



# 2018 - 19 Parent - Athlete Handbook

## Principles That Lead Us

### **FVSEF Mission Statement:**

FVSEF is a valley-wide community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the history and value inherent in our skiing culture and to fostering these ideals of athletic, academic and personal excellence in our next generations. FVSEF participants become better athletes, better students and better citizens...For Life!

### **The FVSEF Vision:**

To preserve and understand the culture and principles of the skiing generations that preceded us, inspiring our participants for a day, for a season and for a lifetime.

### **Values that Guide FVSEF:**

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

**Family & Team**- Individual humility and collective pride.

**Community**-Participation driven by responsibility.

**Fitness**-Respect for the importance of personal fitness for a lifetime.

**Scholarship**-Commitment to a lifetime of learning.

**Excellence**-Strive to be your best, not the best.

**Updated September, 2018**

FVSEF will update this manual periodically. The most current document can be found on the FVSEF.org website.



# Table of Contents

<b>Program Philosophy</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Sportsmanship &amp; Code of Conduct</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Equipment Guide</b>	<b>7</b>
Skis	7
Bindings	8
Boots	8
Slalom Protection	9
Back Protection	9
Mouth Guards	10
Race Suits	10
Zip-Off Ski Pants	10
Helmets	10
Goggles	12
Where Do I Find the Right Equipment?	13
<b>US Ski &amp; Snowboard Association</b>	<b>14</b>
The Western Region and the Northern Division	14
<b>Racing and Competition Choices</b>	<b>16</b>
Age Groups	17
<b>When to Race</b>	<b>18</b>
All Mountain Rangers	18
Development Team Athletes	18
U-14 Athletes	18
U-16/U-19 Athletes	19
Racing / Training Considerations	19
<b>How to Select and Enter Races</b>	<b>21</b>
Tommy Moe (Ages 5-12)	21
YSL US Ski & Snowboard Assoc. Racing (ages 14 and under)	21
U-16 and older scored US Ski & Snowboard Assoc/FIS Racing	21
A Typical YSL/Devo Team Race Trip Schedule	22
<b>Ski Racing and Life</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SafeSport</b>	<b>25</b>
SafeSport - FVSEF	25



SafeSport US Ski & Snowboard	25
SafeSport Programs	26
Background Screening	27
Background Screening Criterion Offenses	28
<b>Travel Policies</b>	<b>30</b>
Housing & Travel Guidelines	30



## Program Philosophy

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

All mountain skiing, free-skiing drills, gate drills, and the right amount of competition are factored in to 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 correct amount of challenge is met, skills can be shaped and athletes acquire a confidence that allows them to use the accelerator without keeping one foot on the brake.

Choosing the proper environment to work on these concepts is a prime factor to achieving success. The proper slope, snow conditions, lifts access/turnaround time and other factors all play a role in successful terrain selection for learning. Our goal is to ski terrain that combines the right amount of challenge with the best opportunity to allow successful skill acquisition. Our hope is to maximize the good habits and fundamental skills and minimize the bad habits. Changing a bad habit takes a long time and a lot of energy. But, if we have to change a bad habit, those changes happen much more easily on terrain where the athletes have confidence and control. Often times we will break into smaller or different groups to achieve these goals.

We will choose our terrain and training environment with thought. We introduce and practice skills on terrain that allows and promotes success. We know if an athlete is not performing a skill well on moderate terrain, it will not improve on steeper and more difficult terrain. That being said, when conditions are appropriate we ski steep and difficult terrain. Free-skiing “off-piste” with style and control is an important skill set and we utilize appropriate areas to challenge and promote those skills.

For all of us, as skills develop, it is incredibly thrilling to move to more difficult areas to challenge our abilities and enjoy the special opportunities that our mountain provides us. Our challenge is to blend this in a way that allows our athletes to ski in all areas in an aggressive, rather than a defensive attitude.

For more information talk to your coach and check out the United States Ski & Snowboard Alpine Training System matrix online.

[Alpine Training System Matrix:](#)

<https://usskiandsnowboard.org/sites/default/files/files-resources/files/2017-11/Alpine%20Training%20Systems%2011-16-17.pdf>

[www.northernussa.org](http://www.northernussa.org)



[www.fvsef.org](http://www.fvsef.org)

## Sportsmanship & Code of Conduct

Sportsmanship is the term applied to the ideals of training and competition that give athletics a healthy learning and character building purpose. We hope that you will play hard, but play fair. The ideals of sportsmanship should also shape our everyday lives giving us a template to achieve our fullest potential while treating all that surrounds us with respect.

As an FVSEF Athlete you represent our Team, FVSEF, Whitefish Mountain Resort, Our Coaches, your Families and everyone that make this program possible. We ask that you strive to be your best athletically, academically and exemplify proper conduct at all times.

