



Parent - Athlete Handbook

Principles That Lead Us

FVSEF Mission Statement:

FVSEF is dedicated to preserving the promotion of athletic and personal excellence and discipline through educational and competitive programs in skiing and ski racing.

The FVSEF Vision:

To connect us to the culture and principles of the skiing generations that preceded us, to instill a lifelong love of skiing, of finding joy in the mountains and snow, and of the mastery of the sport. FVSEF participants become better skiers, better students, and better citizens - for life!

Values that Guide FVSEF:

Integrity-Conduct is based on values rather than personal gain.

Responsibility – Participants take ownership of their actions.

Family, Team, and Community- FVSEF is a skiing community that welcomes, includes, and respects others who share a love of the sport and the outdoor environment, and whose members sense they belong to a team.

Scholarship- Participants are open to trying new things in novel ways and are committed to a lifetime of learning.

Excellence-Youth are inspired to push their limits and learn they are more capable than they thought.

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Program Philosophy

Our coaches spend a great deal of time teaching, and we feel that technical skill development and mastery of fundamentals is imperative. Without the continued development and mastery of the fundamental skills, it will be difficult to realize one's full potential.

All mountain skiing, free-skiing drills, gate drills, and the right amount of competition are factored into our curriculum to enhance and reinforce learning at all stages and to prepare for more intense challenges to come, on the race hill or in life. When the right amount of challenge is met, skills are shaped and athletes gain confidence to accelerate without keeping one foot on the brake.

Choosing the proper environment to work on these concepts is critical to achieving success. The slope, snow conditions, lifts access/turnaround time, and other factors all play a role in terrain selection for learning. Our goal is to ski terrain with the right amount of challenge and the best opportunity to allow successful skill acquisition. We hope to maximize fundamental skills and minimize bad habits. Changing a bad habit is much easier on terrain where the athletes have confidence and control. We often break into smaller or different groups to achieve these goals.

When conditions are appropriate, we ski steeper and more difficult terrain. But we introduce and practice skills on terrain that allows and promotes success. As skills develop, it is thrilling to move to more difficult areas to challenge our abilities and enjoy the mountain. We strive to blend this such that our athletes can ski aggressively rather than defensively.

Athlete Safety

SafeSport and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)

Providing a safe environment to protect the health and well-being of our athletes is a high priority for FVSEF and guides all our programs. In alignment with the governing bodies of skiing, FVSEF uses the guidelines of the US Ski Team's SafeSport Code <https://usskiandsnowboard.org/safesport-athlete-safety> and the US Center for SafeSport's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy <https://maapp.uscenterforsafesport.org/>. The primary policy is that **all one-on-one In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be observable and interruptible, except in limited emergency circumstances or with a documented exception.**

- All FVSEF coaching staff are US Ski & Snowboard members and undergo criminal background screening and complete SafeSport training every two years.

- All FVSEF policies and procedures surrounding dryland training, on-snow training, racing, travel and other activities involving athletes are developed to follow SafeSport and MAAPP guidelines.
- When traveling to away races, FVSEF will make every reasonable effort to follow SafeSport and MAAPP travel and lodging guidelines. If exceptions need to be made, written authorization from the parent must be provided via a signed consent form available to download from our website. **U.S. Ski & Snowboard recommends that parents first complete training on abuse prevention to be informed about potential boundary violations and concerns before consenting to any one-on-one interaction. The training can be found at safesporttrained.org.**
- All one-on-one electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be Open and Transparent unless an exception as defined above exists.
 - Open and Transparent means the Adult Participant copies or includes the Minor Athlete's parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant.
 - If a Minor Athlete communicates with the Adult Participant first, the Adult Participant must follow this policy if the Adult Participant responds.
 - Only platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication may be used to communicate with Minor Athletes.
 - When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team or any number of Minor Athletes on the team, the Adult Participant must copy or include the Minor Athletes' parents/guardians, another adult family member of the Minor Athletes, or another Adult Participant.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard prohibits the following:

- Sexual Misconduct
- Physical Misconduct
- Emotional Misconduct
- Bullying, Threats and Harassment
- Hazing
- Willfully Tolerating Misconduct

U.S. Ski & Snowboard members must report suspected violations of the SafeSport Code. If you suspect that a child is experiencing misconduct of a sexual nature, don't investigate yourself. Call the SafeSport hotline and local child protection authorities (Police or Child Welfare Office) and report it to the experts who have the skills to investigate the matter. If you have any doubts about whether conduct is occurring, please err on the side of reporting. Violations which do not involve sexualized conduct but which may fall under one of the six categories of prohibited conduct above may be reported by email to <https://usskiandsnowboard.my.site.com/Incident/s/> .

