

Wintergreen Winter Teams Parent Guide

Philosophy and Objectives

The Wintergreen Winter Teams (WWT) Race Program through its Development (D) Team and its Race Team, is designed to give children who love to ski an opportunity to improve their technical and general skiing skills. WWT strives to foster a passion for skiing focused on safety with an emphasis on having fun while concentrating on all aspects of skiing, including racing. The competitive nature of the program can be as relaxed or as intense as each individual chooses, but all athletes are expected to work at improving their basic and technical skiing skills.

Wintergreen Winter Teams is comprised of a Development (D) Team, a Race Team and a Freeride team. The D-Team is open to skiers ages 7-13, and the Race Team accepts skiers ages 9-18. No previous racing experience is required; however, participants *must* be comfortable skiing all types of terrain and *must* be able to ski the mountain independently. We have many skiers who join the program simply to improve their skills and through the D-Team program are introduced to racing. We also have more serious racers who have been competing for a few years and wish to improve their racing skills. Although competitive ski racing is an individual sport, the highest levels of competition are attained through team training. Therefore, the team aspect of WWT is paramount as racers train together and learn to support each other.

Skiing is a lifetime sport. Our goal is to help our athletes reach their full potential. We want them to understand the relationship that dedication and hard work have to the successful accomplishment of their individual and team goals. It is our ultimate objective that athletes gain a true love of skiing whether their future holds simple recreational enjoyment or medal hopes.

Important Notes for Parents

Communication

Open communication with the parents is a chief concern of the coaching staff and WWT. If your question or concern relates to skiing or coaching, contact the Wintergreen Winter Teams Director, Chris Shepard (434)325-8282 cshepard@wintergreenresort.com or the Development Team Head Coach, Sarah Hormel Everett (434)996-4598, sphormel@aol.com. Freeride Head Coach, Mike Bailey (434) 270-1490, mikeb8319@yahoo.com.

Boosters Organization

In addition to the Winter Teams, the team parents have formed a 501c-3 organization called the Wintergreen Teams Boosters. The boosters help support the program by raising money to help cover additional expenses such as safety equipment, athletes' supplies and development fees and dues for coaches. The boosters play a vital role in the success of the program through coordinating events and facilitating communication among the parents. Parents also must volunteer in some capacity during the season as it takes a significant number of resources to conduct the program and host competitions.

The Wintergreen Race Team Boosters, helps to help to support the program by purchasing safety/training equipment, coordinating events and facilitating communication among the parents. We request that all athletes join the Boosters in order to help fund these objectives. Dues are \$50/athlete, \$60 for two athletes and \$70 for three or more athletes. Please feel free to contact any of the officers from the Boosters, or any other veteran Race or D- team parent with your questions and ideas.

Boosters Board 2021/2022

Julie Lastra, President, julielastra@gmail.com

Florian Dengel, Vice President, floriandengel@yahoo.com

Nicole Weiss, Treasurer, nicolemweiss@comcast.net

Michelle Andersen, Secretary, michelle@crozetrunning.com

Ann Ritter, D-Team Rep, ann@lionspawdevelopment.com

Becky Thalhimer, Freeride Rep, becklauds@hotmail.com

Parent's Code of Conduct, Training and Race Day Etiquette

All of us want the best for our children and all members of the WWT. We wish to outline our expectations of the parents in order to best support the development of their young athlete (s) and also the team.

As in other youth sporting events, there is a need for a buffer between athletes and non-participants during training and competition. We cannot put a fence or a field between the coaches and athletes, and the parents and fans, so we need your cooperation.

On hill involvement of parents during training should include supportive comments and encouragement. Parents on the hill watching or skiing are welcome to help with logistics such as course maintenance and breakdown, when appropriate and as directed by the coaching staff. At races, we ask that parental assistance be limited to shuttling clothes, unless a coach requests additional help. **Parents are not allowed on the course during inspection and preparation** unless they are fulfilling a course worker function. The coaches and your children are working together in developing a race-day routine and strategy that will serve them for many years to come.

Consistency in coaching techniques, language and priorities can only be achieved if the coaches are allowed to do their job. We need to protect against distractions in the start area and during the race that not only affect your child, but other athletes in the program as well. This is not to say that we do not want parents in the start area with their child. We do ask, however, for discretion and deferral to the coaches' wishes prior to race starts.