As a member of the FVSEF Race Team:

- I will act in a courteous and cooperative manner at all times with FVSEF and other team's coaches, Whitefish Mountain Resort and other ski areas' customers, employees and managers; with my teammates and their parents and families; and with race officials and volunteers.
- I will not use profane language at anytime.
- I will respect and properly use the equipment and facilities of the ski area.
- I will follow the rules of the ski area at all times.
- 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.
- 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.
- I will maintain a clean and neat appearance at all training and race activities so as to promote myself and FVSEF.
- I will not loan or fraudulently use my season pass or lift ticket. I will follow the rules of the ski area in regards to day passes.
- I will not cut the lift lines. I will be respectful to others in lift lines and show my pass courteously to the lift attendant as asked to do so. I will say thank you when loading and unloading from the lift.
- 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.



- I will respect and honor all FVSEF policies developed by the Board of Directors and coaching staff.
- I will handle all borrowed equipment with respect and appreciation.
- 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.
- I will set a positive role model for all my fellow teammates (older and younger) by acting in a polite, respectful, and positive manner.
- 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.
- When competing in a race, I will obey the USSA Sportsmanship Guidelines as outlined in the most current Skiing Competition Guide, as well as the USSA Northern Division Code of Conduct.
- I will be on time and ready to ski at the start of each practice.
- I understand that FVSEF Team members are highly visible at Whitefish Mountain Resort and at races at other resort. I will conduct myself accordingly. Bring attention to yourselves by the way you ski, not by acting obnoxious, loud, or disrespectful. Be on your best behavior on and off the ski hill, in the lift lines, etc. **BE A RESPONSIBLE, RESPECTFUL ATHLETE.**

I understand that as a member of FVSEF, I have a responsibility to set a positive example and be a good citizen. I fully understand that any infringement of the 17 Code of Conduct Rules set forth above may result in disciplinary action in the form of suspension or dismissal from FVSEF programs.

- First Violation: Warnings
  - Coach will identify infraction for athlete and discuss it one on one with the athlete.
  - Coach will contact athlete's parent(s) and organize coach-parent-athlete discussion to resolve problem.
- Second Violation: Suspension from the next scheduled race or program date.
- Third Violation: Dismissal from FVSEF Programs without refund of fees.



In addition, I understand that a violation of rule 3 (stealing equipment or property) or violation of rule 7 (using illegal drugs, abusing prescription drugs, or drinking alcohol as a minor), will result in immediate dismissal with no refund of monies paid to FVSEF.

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.

“I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the FVSEF Code of Conduct and the National Ski Areas Association Skiers and Riders Responsibility Code. I also understand and acknowledge that, if disciplined, I may appeal before the FVSEF Board of Directors at the next scheduled monthly meeting.”



## Equipment Guide

Our sport is a very athletic one and skiing athletes must be conditioned and trained very well to reach high levels. But just like the pole-vault athlete requires a properly designed and fitted pole, our racers must have properly designed and fitted equipment to reach their full potential. When and where to find the best selection of equipment at the most affordable prices is discussed in a later chapter.

### **To skid is human, to arc is divine...**

Carving turns is our basic principle and all skis in our program should be designed to enhance the skier's ability to carve turns. In our world, 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 characteristics allow the ski to bend into an arc. The sharp steel edges cut into the snow as the ski passes forward and it follows itself then in an "arcing" path, gliding through its own track. Not only does this turn decrease the friction greatly, it enhances control and the accuracy of the path a great deal. In our vernacular, enhanced carving like this is elevated to the term: "Arcing".

## Skis

For our younger and All Mountain Rangers skiers, we recommend junior skis with a good deal of side cut 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 Devo Team racers, or older and more experienced All Mountain Rangers skiers, multi-event skis (aka Kombi Skis) will likely fit this guideline. These multi-event skis are designed to ski well for both Slalom and GS and give the distinct advantage of a consistent action to foster effective learning. Kombi skis typically should come roughly to the bridge of the nose or eyebrows.

Newer or 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 each event (slalom & gs). Here are some guidelines; 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.

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



The above are general recommendations and may be tailored slightly in some situations. For instance, less aggressive or less experienced racers may benefit from skis that are on the shorter end of the spectrum. Also know that a disadvantage for skis that are too short is minimal, the disadvantage for skis that are too long is large. Please consult with your coach.

## Bindings

For those of you with lighter athletes (about 70 lbs. and less) be sure to indicate what boot you will be using. There are two standard ski-boot sole profiles. One is specific to many junior ski boots and one is specific to adult sizes. Some bindings will only fit junior boot sole profiles. Some bindings will fit both junior and adult sizes, but some of these require special parts. Many bindings fit only adult boot profiles. We have had several situations when families have bought bindings and boots that are not compatible with each other.

## Boots

Boots must fit well and be flexible at the ankle for the best learning and performance. Except for the smallest of sizes, a 3 or 4 buckle conventional design is best. Pick an appropriate boot for skiers of the correct size, weight and ability. Often, all-mountain (or similar) models are good choices. Many of the 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. Competition model boots are frequently built relatively stiff, but remember, many of the athletes that these boots are intended for are built like linebackers and have years of competition experience.

