \$20 per vehicle, 10% of proceeds will go toward the American Cancer Society’s local chapter.

Photo by Kevin Keim, Sportspix.net

Andre de Villiers, the current world freestyle barefoot champion will compete at the Katy Ski Jam

### A World-Class Waterskiing Community

For years, Lakes of Katy residents have spent lazy afternoons and weekends performing daredevil feats on the water. Eventually, that love of water sports began to garner more attention from pro waterskiers the world over. “It’s been 20-plus years since a pro waterskiing tour, outside of wakeboarding, came through Houston,” shares Gleason, noting the 60 pro athletes who plan to visit the area as part of the Katy Ski Jam. He adds, “You will see all the different cultures from Australia, Europe, South Africa, and the U.S.”

Families can enjoy a range of children’s games and activities while soaking up the October sunshine along the neighborhood’s pristine lakes. Those who have ever wanted to learn more about waterskiing or how to get involved in Katy, can get a thrilling glimpse of the benefits the sport has to offer. “Our main goal is that we have this oasis here in Katy that hardly anyone knows about,” says Gleason. “There is a world-class sporting activity going on out here.” He adds, “Who doesn’t have fun out on the water? We’re just going to show you how much fun you can have.” KM

*SHETYE CYPHER is a freelance writer who has enjoyed living in Katy with her family intermittently since 1976. She is also the journalism teacher and publications advisor at Mayde Creek High School.*

Kathryn keeps her balance while practicing a waterskiing stunt with her dad Chuck Gleason and Brendan Paige



Kathryn, now 9, has been waterskiing since she was only 4 years old



Mike Bateman, Chuck Gleason, Brendan Paige, and Kathryn Gleason practice their skiing technique at the Lakes of Katy



Find Katy Ski Jam event schedules at [katyskijam.com](http://katyskijam.com)

Katy Ski Jam will feature over 60 pro athletes competing for top honors on the water



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