Please know that we understand your desire to be helpful. More importantly, you need to understand that the children want to please us all and that the pressure associated with that desire is substantial.

Race Team Dos and Don'ts

- Do get your child to the ski area in plenty of time to join coaches for warm-ups and course inspection prior to the race. Course inspection typically starts one hour prior to race start.
- Do be supportive of the end result, keeping in mind the difficulty of this demanding individual sport.
- Do not add to the confusion and stress of race day by trying to coach your child. If you sense that your child needs more attention during the race experience, *bring it to the attention of the coach and let them attend to your child.*
- Do not ski down the race hill while your child is racing. Focusing on the course is tough enough without the added pressure of being followed.
Do support all racers during the race and especially in post-race ceremonies. Include all team members in photo opportunities, not just the top finishers.
- Do encourage your children to be humble in victory and graceful in defeat.

Finally, it goes without saying that the WWT expects all parents and participants to maintain a positive attitude. Negative attitudes and derogatory comments will not be permitted. There are clear communication channels in place for providing feedback to coaches and program heads.

Training

- The WWT requires that all team members attend the Holiday Race Camp from December 28 - Jan 1 at Wintergreen. The level of participation depends on the desire and commitment of each individual racer. Before Holiday Camp and for the entire season it is critical to planning to please let the coaches know, via TeamSnap Availability, when practice will be missed. *Please fill out your **Availability on TeamSnap** to the best of your knowledge at least 1 week before practice or preferably for the whole season.*
- During the Holiday Race Camp we focus on safety, basic technical skills and building our endurance. Additionally, this is when the group starts to come together as a team, which makes it very important socially.
- It is imperative that all athletes arrive on time for all training activities. Morning training sessions begin with warm-ups at 7:45 and on most days, training continues until 11:00 AM for all age groups.
- Training/race schedules will be listed on the TeamSnap. These schedules may change due to snow related issues, or to take advantage of a special opportunity. Parents and racers will be notified of schedule changes by TeamSnap.
- The Race Team and the D-Team ski on weekends and vacations come rain, shine, cold or snow. The WWT does NOT cancel dryland training or weekend practices. If there is inclement weather you can use your own judgment as to whether to attend or not, but your child will

always remember the times he/she skied in the rain and in the cold, and they will be stronger for it.

- During training, please provide a nutritious snack for your child to stick in their pockets. Recommended snacks include dry and fresh fruit, crackers, and granola bars
- WWT skiers will not be allowed to participate in free skiing, gate training or races without a helmet. Slalom face guards are required when athletes begin to cross block.
- Likewise, functioning goggles must be worn during training. Athletes will NOT be allowed to participate in gate training without them. Sunglasses are not allowed for free skiing, training or racing. Goggles should be the correct size for the athlete, and ideally skiers should have at least two pairs of goggles, one for night and flat light conditions, and one darker for sunny days.

On Hill Activities:

On training days, given appropriate terrain and surface, we will have gates set up in either a Slalom or GS course from 8:00 to 10:00 AM. During this time, all race team members will run through the training course as many times as possible. During the 10:00 to 11:00 AM free ski period, coaches will lead small groups around the mountain, allowing time to work on individual technique in a fun, low pressure, high interaction situation. The structured elements taught in these sessions can be utilized while free skiing, later in the afternoon or while out at other mountains on family outings.

During morning gate training, athletes will be getting specific input to their needs, as identified by the coaches. This will include two-way conversations on the lift and in the course start and finish areas. This interaction will follow a plan set for the athletes based on their particular technical needs, past experience and performance, and the athlete- coach-parent communication loop. The quantity and visibility of this feedback will vary depending on the individual needs, specific situations, logistics and racing preparation/competition schedules.

Typical Wintergreen Training Day:

7:45 AM: Meet at ski school ready to go for warm-ups
8:00 -9:30 AM: Training session
9:30-10:00 AM: Pull and slip course
10:00- 11:00 AM: Directed free skiing with the coaches

Conduct Expectations of Racers

- Be courteous and sportsmanlike at all times. Remember that you wear the “Wintergreen Race Team” jacket and as you travel to other mountains you are representing Wintergreen: Do so with pride!
- Be cooperative with and responsive to coaches, ski area personnel and parent volunteers, and to the other skiers on the hill.
- Encourage and support your teammates and other competitors. Derogatory remarks are not allowed.
- Respect other’s belongings. Fooling around with another athlete’s equipment or belongings will not be tolerated.
- Profane or abusive language or behavior is not allowed at any time on the race course, in the lodge, after a race, in training, or any other time.
- Respect the ski areas. Be aware of your behavior, and ski courteously.