There can be an inclination to buy boots that are too large because they feel good on flip-flop summer feet and/or the skier is not used to a performance fit. On this note, I frequently see U-16 athletes skiing well in boots that are a size smaller than they had as U-14 skiers. Boots that are too big are unworkable. Make sure your boot fitter is “shell sizing” your athlete 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. Be careful buying boots that your child is going to grow into; that just doesn’t work well and is false economics. Boots can usually be made a whole size bigger as needed. Boots can be made bigger, but cannot effectively be made smaller and still ski like a performance boot.

Boots should be just rigid enough to transmit movements of the ankle and lower leg to the ski, but fit well enough and be flexible enough to allow those athletic movements. Of course the foot area of the boot must fit each foot well in length and width. But also important is the height of the cuff of the boot. Some boots have very high cuffs and others have lower cuffs. Boots where the height is scaled appropriately allow ankle movement, yet still work to transfer those movements to the ski well. Boots (even race boots) designed for children typically have cuffs



that are well scaled in height. We often see issues in children who have feet large enough to require adult or near adult sized because their feet have grown to that size, but the rest of their body has not yet caught up with that growth. It may make your boot search a bit more difficult, but DO SEEKOUT boots with appropriately cuff height.

Boot flex is also an issue. Boots are designed with hinging characteristics and material stiffness that should be coupled with appropriate body size, strength and experience. Softer flexing boots are typically better for junior skiers. Manufactures generally label boots with a number that is designed to indicate their relative stiffness. Lower numbers indicate softer boots. You might see numbers that range from 50-150. These numbers while indicating relative flex/stiffness in a manufactures line are not necessarily the same exact resistance compared to another manufacturer's reference. In other words a Lange boot labeled as a 90 may flex somewhat differently than a Head boot labeled as a 90. In general, you should see our younger skiers in 50-60 durometer boots. A strong Devo Team skier might top out with a 90. Our oldest and most experienced skiers might be seen in boots in the lower 100s. The 120s and above are best reserved for older and very experienced teens and above.

**Whistles:** We highly recommend whistles for all of our program participants.

**The information below is primarily aimed at our Devo Team and older groups who will training and racing at the United States Ski & Snowboard levels.**

## Slalom Protection

Skiing "through" a slalom gate means a racer's body will be inside of the gate in order to take a shorter line to the finish and their feet will be to the outside of the gate to allow a legal passage of the gate. When a racer is big enough and aggressive enough to ski "through" a slalom gate that is designed to withstand the rigors of a 200 pound plus ski racer, they will need appropriate slalom protection. This will include, face protection affixed to the helmet, we also recommend a mouth guard, handguards on the poles and shin guards. The timing of owning this is critical, if athletes are encouraged to do this before they have decided or are able to ski "through" gates, they will likely ski around the gate with their body, then reach out to hit the gate with their hands. The result is a bad habit that is difficult to break. Please consult with your coach to better understand when Slalom Protection is appropriate.

## Back Protection

This is a tough call; when athletes get dynamic enough for us to be concerned about their need back protectors are good protection and heartily recommended by us. Younger less dynamic athletes; this is your call....For our more aggressive athletes they are likely a great idea.



## Mouth Guards

We recommend them.

## Race Suits

Most kids like to wear suits. It is their battle uniform. The suit make them feel cool and in-line with their competition experience. New suits are expensive. Used suits work well, can be available with planning and typically not expensive. Suits may be cool, but until a skier is skiing at 25 plus miles an hour constantly, their value is mostly the cool effect. (More about that later.) When athletes ski above 25-30 mph consistently, a suit is totally necessary. Younger racers would like to be cool in suits, but they also need to be warm. Suits are not necessarily warm...LAYER up for younger skiers in suits. But remember, suits are only effective as the cool effect until speeds reach 25 MPH...cool is good, but warm trumps cool...

## Zip-Off Ski Pants

Necessary to allow athletes to stay warm during for inspection, warm-up and training but allows them to remove that outer layer easily at the race start.

## Helmets

All of our program athletes must wear helmets manufactured for skiing.

What is important; is a well-fitting helmet designed for ski racing that is comfortable. If the helmet is too tight, obvious discomfort makes it difficult to wear. A helmet that is too large can bounce around, move the goggles, impair vision and will likely not be as protective as it is designed to be. A well-fitting helmet will be comfortably snug. When the helmet is worn, it should grip the head to the point that when twisted, the helmet will move 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.**

Those racers who will not race in United States Ski and Snowboard sanctioned races may wear non-sanctioned, well-fitting ski helmets.

For those who will race in any United States Ski & Snowboard sanctioned race, there are a few requirements. For Slalom Racing, one may wear a helmet with soft covering over the ears. For GS, SG, DH or Kombi, the helmet must have hard shell covering over the ears. (See more below)



Poc, Spyder, Uvex, Carrera, Shred, Briko & Boeri are all good ones. There are likely others and I may have missed some good ones. Though they all fit each of us reasonably well, we do know that some tend to fit slightly differently. Each tends to have a slightly different shape as its native mold. Some are more round, some more oblong and so on. I believe it is a good idea for the athlete to try helmets on prior to buying, whenever possible.