You can verify the membership and background screening of any club coach, judge, official or volunteer member through the [U.S. Ski & Snowboard Background Screening Lookup](#) tool or by calling U.S. Ski & Snowboard Member Services at 435.647.2666 to ensure that the coaches, officials and volunteer members working with your child have undergone background screening.

SafeSport Helpline

The Center for SafeSport provides 24-hour support via the [SafeSport Helpline](#) or by calling 866.200.0796.

Reporting Suspected Violations of Sexualized Conduct

<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>

USOC SafeSport Programs

The USOC provides a wide range of SafeSport resources, including [online education and awareness](#). All U.S. Ski & Snowboard coaches, official and club volunteer members (those in a position of authority over athletes) are required to take the online SafeSport course. Information and access will be provided via email following membership registration.

Housing & Travel Guidelines

Best Practices for U18 Athletes.

Athlete Supervision, Housing and Travel Best Practice Guidelines for U-18 athletes*

1. All club training and projects should be open to observation by parents.
2. All coaches supervising athletes must be members of United States Ski & Snowboard and have a criminal background screening.
3. One coach member and at least one other adult should be present at all training and other club activities where at least one athlete is present. Clubs and coaches will evaluate their seasonal plans and decide in advance how to accomplish this goal.
4. An open and observable environment should be maintained for all interactions between adults and athletes. Private, or one-on-one sessions should be avoided unless they are observable, e.g. in a conference room with glass walls or a room with the door open.
5. Coaches should not invite or have athletes to their home without the permission of the parent or guardian and in the instances that permission is given, #3 should be observed.
6. Schedule overnight travel as far in advance as practical and share itinerary and contact information of lodging, coaches and athletes with athletes and parents.
7. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings or other activities, #3 and #4 should be maintained.
8. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle unless another athlete or coach is present. If that cannot be accomplished, parental consent must be obtained.
9. Coaches must ensure their vehicles are properly insured.
10. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes, those athletes shall be of the same gender and of similar age. Where athletes are age 13 or older, chaperones shall stay in nearby rooms. Where athletes are 12 or under, chaperones may stay in the same accommodations as the athletes as long as parental permission is obtained. In that circumstance, #3 shall also be observed.
11. Adults shall respect the privacy of athletes in situations such as changing clothes/showering, etc.

12. The use of electronic devices such as cell phones, MP3 players and other recording devices in locker rooms/changing areas is prohibited.
13. If the team is composed of athletes of both sexes, each sex shall be accorded a separate changing area or given serial use of the one available changing area.
14. Coaches should not initiate contact or accept supervisory responsibility for athletes outside club programs and activities.
15. During overnight team travel, there shall be a curfew imposed and monitored by coaches.
16. Violation of the curfew for anything other than a demonstrable emergency shall be grounds for immediate removal from the project.
17. Coaches should be the first to arrive at a project and the last to leave.

*These guidelines, while specific to u-18 (minor) athletes, can be adapted for use by those projects involving athletes over 18 at the discretion of the project leader.

Concussion Policy

Pursuant to Montana State Law and the USSS concussion policies, any FVSEF athlete suspected of having sustained a concussion must be removed immediately from participation in any FVSEF sporting event (e.g. sanctioned training, practice, camps, competitions or tryouts), by any FVSEF agent or coach overseeing the event. <https://my.usскиandsnowboard.org/aip/my-ussa/ussa-concussion-policy>

The athlete will be prohibited from further participation until evaluated and cleared in writing to resume participation in FVSEF sporting events by a qualified health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussive head injuries. The health care professional must certify to FVSEF in the clearance letter that he/she has successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of concussive head injuries within three years of the day on which the written statement is made.