The WWT is not allowed to use Wintergreen’s, or any other resort’s, ski school lift lines outside of practice or when permitted at races

- Follow any and all special rules that are put in place to govern conduct on race days, including methods of inspection, and control your speed on public trails.
- Take time to thank at least one person who helped make your ski day possible, whether it is a ski area worker, patroller, race volunteer or parent.

YOU ARE NOW A MEMBER OF A TEAM, AND YOUR BEHAVIOR REFLECTS UPON EVERYONE ON THE TEAM!

Race Schedules

At the beginning of the season, the coaches select from the race schedule which races the team will attend. Attendance at these races is not required. Each racer ultimately (with input from coaches and parents) chooses his, or her, own race schedule. As a courtesy, we request that racers let the coaches know if they do not intend to participate in one of the scheduled races through the Availability function on TeamSnap.

We do not recommend that racers attend additional races outside the team schedule during December, January and February. These core months of the season are extremely busy, and we feel that extra races during this time are not beneficial. We choose the race schedule carefully

based on both our experience and national guidelines for skiers of different ages. We would always rather have the kid's hungry to race more than to get tired of racing. Also, please be aware that if you choose to attend a race that has not been designated by the coaches as a team race, we cannot guarantee coaching for that race.

Race Entries

Throughout the winter your child will have the opportunity to enter in several races. In order to participate, a racer must be a member of the Southern Alpine Racing Association (SARA), as well as the United States Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA). You can register online. Registration for the races is also electronic, normally through the website of SARA. The deadline for race registration is five days before the race and registering early ensures that your child will be on the start order. Links to these sites are found at the end of this guide.

Typical Race Day

- Parents (or someone designated by the parents) are responsible for transportation to the ski area and back home after the awards at the end of the day. Plan on arriving 1.5 hours before the start of the race. Please refer to the SARA website for race start times.
- Course inspection is always scheduled one hour before the start of the race. Racers should plan to meet their coaches 10 minutes before the course inspection time. Coaches will be responsible for supervision of the racers during course inspections and at that time, the coaches will inform the racers how much time they have before their run. *Parents are not permitted to ski through course inspection.*
- Know your start order and be at the start on time. It is the racer's responsibility to be at the start on time! Coaches will be at the start, and when possible along the course and at the finish.
- Once the racer has finished his or her first run, the parent (or designee) is responsible for the racer until the next course inspection. The second run starts roughly an hour after the last racer completes the first run. We will plan to get on the lift for inspection at least 45 minutes before the start of the second run. This means that parents will have to make sure that the kids eat lunch soon after their first run and keep an eye on them during this time. Make sure that their race bibs stay on!
- At the completion of the second run, the parent is again responsible for the child. This is a great time to take a few runs to explore the ski area before the awards ceremony, which are typically held one hour after the conclusion of the race. Please remember to turn in your race bib!
- We encourage everyone to attend the awards ceremonies, to show good sportsmanship, as well as support for the team and event organizers.

Race Day Thoughts and Issues

A Test Against the Clock

By the numbers, the time actually spent racing is less than 2/10ths of 1% of the time spent skiing and training, yet it is one of the most memorable parts of the season. **The focus of the WWT is on having fun, and developing skiing fundamentals through ski racing.** The races themselves provide challenges, opportunities to test oneself and encouragement to improve.

Relax and Ski

For coaches, the focus on race day is to help the racers relax and transfer their skill set to a competitive arena. Almost all athletes are nervous on race days. They turn to parents for encouragement and support. Be positive and try to emphasize the effort, not the outcome. By demonstrating a positive and relaxed approach to ski racing, your child can focus on having fun in the race course.

Keeping Track of Clothing

Most racers will shed clothing at the start of the race. Whenever possible coaches and/or parent volunteers will take these coats and warm-ups down to the finish or into the lodge. To make sure your child finishes the day with everything he/she started with, **write your child's name and phone number on everything.**

Scoreboard and Results

Praise the performance not the results. Coaches always ask the skiers how they skied, not how they placed in the race or how many seconds they added. They rely on their parents to let them know the world is still okay even if they don't reach their goals for a specific day, and on their coaches to remind them that every race is a new opportunity to succeed.