A chin/face guard is important for Slalom, but it must be removed for GS/SG and DH (and these events need helmets with a hard shell over the ears). Though it is not the end-all for facial protection, I am pretty confident it can and does help to deter gate impacts to the face. You might consider this more important for our Devo Team and older athletes. I CERTAINLY recommend them for our Devo Team and older athletes, especially if they are aggressive slalom skiers who challenge gates and try to take the shortest line (through or inside the gate).

To remove the guard for GS; usually 4 screws hold that protective bar/guard in place. My own children (as they got responsible enough) had a screwdriver in their gear bag and a small ziplock bag to put the screws in. They also had a set of extra screws in a different ziplock, just in case... (And yes, they did get used...) Extra screws can be found easily at places like Nelson's hardware.

Most modern helmets are lined with Styrofoam as the protective layer. Comfort foam lining in the helmet is just that; for our comfort and fit. The Styrofoam layer is designed to crush on impact, absorbing the destructive energy of the impact, trying to save the noggin. 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.

#### **Attention Parents of U14's and older:**



**HELMET RULES** ~ If your racer will race in 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!

Below are Rules regarding United States Ski & Snowboard and helmet rules for competitors:

All competitors and forerunners must wear a helmet for Giant Slalom, Super G, Downhill and Downhill Training and Alpine Combined. Helmets must meet current equipment specifications. [606.4, 707, 807, 907, 1007, and additional United States Ski & Snowboard and FIS regulations.]



1. Athletes U14 and older must use helmets that meet the new FIS standards for all United States Ski & Snowboard Giant Slalom, Super G and Downhill. U14 and older competitors whose helmets are not in compliance will not be permitted to start.
2. Regulations for helmets for Giant Slalom, Super G and Downhill are applicable without exception at all levels of FIS competition [2.3.3]

Helmet cameras, helmets with fairings or other projections are not allowed. Facial protection for Slalom is allowed. (And recommended by us) Facial protection must be removed for GS, SG and DH.

## Goggles

Quite related to helmet fit and function is how the goggles interact with the helmet AND the athletes face. Manufactures definitely design goggles to work with and be compatible with their helmets, but it is not always a total success... (The helmet/goggle shape is great, but the athletes face may not fit this formula...)

Let's consider some important requirements for the interaction of helmet/goggle/athlete to be optimal.

### **Fitting Guidelines:**

As above, we already know, the helmet needs to fit correctly...

- The goggle needs to fit the shape/space provided by the helmet well and allow no/or very minimal "goggle gap" between the top of the goggle 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 goggle needs to seal tightly against the face. There are multiple considerations here:
  - The thickness of the helmet and its pads
  - The distance between the strap of the goggle to the foam that seals against the face, and:
- The shape of the athlete's face.

If these do not work in concert, the goggle will not seal tightly against the face, allowing air to pass under the goggle and likely, the eyes will tear when skiing at speed.

**IT IS BEST TO TRY ON GOGGLES WITH YOUR HELMET TO INSURE THE PROPER FIT AND SEAL FROM THE WIND.**



If you think this is frivolous; remember that our athletes will ski at 50 mph and above. Imagine when you are driving in the rain at 50 mph what your visibility would be like w/o the wipers...

While we are on goggles...learn to take care of them! The anti-fog coating on the inside of the lens is quite soft. Extreme care should be taken to protect the inside of the lens or when cleaning the lens; follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Keep goggles in a protective bag/box whenever possible.

Try to have lenses available for extreme light conditions. In General; use lighter lenses for darker/cloudy days and darker lenses for those many sunny Whitefish days. If you train at night you should definitely have a lens that is clear or designed for low light conditions.

## Where Do I Find the Right Equipment?

All choices should be made considering proper sizing and performance characteristics. For our younger skiers the performance characteristic consideration will be looking for a good ski/boot that will enhance learning, especially carving. For our more experienced racers we will probably retain that requirement, but also factor in how the equipment will help to deliver speed to our racers and in many cases meet the United States Ski & Snowboard or FIS rules.

There are a few source options that we can deliberate. When considering used equipment, there can be significant advantages, 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, especially when coupled with some of the options below.

1. FVSEF each year sponsors and organizes an in-house ski swap for our families typically in the early fall. Here families can preview used equipment that other families have outgrown. Coaches will be onsite to help with sizing and other considerations.
2. Additionally our two sponsors, The Sportsman & Ski Haus (Kalispell Store) and Great Northern Cycles (Whitefish) will each host sessions where our families can view and order new race gear at discounted pricing. At pre-scheduled sessions 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.



# US Ski & Snowboard Association

## The Western Region and the Northern Division

The US Ski & Snowboard Association is the national controlling body of ski racing in the US. Races registered and organized by US Ski & Snowboard Association standards are known to be US Ski & Snowboard Association “sanctioned” races. These races are run by consistent US Ski & Snowboard Association standards and rules in order to ensure fair competition conducted in an orderly fashion. These competitions may be scored, or non-scored; that is: Races for U-16 and older (and occasionally U-14s) may include a component of the competition where a racer’s result in that race affects the racer’s US Ski & Snowboard Association National Ranking. If a race is scored to be used for athlete national ranking the main considerations are the comparative national ranking of the top 10 entered in and finishing the race and a competitor’s time compared to the winner of the race. All YSL races are non-scored, even if U 16s are competing.