Upon removal of an athlete from participation for a suspected concussion/traumatic brain injury, the FVSEF agent or coach making the removal will also inform US Ski and Snowboard Competition Services in accordance with their Concussion Policy. In addition to providing a Clearance Letter to FVSEF, athletes who have been medically cleared to resume participation must also provide the Clearance Letter to USSS Competition Services to be cleared to enter and participate in USSS sanctioned races.

Other Injuries

If an accident occurs while skiing with an athlete, the Coach will call ski patrol, radio another coach to take his/her group, and follow the sled to the ski patrol building; parents and the program director will also be notified as soon as possible. The coach will stay with the athlete until the parent arrives to the patrol building.

All athletes and coaches are asked to follow the Skiers and Riders' Responsibility Code (below) and must wear helmets.

National Ski Areas Association SKIERS AND RIDERS' RESPONSIBILITY CODE

- 1.) Always stay in control and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
- 2.) People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
- 3.) You must not stop where you obstruct a trail or are not visible from above.
- 4.) Whenever starting downhill or merging into a trail, look uphill and yield to others.
- 5.) Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
- 6.) Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
- 7.) Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.

Groups

All Mountain Ranger and Development Team groups must stay together when free skiing. If an athlete needs to go inside, the whole group must go inside or wait outside. While gate training on the t-bar or Chair 2, Development team groups may be instructed to lap without a coach on occasion.

If an athlete is to be dismissed during training hours we must have the parents' permission.

If an athlete leaves without permission the parents will be contacted.

If an athlete is lost or separated from their All Mountain Ranger or Development Team group, the athlete should return to the Team Room in the Hellroaring Saloon building. If the group is skiing on the backside of the mountain, the athlete should make their way to the bottom of the lift and tell the lift operator they got separated from their race team group (specify race team, not ski school). The lift operator can radio dispatch and get a message to the coach. The coach may also report the athlete lost to ski patrol and will report to the Program Director or Lead Coach who can then mobilize additional coaches to help look for the athlete.

Coaches will dismiss Ranger and Devo athletes for lunch from the Team Room.

Sportsmanship and Code of Conduct

Sportsmanship fosters a healthy learning environment and character-building experience in athletics. We expect our participants to play hard but fair. The ideals of sportsmanship should shape our everyday lives, giving us a template to achieve our fullest potential, while treating all that surrounds us with respect.

FVSEF Code of Conduct

Overview: Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation aims to create an environment for your best success as a person, an athlete and a student. It is the actions of our FVSEF community that define the environment. Below is a partial list of attitudes and actions we consider to be positive additions to that environment.

As a member of FVSEF you must agree to adhere to the following statements and the spirit of those statements:

- 1.) I will always act in a courteous and cooperative manner with coaches, Whitefish Mountain Resort and other resorts' customers, employees, and managers; with my teammates, their parents and families; and with race officials and volunteers. I will always treat them with respect and speak to and about them only in positive and constructive ways.
- 2.) I will foster the community and team building spirit by doing things like attending awards ceremonies, "B" Net break down, and other similar activities whenever possible.
- 3.) I will not use profane or offensive language at any time.
- 4.) I will respect and properly use the equipment and facilities of all ski areas I visit as a FVSEF athlete.
- 5.) I will always follow the rules of the ski areas I visit as a FVSEF Athlete.
- 6.) I will obey all posted mountain signs and all verbal or written instructions received from the ski patrol, coaches, or area employees or management of the ski area.
- 7.) I will not use illegal drugs, abuse prescription drugs, or use any banned performance-enhancing drugs or supplements. As a minor, I will not drink alcohol.
- 8.) I will maintain a clean and neat appearance at all training and race activities to represent myself and FVSEF positively.
- 9.) I will not loan or fraudulently use my season pass or day lift ticket. I will follow the rules of the ski area regarding day lift tickets.
- 10.) I will not cut the lift lines. I will be respectful to others in lift lines and will actively and courteously show my pass to the lift attendant before being asked to do so. I will say thank you when loading and unloading from the lift.
- 11.) I will load and unload the ski lifts only at staffed and open lift ramps. I will stay on the track of the T-bar.
- 12.) I will respect and honor all FVSEF policies developed by the Board of Directors and coaching staff.
- 13.) I will handle all borrowed equipment with respect and appreciation.
- 14.) I will take responsibility for my actions. I understand that any damage I cause either directly or indirectly is my responsibility. If damage is done, I will reimburse property owners, hotel management, ski areas, or ski clubs for any loss incurred because of my actions.

