



photo by Chris Garrison



photo by Justin Leblanc

# The Crowned Prince of Wake

by James Robertson

Athens' own Chris Abadie has now landed on the podium for both years of the X Games Real Wake competition. The competition features two awards; one decided by a group of judges and the other by fan votes.

During the first year of the competition in 2015 Abadie won gold in fan favorite pick and the gold medal from the judges as well. This year Abadie won fan favorite gold again and took the bronze medal in the competition.

"X Games Real Wake is the most highly respected competition in wakeboarding and placing two years in a row has been a dream come true," said Abadie. "As a kid, it was always a dream to compete in the X Games."

X Games Real Wake is both a creative and skill based competition that gives riders the freedom to express their own view and style of riding through

a video. The event gives the competitor the creativity and control of how they portray their riding style.

Six riders are carefully selected and given sixty days to film a 90 second video. Videos are judged on production, creativity, style, and technicality of riding.

While most of his filming this year was done outside of Henderson County the team did film some of the footage on a private lake outside of Athens where they had the freedom to build their own unique ramps and rails.

"Riding at home is comfortable and convenient, but it's being on the road with five or six of us in the RV working together when we get some of the best footage and ideas, and some of the best times," said Abadie.

Wakeboarding became a passion for Abadie when he was just thirteen years old when he landed his first flip behind a boat. From that moment, he was hooked, but it was never really his focus to become a professional. That all changed in 2009 when Abadie and two friends, Andrew Adams and Davis Griffin, started a blog called Shredtown.

"We had moved from riding behind the boat to building these crazy ramps and rails that we could hit with the Seadoo or our high-speed winch," said Abadie. "We would document everything we did with quality edited video content and market it across



Time constraints and failure worked against Abadie this year in the pursuit of defending his double gold but like a true competitor he realizes that its failure that makes a person better at what they do and these are challenges that we all face.

"It was crazy to win double gold last year and I'm stoked to have got bronze and win fan favorite this year," says Abadie. "I filmed my part in less time than I wanted and didn't get some of the tricks I was trying, but I believe that's how it goes for all the competitors."

Will Abadie continue wakeboarding into the future?

"I really don't know what the future within the sport holds," he said. "I will keep pushing as long as I can keep inspiring others and feel that I am contributing."

One thing can almost be certain for this seeker of extreme, in the words of Emmett "Doc" Brown, "Where we're going, we don't need roads!"

the internet. It wasn't long before we were getting emails from companies and other professional riders saying how much they loved our stuff and to keep at it. Since then, it's been an awesome ride of continuous opportunity and respect from the wakeboarding industry."

It's that crew of two that Abadie contributes the success of his young career. For Abadie and the others it's never been about building their names. It's all been about building Shredtown.

"I believe having a crew has added the most value to Shredtown and my career," says Abadie. "The three of us have dedicated the past eight years to growing the sport of wakeboarding. We almost treat wakeboarding as if it's a team thing. Throughout our career, none of us cared about building our individual names; it's all about Shredtown. I was asked to compete in X Games Real Wake and I could not have put together a good video without the crew. Andrew is a master at videography and Davis does pretty much everything else to make it happen."

Hugely supportive parents, the local community, fans around the country and world, and local businesses can't be forgotten in their role in Abadie's success.

"My parents have always been there for me and helped out," he says. "Love you guys and thank you to everyone who took the time to vote and share the video. Also, a big thanks to the guys at Smith Lumber, Ace Hardware, Spencer Hardware, Red Hat Rentals, Athens Steel, and Sherwin Williams. It's been awesome getting to know the people from our local businesses and see how much they care and want to help when they can. Thanks everyone!"

photo by Justin Leblanc



photo by Bryan Soderlind