YSL and other races may also be used as “Qualifying Events” where a racer’s results are measured by their placing in that race. Their placing may be used as a measure to qualify to a later event or recognition. In that case the method used is typically “scored” by the use of “New World Cup Points. Points are assigned to each place from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> (if necessary) with 100 pts going to 1<sup>st</sup>, 80 pts to 2<sup>nd</sup>, and so on down the line. This measurement is different than the “scoring” used for an athlete’s national ranking. More explanation may be found on this in the US Ski & Snowboard Association *Competition Guide*.

For US Ski & Snowboard Association Sanctioned races all competitors, coaches and officials must be US Ski & Snowboard Association /Northern Division members with an appropriate level of membership.

**Memberships’ not renewed by October 15 are subject to a late fee.** First time members are not subject to the late fee.

US Ski & Snowboard Association is divided into 3 regions, we reside in the Western Region. Regions are further divided into Divisions; including the “Northern Division of US Ski & Snowboard Association” which we are a part of. Some Divisions follow state boundaries; others include multiple states or parts of states. Our United States Ski & Snowboard members must also be *Northern Division* members. You will find registration/payment information for Northern Division on the same form/site as your US Ski & Snowboard Association registration.



Worldwide, US Ski & Snowboard Association falls under the umbrella of FIS (the International Federation of Skiing)

Memberships may be activated online at <https://usskiandsnowboard.org/>

If you intend to compete in ONLY the Tommy Moe Series, US Ski & Snowboard Association /Northern membership may be unnecessary. There are short term memberships available for those who may wish to compete for one event or a weekend's series.



## Racing and Competition Choices

**The Tommy Moe Series** (ages 5-12) is a low-key level of competition at Whitefish where kids can have a great deal of fun and gain competition experience in the comfortable atmosphere of their home arena.

No United States Ski & Snowboard or Northern Division memberships are required. Helmets may have a flexible ear covering.

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

The Youth Ski League (YSL) race series are comprised of non-scored races. Races that are scored provide athletes with a national ranking system. (see information about “scoring” in the section above) “Youth Ski League racing 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. This program provides fun and instructional racing for young skiers. You are invited to 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 U-10 (ages 9 and under, U-12 (ages 11-10) U-14 or U-16 and older. Short-term memberships that are event specific are also available. Racers must be members of United States Ski & Snowboard and the Northern Division of United States Ski & Snowboard. Online registration for both is available at: <https://usskiandsnowboard.org/>

Reminder: For United States Ski & Snowboard racing, helmets must have a hard covering over the ears for GS, SG and DH events and helmets for U-14 racers and older must bear a United States Ski & Snowboard/FIS approved sticker.

**U-14 and/or U-16 Specific Qualifiers:** For those U-14 racers interested in potentially qualifying for the Western Region U-14 championships or the Tri-Divisional U-14/16 Championships the schedule may contain races specific to these age groups for the purpose of qualifying to one of these championship events. These races may be scored for national ranking.

The **US Ski & Snowboard Association or FIS Scored Racing Series** (ages U-16 and up) offers more intensive racing and training and usually is best suited for racers with racing experience. United States Ski & Snowboard maintains a National Athlete Ranking System for



athletes that take part in “Scored” races. Scored Races are handicapped according to the level of competition of that race and each finisher is assigned a value of “race points” for that race. Race Points earned by the athletes are used to assign those racers their national ranking. More information on this can be found in the United States Ski & Snowboard *Alpine Competition Guide*. Athletes (ages 16 and older) that qualify may also follow a FIS racing and ranking race schedule.

The **Northern Division U-16** and older race series is a race series open to all properly registered United States Ski & Snowboard 14 years and older. This series consists of three scored qualifying races in SL, GS and SG. There are typically also 1 or more open race series weekends. The three races in SL, GS and SG serve as the qualification series for the Western Region Championships, Western Region FIS Championships, and the Western Region FIS Finals. Any open series of races (not labeled as Qualifier) do not count towards qualification for the events described above, but do count towards awards for the season long Northern Division Race Series. Memberships required are: **United States Ski & Snowboard & Northern Division Competitor**. FIS membership required for FIS racing.

## Age Groups

Our training age groups tend to follow the age classifications of United States Ski & Snowboard and FIS.

Our organized training programs typically begin at age 7.

### **Juniors Age Classes** (ages are of Dec 31 of the current season)

Example: an athlete who is 10 years old on or before December 31 of the 2017-18 season would be classified as a U-12. For that season, they are not under 10 but are under 12.

- U-10 Ages 9 and under
- U-12 Ages 10 & 11
- U-14 Ages 12 & 13
- U-16 Ages 14 & 15
- U-19 Ages 16 – 19 (3 year category)
- U-21 Ages 19 & 20
- Senior. Ages 21 & older



## When to Race

Though we are about skiing and racing, when and where to race ought to be important considerations and components of our overall strategy.

There are a number of considerations to be accounted for when deciding whether to race or not.