15.) I will set a positive role model for my fellow teammates (older and younger) by acting in a polite, respectful, and positive manner.

16.) I will take responsibility for the Team Room and for my ski gear; always storing my gear in my assigned space and making sure to leave the Team Room better than I found it.

17.) When competing in a race, I will obey the USSS Sportsmanship Guidelines as outlined in the most current Skiing Competition Guide, as well as the USSS Northern Division Code of Conduct.

18.) I will be on time and ready to ski at the start of each practice.

19.) I understand that FVSEF Team members are highly visible at Whitefish Mountain Resort and at races at other resorts. I will conduct myself accordingly. I will bring attention to myself by the way I ski, not by acting obnoxious, loud, or disrespectful. I will be on my best behavior on and off the ski hill, in the lift lines, etc. I WILL BE A RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL ATHLETE.

I understand that as a member of FVSEF and while wearing a Team Jacket, I have a responsibility to set a positive example and be a good citizen. I fully understand that any infringement of the 19 Code of Conduct rules set forth above may result in disciplinary action in the form of suspension or dismissal from FVSEF programs.

First Violation: Communication and tutoring from Coach.

Second Violation: Meeting with Coach and Program Director to discuss alternative strategies or potential disciplines.

Third Violation: Meeting with FVSEF Board of Directors, which may result in dismissal from FVSEF Programs without refund of fees.

In addition, I understand that a violation of stealing or vandalizing equipment or property, using illegal drugs, abusing prescription drugs, or drinking alcohol as a minor, will result in an immediate disciplinary meeting with the FVSEF Board of Directors and may result in dismissal with no refund of monies paid to FVSEF.

I understand and acknowledge that, if disciplined, I may appeal before the FVSEF Board of Directors at their next scheduled monthly meeting.

Equipment Guide

Our sport is very athletic and using properly fitted and designed equipment can be as important as good conditioning and on-snow training.

All skis in our race program should be designed to enhance the skier's ability to carve turns. A well-executed carved turn is done by placing the ski on edge and pressuring it skillfully. The ski's hourglass shape and its flex allow the ski to bend into an arc of "reverse camber". The sharp steel edges cut into the snow as the ski passes forward and it follows itself in an "arcing" path, gliding through its own track. Not only does "arcing" a turn decrease the friction of the ski sliding on the snow, it enhances control and accuracy of the path a great deal.

Skis

For the All Mountain Ranger – Learn to Ski program, we recommend junior skis with a good deal of sidecut that are both soft and of an appropriate length. For less experienced skiers/younger skiers, less than chin height is best. Skiers with more experience might choose skis that are about nose height.

For our U10 Development Team racers and more experienced All Mountain Rangers, multi-event skis (aka Kombi Skis) will likely fit this guideline. Multi-event skis are designed to ski well for both Slalom and GS and provide consistent responses to foster effective learning. Kombi skis typically should come to the bridge of the nose or eyebrows.

New and less experienced U-12 skiers may also benefit from a kombi or multi-event pair of skis. More experienced U-12s and 14s may want to choose discipline-specific race skis for both slalom (SL) and giant slalom (GS). SL skis should stand upright to the bottom of the chin minimum and up to nose height maximum; GS skis should be from the top of the forehead minimum and up to 2" above the head. Strong U14s will want to be on the longer side of this range.

Recreational development team members will likely want a good all-mountain ski that is wider overall for free skiing, but with some sidecut for groomed runs, drills, and gate training.

U-16 and older should consult with their coach and the current United States Ski & Snowboard and FIS equipment regulations.

If in doubt about length, it's better to error on the too short side than too long. Please consult your coach if you have questions.