Equipment and Clothing

It is vital that your child is properly dressed and has well-suited equipment that is properly tuned. If you have questions regarding your child's equipment, please ask one of the coaches.

- **What clothing does my child need?**

Warm parka, warm-up pants (side zip to take them off at races), gloves or mittens, helmet, neck gaiter/buff, one pair of wool or polypro sock, long underwear, turtleneck, sweater or fleece. While it is not required, many racers have a team jacket. At the end of each season, the Boosters place a large order for Race Jackets for the following year. In addition, at the beginning of the season we hold a Team Swap of new and gently used, equipment and clothing.

• **Does my child need a Competition Suit?**

Studies tell us that the aerodynamic benefit of a young racer wearing a comp suit is negligible. The advantage is almost purely psychological. As investments go, buying a comp suit pales in value when compared to dedicating money to keeping your child's skis tuned. If you do buy a comp suit, you must also purchase side zip warm-up pants. Racers will lose exponentially more time if they are cold than they will by wearing a suit. On the positive side, if well taken care of, a comp suit will last many years.

• **How many pairs of skis should my racer have?**

If it is the child's first year on the race team, then one pair of Slalom skis is sufficient. In order to race in both Slalom and GS you must have the correct equipment as detailed in the USSA Competition Guide.

• **Do my child's skis need to be tuned?**

YES!!! Sharp edges and properly functioning equipment are essential for both training and racing. We will do all we can to give you opportunities to learn tuning skills through clinics and mentoring. However, most kids do not have the strength and/or fine motor skills to take care of their own skis and we suggest utilizing the expertise of the technicians on the mountain or at Freestyle.

The Racer's Race/Training Day Checklist

Post this checklist somewhere you will see it before heading out to ski. Remember to bring multiple layers of clothing, so you can add if you are cold, or take off if you are hot. And most importantly, label everything - boots, skis, poles, clothes, etc. Boots Skis Poles

Helmet Goggles Gloves

Ski Socks (thin wool or polypro)

Long Underwear
 Fleece or sweater

Jacket

Side-zip Warm-up
Pants Hat Neck
Gaiter Snack, Lunch
or Money Ski Pass

- ❑ Any special race clothing/equipment

Accommodations at Race Venues

Some races are held within commuting distance of Wintergreen while others are held at resorts that will require an overnight stay. Often, WWT families share condos to help defray the costs of accommodations and provide a built-in social network for the children. The following is a list of accommodations at some of the resorts to which we travel.

Bryce Resort www.bryceresort.com

Many families stay at the resort so the kids can enjoy downtime together.

<https://bryceresort.com/mountain-resort-lodging/>

There is also a Super 8 (approx. 12 miles from the resort)
540-477-2911

Massanutten Resort, VA www.massresort.com

Massanutten is approximately 45-60 minutes away from Wintergreen so many families commute to races at Massanutten without staying overnight.

Canaan/Timberline, WV

Canaan has beautiful accommodations at their resort and many families opt to stay there.

www.deerfieldvillage.com 1-800-342-3217 www.timberlinerealty.com

1-800-633-6682

Winterplace Resort, WV www.winterplace.com

There is a strip of hotels (Comfort Inn, Best Western, etc.) all 25 minutes from the resort in Beckley, WV. We recommend searching hotels/rates in Beckley on the travel websites (Expedia, Travelocity, etc.).

Snowshoe Mountain Resort, WV www.snowshoemtn.com

www.snowshoevacationrentals.com

Snowshoe Races are typically held on Widowmaker slope. The closest lodging to that slope is “Top of the World” which you can book privately through AirBNB, VRBO, etc. or through the resort

Sugar Mountain Ski Resort, Banner Elk, NC

www.skisugar.com

Sugar has several accommodation options. If you have pets, the Best Western is fantastic and breakfast is included. Many families stay there so athletes can enjoy downtime together. You can also find lodging through www.skisugar.com

Important Websites

Membership registration, Regional Race schedules, and for Race Registration

www.saraski.org www.ussa.org

Local source for Race equipment and Ski tuning

www.freestyleonline.com *For National Race*

Results www.live-timing.com

Mountain Conditions and Snow Reports

www.onthesnow.com

Class Definitions determined by age as of Dec. 31

U19 = 16, 17 & 18 years old

U16 = 14 & 15 years old

U14 = 12 & 13 years old

U12 = 10 & 11 years old

U10= 8 & 9 years old