First are some general thoughts by group, below that are some thoughts that may modify decisions based on individual circumstances.

### All Mountain Rangers

The Junior Team skiers would be encouraged to participate in all Tommy Moe Race events that are race related and any Tommy Moe Freestyle events that interest them. Additionally, Junior Team skiers may choose to participate in 1-2 YSL US Ski & Snowboard Association events. This would be especially encouraged if there is a home based YSL event, or if siblings regularly compete in YSL races. It may also be that the family would choose to participate at a particular race where they could visit family/friends or enjoy the experience of that particular venue. Younger and inexperienced racers should understand that Slalom racing brings many complexities to racing through the many gate setting options presented at races. It is not unusual for our less experienced racers to occasionally be disqualified at races because of those complexities.

There are membership and helmet based requirements for YSL US Ski & Snowboard Association racing that are not a requirement for Tommy Moe Series events.

### Devo Team Team

The Devo Team skiers would be encouraged to participate in all Tommy Moe Race events that are race related and any Tommy Moe Freestyle events that interest them. While there is no requirement that Devo Team racers compete in *YSL US Ski & Snowboard Association* events, our Devo Team Skiers would also be encouraged to compete in at least 1-2 away events as well as a home event if scheduled.

### U-14 Racers

U-14 may have a goal of attending an “End of the Season Championship Event” If so, they should consult with their coach regarding the proper “qualifier” 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 and consult with your coach.

<http://www.northernussa.org/>

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

## U-16/U-19 Racers

These racers likely have a goal of attending an “End of the Season Championship Event” If so, they should consult with their coach regarding the proper “qualifier” races to attend. Familiarize yourself with the procedures and schedule in the Northern Division Handbook and consult with your coach. <http://www.northernussa.org/>

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

To race effectively, our athletes must be well-trained. So racing without the appropriate preparation of training would seem to be frivolous and at times perhaps thought of as potentially destructive. Poor performance due to a lack of proper preparation and training can be threatening to self-confidence.

Race days, typically limit the number of runs available to the competitor and with that in mind, limit the technical advancement that might be available in a normal training day.

On the other hand, in order to perform well at races, it is important to be familiar with the routine of race day. One must learn the scheduling of inspection, arrival at the start, nuances of the competition hill, the general hustle and bustle of a race, the converse aspect of waiting for your start, the pre-competition nerves and ever 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 other goals may be better measures. Perhaps your first goal will be to just be there, compete and learn and become familiar with the race routine (or chaos...) Or perhaps a goal of managing your schedule well, being on your schedule for inspection, getting proper warm-up, being at the start comfortably for your start position, but not too long. Getting enough free-skiing; and a proper feeding schedule is in itself is a difficult process and on race day. Perhaps a series of smaller meals is more appropriate; do be sure to get proper food and hydration through the day, but a traditional sit-down meal may not be available in the schedule. You may have technical goals: pole plants for every turn, established



balance on the outside ski or other similar goals. The goals can be tactical, being aggressive from the start through the finish, skiing the vertical combinations well, skiing the line you determine or other goals in a like approach. They can be mental performance related: developing a competition plan and following through, maintaining focus and or concentration through the day or run to run... These are suggestions, don't try to concentrate on too many at once, a goal or two for the day will help insure success at the end of the day.



## How to Select and Enter Races

### Tommy Moe (Ages 5-12)

No memberships or special helmets required.

This race series is a perfect activity for kids ages 5-12 who want to try out low-key, beginner level competitions.

Pre-register online for \$15 per race or \$90 for the season. Each pre-registered participant will still need to check-in between 8:30am and 9:30am to sign in and get a bib. Online registration closes at 7:30am on Sunday, the day of the event.

Day-of registration is available for \$25 per race or \$125 for the season.

[www.skiwhitefish.com](http://www.skiwhitefish.com)

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

US Ski & Snowboard Association/Northern Division membership required.

Hard Shell helmet covering ears required for GS, Super G and Kombi Events for all United States Ski & Snowboard Racing. U-14 and older age groups require FIS approved helmets.

Entries to be made by parents on the US Ski & Snowboard Association website. Log in, then under “Your Tools” go to *Athlete Event Registration*. Please notify your Head Coach that you will be attending a race so planning may be done for tickets and the appropriate coaching staff. Some events may be by invitation/qualification only.

Entry fees are evaluated each year, but currently are \$21 per SL/GS race. Athlete lift ticket prices vary per ski area policy. Fees and other information will be circulated prior to the event.

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

U-14 may be scored in some races as noted in the competition calendar. US Ski & Snowboard Association membership required. FIS membership required for FIS racing. U-14 and older age groups require FIS approved helmets.



Entries to be made by parents on the US Ski & Snowboard Association website. Log in then, under “Your Tools” go to *Athlete Event Registration*. Some events may be by invitation/qualification only.

All FIS races are by Qualification/invitation

Entry fees are \$36 per US Ski & Snowboard Association tech race. FIS fees vary as determined by the organizer. Athlete lift ticket prices vary per ski area policy. This information along with other pertinent trip information will be circulated prior to the race.