Bindings

When purchasing bindings, be sure to indicate to the store what boot you will be using, especially for skiers weighing less than 70 lbs. Some bindings will only fit junior boot sole profiles, and others only fit adult boot profiles.

Boots

Boots must fit well and be flexible at the ankle for the best learning and performance.

All-mountain (or similar) models are often good choices for younger, lighter skiers. Competition boots are designed for older, stronger, and more experienced athletes. Boots that are too stiff or too high will hinder even the most talented skiers, young or old.

There is a tendency to buy boots too large because they feel good on flip-flop summer feet and/or the skier is not used to a performance fit. Additionally, parents like to get more than one season out of a boot. However, boots that are too big make it very difficult to perform up to one's potential. Make sure your boot fitter is "shell sizing" your skier and that there is no more than two fingers space between the heel and the back of the shell when the toes are just touching the front. It's easier to make a tight-fitting boot roomier than it is to make a loose-fitting boot tighter.

- Buckles: 3-4 buckle conventional design is best
- Boot fit around foot and ankle should be snug; when trying shell on without the liner, you want no more than two fingers space between the heel and the back of the shell when the toes are just touching the front.
- Cuff height should be scaled to allow ankle movement yet still work to transfer movements to the ski; the cuff of an adult boot may be too high for a child whose foot has grown before gaining an adult height.
- Boot flex/stiffness: the boot should be rigid enough to transmit movements of the ankle and lower leg to the ski. Softer flexes are better for junior skiers – look for a 50-60 flex for the youngest Rangers, up to a 90 for our strongest Development team member. Our U14, U16, and U18 racers might use a 120-130 flex depending on their mass and strength.

Whistles: We recommend whistles for all our program participants for safety when skiing in fog or trees- it can help find individuals who get separated from their group.

The information below is for Devo Comp Team and older groups who train and race at the United States Ski & Snowboard sanction levels.

Slalom Protection

Skiing "through" a slalom gate means a racer's body travels inside of the gate while their feet travel to the outside of the gate to legally pass the gate. When a racer is big enough and aggressive enough to ski "through" a slalom gate they need appropriate slalom protection. This includes the following:

- chin guard on the helmet for face protection
- mouth guard for teeth protection
- pole guards for hand protection

- shin guards

If a skier has this protection too early, or when they are not yet ready to ski through the gate, they will likely learn bad habits that are hard to break, so the timing of owning this equipment is critical. Please consult with your coach to better understand when Slalom Protection is appropriate. Note: a mouth guard is a good idea for all skiing activity, not just when training slalom.

Back Protection

Back protectors are recommended when athletes get aggressive enough and have enough mass that a hard crash can do some real damage - typically at the U14 or U16 age and older.

Race Suits

Suits may be cool, but until a skier is skiing at 25 plus miles an hour constantly, their value is mostly the cool effect. When athletes ski above 25-30 mph consistently, a suit is totally necessary. New suits are expensive, but used suits work just fine and can be found online or within our team as skiers grow out of last year's suit. Whitefish Mountain Resort's Tommy Moe race series does not allow suits to be exposed while racing and the US Ski & Snowboard occasionally limits the use of suits for U-12 and younger racers. Check w/your coaches.

Zip-Off Ski Pants

Necessary for racers participating in US Ski & Snowboard races if they are competing in race suits. Racers stay warm during inspection, warm-up, and training but can remove the pants easily at the race start without taking boots off.

Helmets

All FVSEF participants must wear helmets manufactured for skiing.

A good fit is important. The helmet should grip the head to the point that when twisted, the helmet moves the skin of the forehead and brow, but not be uncomfortable to wear for long periods. **GET YOUR HELMET FITTED BY SOMEONE WHO KNOWS HOW.**

- Try on helmets prior to buying whenever possible.
- A chin guard is important for Devo team and older athletes in slalom, but it must be removed for GS/SG and DH
- If a helmet takes a good blow; IT LIKELY HAS A DEFORMED STYROFOAM LINER AND SHOULD BE REPLACED. Some helmet companies have a crash replacement policy to motivate us to replace those questionable helmets.
- Helmet cameras, helmets with fairings or other projections are not allowed.

For participants who are not participating in United States Ski & Snowboard sanctioned races, non-sanctioned, well-fitting ski helmets work. However, for those racing in sanctioned races:

- A helmet with soft covering over the ears is only allowed in Slalom.
- Helmet must have a hard shell covering over the ears for GS, SG, DH or Kombi events.

Attention Parents of U14's and older:



HELMET RULES ~ For any United States Ski & Snowboard sanctioned event, make sure the helmet has this sticker visible on the back of the helmet outer shell for GS, SG & DH!

Goggles

Manufacturers design goggles to work with and be compatible with their helmets, but it is not always a total success. The helmet/goggle might work together, but they don't fit every athlete's face.

- The goggles need to fit the shape/space provided by the helmet well and allow no/or very minimal "goggle gap" between the top of the goggles and the helmet. Not only can Goggle Gap be cold and a cause of lost concentration, but it can allow air to pass under the goggles at speed, causing the eyes to tear and a bad situation for optimal viewing when skiing at high speeds.
- The goggles need to seal tightly against the face.
- Try on goggles with the helmet to insure proper fit and seal.
- Use lighter lenses for darker/cloudy days and darker lenses for those many sunny Whitefish days. If you train at night, you need a clear or low light lens.
- Protect the lens and keep goggles in a protective bag/box whenever possible.

Where Do I Find the Right Equipment?

When considering used equipment, there can be significant advantages in cost. However, wear, ineffective design or non-compliance with current rules can be a factor. Buying new can seem more expensive at the outset, but warranties, service, availability, and effective selection usually offset that initial expense.

- FVSEF organizes an in-house ski swap each year in early fall. Families can find used equipment older athletes have outgrown. Coaches will be onsite to help with sizing and other considerations.
- Additionally, our sponsor Great Northern Cycles & Ski (Whitefish) hosts a team night where families can view and order new race gear at discounted pricing. At a pre-scheduled session each fall, representatives from the equipment manufacturers and coaches will be on hand to help size and present race gear.

Please check the FVSEF website calendar and review your emails from FVSEF for current schedules.

Context of our Sport

National Governing Body

US Ski & Snowboard is the national governing body of ski racing in the US. The country is divided into three regions, and into divisions within those regions. Montana is within the Northern Division of the Western Region.



Races registered and organized by US Ski & Snowboard standards are known to be “sanctioned” races. These races are run by consistent US Ski & Snowboard standards and rules to ensure fair competition. Competitions may be scored, or non-scored:

- Races for U-16 and older (and occasionally U-14s) are scored and the racer’s result affects their US Ski & Snowboard National Ranking. Scoring is a complex calculation based on those finishing in the top 10 of the race and the time differences between the winner and those subsequent finishers.
- All Youth Ski League (YSL) races are non-scored, even if U 16s are competing.
- Either type of sanctioned race may also be a “Qualifying Event” where a racer’s place in the race earns them points towards qualifying for a championship event later in the year.

For US Ski & Snowboard sanctioned races all competitors, coaches and officials must be US Ski & Snowboard /Northern Division members. Memberships may be activated online at [Membership Start | My USSA](#)

If you intend to compete ONLY in the local Tommy Moe race Series, US Ski & Snowboard /Northern membership is not necessary. There are also short-term memberships available for those who only want to compete for one event or a weekend’s series.

Racing Choices

The Tommy Moe Series (ages 5-12) is a low-key level competition hosted by Whitefish Mountain Resort where kids can have fun and gain competition experience in their home arena. We encourage participation in these races, but they are not a part of our FVSEF programming. No United States Ski & Snowboard or Northern Division memberships are required. Helmets may have a flexible ear covering.

The **United States Ski & Snowboard YSL** (ages 15 and under) operates with a strong developmental mission and these athletes enter competitions that offer appropriate competition levels whether introductory or more advanced.

The YSL race series are non-scored sanctioned races. It is a nationally organized program for athletes 15 years of age and younger interested in ski racing. This program is being run in conjunction with local ski clubs and ski schools. It provides fun and instructional racing for young skiers. You may enter any U-16 and under racers in United States Ski & Snowboard Northern Division Events.