## A Typical YSL Race Trip Schedule

### **The Day Prior to the Event:**

Typically a family will travel to the site the day prior to the event on as their personal requirements allow.

Coaches travel with waxing supplies and will conduct a waxing session for the following day’s race. Families that have the wherewithal to wax before travel should do so. Waxed skis travel better and it will help with the overall schedule. On arrival, please touch base with the coaches so as to gain information for the following day’s schedule.

### **The Day of the Event:**

Coaches will conduct a *team meeting* to disperse athlete lift tickets, competition bibs and information regarding the day’s schedule. Typically, this meeting is held close to or shortly after 8:00 am in a pre-designated spot of the base lodge depending on the timing of the coaches morning meeting and the scheduled first lift for athletes and coaches.

1. Athletes and coaches will meet in an area designated at the team meeting to board the lift on opening.
2. Athletes and coaches will inspect the race venue as a group.
3. The first run will be run as scheduled; for YSL this is *usually* 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.
4. In YSL racing, everybody gets a second run, time permitting.
5. Athletes should spend time with; inspection, warm-up and free-skiing 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 warm-up. Parents can really help here 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 (Hint: properly labeled clothes with the names of their owners find their owners more easily than clothes that are not labeled!)

6. 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 attend to the required schedule as necessary.

Following each athletes 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 the schedule for the following day and wax as necessary.

## Ski Racing and Life

*Ski racing is one of a growing number of competitive sports. In a sense, life is also a competition, and we feel athletics is a great platform for learning life's lessons and will strengthen the ability to embrace victories and to overcome challenges in life.*

*As ski racers we find that there will be good days and there will be bad days. Things happen to ski racers that are hard to explain at times. Weeks, months, and even years of hard work and dedication may go unnoticed on a race day, perhaps with a disappointing finish or no finish at all. On other days, everything seems to fall into place and the racer takes a giant leap forward. As in life, it is important that the racer focuses on these positive days and continues to move forward. Everyone has his or her day, the day in which a goal has been achieved and all the hard work has paid off. That day may be in the form of winning a race or it may be moving up five spots from the first run. It is important to set big and small goals. Be patient and don't be discouraged by the bad days or the time that passes between the good ones. It is that time and the rainy days that make the sunny ones so sweet. Who knows what your hard work will foster in the future? That's the spice of ski racing and life!*

Craig Bennett

Here are some things that a ski racer needs to remember:



Keep Good Composure in all Situations --  
Good or Bad!

Respect Others

Earn Respect; Don't Expect It!

Work Hard!

Never Give Up!

Smile and Have Fun!



# SafeSport

## SafeSport - FVSEF

Providing a safe environment to protect the health and well-being of our athletes is a high priority for Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation and guides the presentation of all our programs. In alignment with the governing bodies of skiing, the US Ski & Snowboard Association and the U.S. Olympic Committee, Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation uses the guidelines of SafeSport as outlined by both the US Ski & Snowboard Association and U.S. Olympic committee.

The guidelines and protocols of the US Ski & Snowboard Association SafeSport Guideline can be found here: <https://usskiandsnowboard.org/governance/safesport>

All Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation Coaching Staff are US Ski & Snowboard Association members and undergo background checks as required by SafeSport.

All of the Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation policies and procedures surrounding dryland training, on-snow training, racing, travel and other activities involving athletes are developed to follow SafeSport guidelines.

When traveling to away races, Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation will make every reasonable effort to follow SafeSport/US Ski & Snowboard Association Travel Guidelines. However, on occasion due to limited numbers of traveling athletes, Flathead Valley Ski Education Foundation may make a slight adaptation to travel guidelines. Our goal is to communicate with parents when making adaptations.

## SafeSport US Ski & Snowboard

As a condition of membership, all U.S. Ski & Snowboard members agree to abide by the SafeSport Code.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard prohibits the following conduct:

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



Any member of U.S. Ski & Snowboard who is appointed to a position of authority over, or who has frequent contact with athletes must clear criminal background screening and complete SafeSport training every two years with a refresher required every other year. This includes U.S. Ski & Snowboard members holding a U.S. Ski & Snowboard coaching license, U.S. Ski & Snowboard members holding a U.S. Ski & Snowboard officials license, U.S. Ski & Snowboard members holding a U.S. Ski & Snowboard club volunteer membership and U.S. Ski & Snowboard members at U.S. Ski & Snowboard clubs whom the club formally designates to be in a position of authority over athletes, and the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Governance Board members.

Every U.S. Ski & Snowboard member 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 a doubt on whether conduct is occurring, please err on the side of reporting. Conduct which does not involve sexualized conduct but which may violate one of the six categories of prohibited conduct may be reported to [safesport@usskiandsnowboard.org](mailto:safesport@usskiandsnowboard.org).

### **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://www.safesport.org/report-a-concern>

## **SafeSport Programs**

### **USOC SafeSport Programs**

The USOC provides a wide range of SafeSport resources, including [online education and awareness](#). All U.S. Ski & Snowboard coach, 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.