Membership required for United States Ski & Snowboard YSL level events are Alpine Competitor for the following ages:

U-10 (ages 9 and under as of December 31)

U-12 (ages 11-10)

U-14 (12-13)

U-16 (14-15).

U-14 and U-16 Qualifiers: For U-14 and U-16 racers interested in qualifying for the Western Region U-14 or U-16 championships or the Tri-Divisional U-14/16 Championships, the Northern Division schedule contains races specific to these age groups for the purpose of qualifying to one of these championship events. The qualifying races include scored races in SL, GS and Super-G. Any open series of races (not labeled as Qualifier) do not count towards qualification but do count towards awards for the season-long Northern Division Race Series Awards.

Age Groups

Our training age groups follow the age classifications of United States Ski & Snowboard. Our organized training programs begin at age 7.

Juniors Age Classes (ages as of Dec 31 of the current season)

Example: an athlete who is 10 years old on or before December 31 of a season would be classified as a U-12. For that season, they are not under 10 but are under 12.

<u>Age Category</u>	<u>Description</u>
● U-10	Ages 9 and under

- U-12 Ages 10 & 11
- U-14 Ages 12 & 13
- U-16 Ages 14 & 15
- U-18 Ages 16 & 17
- U-21 Ages 18 - 20
- Senior Ages 21 & older

Racing

When and where to race are important considerations and components of our overall strategy.

All Mountain Rangers – Learn to Race

The All-Mountain Ranger skiers are encouraged to participate in all Tommy Moe Race events and any Tommy Moe Freestyle events that interest them. Additionally, All Mountain Ranger skiers may choose to participate in one or two YSL races, especially if there is a home YSL event, or if older siblings regularly compete in YSL races. Many families also choose to participate in races where they could visit family/friends and enjoy the experience of that venue. Rangers who wish to race in YSL races must communicate that to our Development Team lead coach Madeline Williams at least 1-2 weeks in advance to ensure we have sufficient staff at these events.

Development Team

The Devo Team skiers are encouraged to participate in all Tommy Moe Race events and any Tommy Moe Freestyle events that interest them. While there is no requirement that Devo Team racers compete in YSL events, our Devo Competitive team skiers are encouraged to compete in at least 1-2 away events as well as a home event if scheduled.

U-14 Racers

U-14s with a goal of attending an “End of the Season Championship Event” should consult with their coach regarding which races to attend. These races may be with the U-16 scored series or in the YSL series. Familiarize yourself with the procedures and schedule in the Northern Division Handbook.

U-16/U-18 Racers

These racers likely have a goal of attending an “End of the Season Championship Event” and should be communicating with their coach regarding which races to attend. Familiarize yourself with the procedures and schedule in the Northern Division Handbook.

US Ski & Snowboard Association membership is required and U-14s and older must have a FIS approved helmet for US Ski & Snowboard Association racing.

Racing / Training Considerations

Racing without adequate preparation or training is not recommended. Poor performance due to a lack of training can undermine self-confidence.

Race days limit the number of runs available to the competitor and therefore limit the technical advancement available on a normal training day.

On the other hand, it is important to be familiar with the routine of race day to be able to perform well. Athletes need to become familiar with the schedule of inspection, arrival at the start, nuances of the competition arena, the intensity of a race, the aspect of waiting for your start, the pre-competition nerves and so many other elements.

How do you “train” for competitions then? One effective way is to attend competitions, but to effectively manage expectations for the athlete. Winning, or even placing high may not be the measure to use. Gaining experience and the achievement of other goals may be better measures of a successful race series.

How to Select and Enter Races

Tommy Moe (Ages 5-12)

- No memberships required.
- Race Suits are not allowed.
- FVSEF coaches are not allowed to be in the race venue in order to prevent intimidation of non-coached skiers.
- Pre-register online at www.skiwhitefish.com for each race or for the season.

YSL US Ski & Snowboard Racing (ages 14 and under)

- US Ski & Snowboard /Northern Division membership required.
- Hard Shell helmet covering ears required for GS, Super G and Kombi Events
- U-14 and older age groups require FIS approved helmets.
- Entries to be made by parents online (new registration app has not yet been identified for use in Northern Division- the old system at US Ski & Snowboard no longer exists). Please notify your coach that you will be attending a race to ensure we have adequate staff at the event.
- At away races, Coaches travel expenses are divided equally among the attending families.