### **U.S. Ski & Snowboard Fast Start Coaching Course**

Understanding the SafeSport environment is an important basic element for clubs, coaches, and officials. The Fast Start Coaching Course, now mandatory for all U.S. Ski & Snowboard coaches, includes SafeSport awareness as a key component. Information on the Fast Start program is available [Coach Development section](#).



## **U.S. Ski & Snowboard Background Screening**

To help ensure SafeSport environment, the U.S. Ski & Snowboard requires all staff, club coaches, club officials and club volunteers to undergo background screening. Scroll below for more information on the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Background Screening programs.

## **Background Screening**

U.S. Ski & Snowboard is a youth sports organization with more than 75% of its athlete members under the age of 18. In keeping with the standards of many youth sports organizations, schools, and recreational programs in the United States today, U.S. Ski & Snowboard has implemented a strict SafeSport policy on abuse, molestation and sexual harassment. To support this policy, the organization has implemented a background screening process to help ensure that the environment in its athletic programs at every level is as safe as possible.

This process includes all U.S. Ski & Snowboard employees, member coaches, judges/officials and volunteer members. It is a big undertaking for the organization. But it will help us maintain a high standard among youth sports organizations in America. The process is simple and can be managed online. There is no cost to U.S. Ski & Snowboard members.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard has selected the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) to conduct its screening. NCSI is one of the leaders in providing screening to youth-serving organizations. It works in partnership with the National Council of Youth Sports, which serves organizations representing over 52-million boys and girls.

The process will screen past convictions for sexually related and violent crime, as well as DUI. U.S. Ski & Snowboard has worked with NCSI to establish very specific criteria, which is listed below. U.S. Ski & Snowboard has also prepared Frequently Asked Questions at the bottom of this page to answer key questions on this important program.

The process for screening is simple and generally takes about five minutes. But you must have a current, or in process, U.S. Ski & Snowboard coach, judge/official or club volunteer membership to register for the screening.

Once your screening is complete and U.S. Ski & Snowboard receives a 'green light' from NCSI, your membership will be finalized and a membership card will be activated.

U.S. Ski & Snowboard appreciates the cooperation and understanding of its members to help implement this program to ensure that the environment in ski and snowboard athletic programs throughout the organization is as safe as possible for young boys and girls.



## Background Screening Criterion Offenses

Managing a SafeSport environment is important to U.S. Ski & Snowboard. Background screening of all employees, member coaches, member officials and club volunteer members is required. Convictions and pending dispositions for the following crimes will prompt a determination that an applicant “does not meet” the criteria to serve U.S. Ski & Snowboard.

**Reportable convictions or disclosures of convictions or registrations or pending dispositions, for any of the following criminal offenses or registrations will prompt a determination that an applicant 'does not meet' the criminal background screening criteria and a red light determination will be issued:**

### **Felonies**

1. Any violent felony (any crime punishable by confinement greater than one year.
2. Any felony within the past ten (10) years involving cruelty to animals.
3. Any non-violent felony (any crime punishable by confinement greater than one year) within the past ten (10) years not otherwise included above. (i.e., Felony theft or Controlled Substances)

### **Crimes of a Sexual Nature**

1. Any felony or lesser crime of a sexual nature or classified as a sex offense including but not limited to prostitution, pornography, indecent exposure; and crimes in which sexual relations is an element.
2. Any crime for which a conviction places the offender on a sex offender registry.

### **Misdemeanors**

1. Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person within the last ten (10) years.
2. Any lesser crime involving controlled substances if there was one (1) offense within the past five (5) years, or two (2) or more offenses within the last ten (10) years (not alcohol).
3. Any lesser crime within the past ten (10) years involving cruelty to animals.
4. Any lesser crime involving harm to a minor within the past ten (10) years not included above.
5. Two driving under the influence offenses (alcohol) within the past five (5) years or more than two (2) offenses in the past ten (10) years.

NOTE: Criminal offenses include "Attempted Crimes" in the above classifications.



### **Did You Know?**

- Every U.S. Ski & Snowboard staff member, plus all coaches, officials, judges, and volunteer members undergo background screening before issuance of membership or employment by U.S. Ski & Snowboard.
- Parents, 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.
- Club leaders, the USOC provides online SafeSport training for your coaches, judges, officials and volunteer members.



## Travel Policies

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 with the team must call the motel 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 make arrangements to have their children travel with another family.

Costs of YSL races include: lift tickets, & coach expenses. At each race, Coaches will coordinate and pay the athlete's lift ticket fees. Payment to the event organizer is made via a Flathead Valley Ski Foundation check. Families will reimburse the Foundation for these costs. Additionally, Coach expenses (car rental and fuel, housing, and per diem) are split among the attending families.

## Housing & Travel Guidelines

Best Practices for U18 Athletes.

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

1. All United States Ski & Snowboard club practices, projects should be open to observation by parents.
2. All coaches supervising United States Ski & Snowboard athletes must be members of United States Ski & Snowboard and criminally background screened.
3. One coach member and at least one other adult should be present at all practices and other club activities where at least one athlete is present. Clubs and coaches should 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 United States Ski & Snowboard member 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 in the discretion of the project leader.