U-16 and older scored US Ski & Snowboard Assoc/FIS Racing

- US Ski & Snowboard membership required.
- FIS membership required for FIS racing.
- FIS approved helmets required.

- Online (www.adminskiracing.com). Please notify your coach that you will be attending a race to ensure we have adequate staff at the event.
- At away races, Coach travel expenses are paid for equally by the attending families. An invoice will be sent via the Playmetrics registration platform upon return from the trip. Please ensure look for email notifications regarding trip invoices.
- All FIS races are by Qualification/invitation.

A Typical YSL Race Trip Schedule

The Day Prior to the Event:

- Family travels to the site the day before the event
- Skis should be tuned and waxed, ready for the first day of racing.
- Coaches travel with waxing supplies for subsequent races.
- On arrival, please contact the coaches for information about the following day's schedule.

The Day of the Event:

Coaches hold a team meeting to disperse athlete lift tickets if applicable, competition bibs, and information regarding the day's schedule.

- Athletes and coaches will meet to board the lift on opening.
- Athletes and coaches will inspect the race venue as a group.
- The first run will be run as scheduled; for YSL this is *usually* the youngest age class to oldest. All girls race first, then the boy's race. Occasionally the U-12 and under genders may be combined to race as one group, boys and girls together. For the first run, start positions within an age group are determined by a random draw each day. The second run gender and age groups will run as the first run, EXCEPT the order of the athletes within the age groups will be reversed.
- In YSL racing, everybody gets a second run, time permitting.
- Athletes should spend time with inspection, free skiing, and physical activation, then arrive at the start with enough time to prepare themselves for their run. While we don't want athletes to be late for their start, we hope that they will NOT spend excessive time at the start waiting but will be using that time for skiing and activation. Parents can really help by skiing with their own children and any others that might need to do that. You can help to schedule your time by making a run on the chair servicing the competition and noting the bib currently racing then seeing the bib # in the start gate on your second arrival; allow a bit of extra time; (but not too much...) We likely will need help shuttling racer clothes from the top to bottom. In the clothing shuttle be sure that all know the destination of the clothes from the start. Jackets and pants labeled with owner names help in finding them after the race.
- The second run will be reset following the completion of the first run with time scheduled for inspection. This time is usually pre-set at the beginning of the day BUT may change spontaneously if the first run schedule is altered.

The time between runs is often a time of schedule juggling. Athletes/families should allow their time between runs to get some food, go to the bathroom and be on time for 2nd run inspection. To facilitate the flow of this schedule, coaches may need help from parents to shuttle athlete clothing from the start to the finish area and encourage athletes to be on time.

Following each athlete's 2nd run they should plan to free-ski for the remainder of the day and attend the awards ceremony as planned by the organizer. Athletes may ski with family/friends or coaches but please communicate with the coaches.

If necessary, coaches will announce a team meeting time to review the schedule for the following day and wax as necessary.

Travel Policies

Please notify coaches of your plans to travel to and enter races well in advance. We need adequate notification to make proper arrangements for coaches' schedules, housing, tickets and other details

For races that require overnight stay, coaches will reserve a block of rooms at one of the motel/lodges in the surrounding area. Typically, this will allow the team a group discount. The motel will provide the team with a date by which rooms must be reserved by parents. Families intending to stay at that location must call the hotel and reserve a room from the block of rooms prior to the appointed date. Families may make other lodging arrangements as suits their needs.

At the Devo Team level, Coaches do not act as overnight chaperones. Families may either travel with their children or may decide to have their children travel with another family.

Costs of YSL races include entry fees, lodging, food, transportation, lift tickets & coach expenses. At each race, Coaches will coordinate and pay the athlete's lift ticket fees, unless the resort makes other methods available. (Red Lodge and Great Divide offer some free tickets to WMR season pass holders). Families will be invoiced and reimburse the Foundation for coach travel expenses and any other costs the Foundation has pre-paid for the racers.