



Stevens Pass Alpine Club  
Athlete and Family  
Handbook  
2020 – 2021



Dear Member,

On behalf of the coaching staff and the Board of the Directors, I would like to welcome you to Stevens Pass Alpine Club (SPAC). Many of you are returning members, while others may not only be new to our program, but are new to ski racing. We understand that each of you has different needs, and we will do our best to accommodate you.

SPAC has a long tradition of team spirit and camaraderie and is recognized for developing skiers of all abilities. Like many youth sports, the importance of having a strong parental support group cannot be emphasized enough. Without the volunteer help of parents our program cannot exist. We strongly encourage you to get involved to enhance the athlete experience, increase your knowledge, and help the club succeed overall. Please reach out to the Board, the Program Director or the Chief of Race for volunteer ideas that best fit your interests and the needs of the club.

We will make every effort to keep you informed throughout the ski season. Please check the website on a regular basis ([www.spacracing.com](http://www.spacracing.com)) for information and updates. You can also check your personal calendar at [www.smartsheet.com](http://www.smartsheet.com) for information specific to you.

The coaching staff and the Board of Directors encourage your input. If you have any questions and / or concerns please contact us. I sincerely hope your experience with SPAC encourages a life-long passion for skiing and look forward to a white winter.

*Dave Lyon*

Program Director

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## SPAC Staff and Administration

### SPAC Contact Information

**SPAC Email:** [info@spacracing.com](mailto:info@spacracing.com)

**SPAC website:** [www.spacracing.com](http://www.spacracing.com)

**SPAC Personal calendars:** TeamSnap

### SPAC Mailing Address:

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c/o Lee Podawiltz  
611 Pine Street  
Edmonds, WA 98020

### SPAC Staff

#### Program Director:

Dave Lyon [dave@spacracing.com](mailto:dave@spacracing.com)

#### Mighty Mite Head Coach (6-13 years old):

Nils-Eric Riise [nils@nwi.net](mailto:nils@nwi.net)

#### Freeride Program Director:

Frank Martin [spreeride@gmail.com](mailto:spreeride@gmail.com); [stevenspassfreeride.com](http://stevenspassfreeride.com)

### SPAC Administration

Position	Name	Email
President (Board of Directors)	Kate Cudney	<a href="mailto:presbod@spacracing.com">presbod@spacracing.com</a>
Chief of Race	Stuart Larson	<a href="mailto:chiefofrace@spacracing.com">chiefofrace@spacracing.com</a>
Race Administrator	Jason Cohen/Amee Forbes	<a href="mailto:raceadmin@spacracing.com">raceadmin@spacracing.com</a>
Volunteer Coordinator	Jakub Oleksy	<a href="mailto:volunteer@spacracing.com">volunteer@spacracing.com</a>
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### Board of Directors

Position	Name	Email
President	Kate Cudney	<a href="mailto:presbod@spacracing.com">presbod@spacracing.com</a>
Vice President	Michael Schmidt	<a href="mailto:Michael@spacracing.com">Michael@spacracing.com</a>
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Member	Kurt Westman	<a href="mailto:kurt@spacracing.com">kurt@spacracing.com</a>
Member	Mike Ulvestad	<a href="mailto:mikeul@live.com">mikeul@live.com</a>
Stevens Pass Representative	Ben Fok	<a href="mailto:Bsfok@vailresorts.com">Bsfok@vailresorts.com</a>

## Mission Statement

Stevens Pass Alpine Club is a competitive alpine sports club, fostering the development of alpine athletes of every age, with each athlete representing the highest level of sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership, and personal responsibility.

## Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

Stevens Pass Alpine Club is a competitive alpine sports club based at Stevens Pass Mountain Resort, Washington, whose primary focus is upon competitive alpine ski racing, while including a separately managed competitive freeride skiing program. Membership consists principally of competitors and their parents. Stevens Pass Alpine Club is a member of the [Pacific Northwest Ski Association](#) (PNSA), which includes Washington, Oregon and Northern Idaho. PNSA is a division in the [USSA Western Region](#) which is part of the [United States Ski and Snowboard Association](#) (USSA). The PNSA competition program is the first step for local racers in national and international amateur alpine ski racing competition.

Stevens Pass Alpine Club is a tax exempt, not-for-profit corporation, whose Guiding Principles are:

- To promote the sport of amateur alpine ski racing, free ride skiing, and related winter sports.
- To foster a lifelong passion for winter sports among its athletes.
- To assist in the promotion of amateur alpine ski racing and free ride skiing at the local and regional levels, and to foster development towards national and international amateur skiing competitions.
- To coordinate with the USSA, and its related members, in educating its members and potential members or potential amateur skiing competitors in all aspects of skiing competition and coaching.
- To sponsor and maintain educational opportunities designed to train skiing coaches through USSA and PSIA sanctioned programs.
- To assist skiing competitors in pursuing college level competition and education, as well as provide guidance towards those seeking further careers in alpine snow sports.
- To nurture a competitive sports environment, which builds character, values, and good sportsmanship for all participants.

## Outline of Programs

SPAC serves children 6 & over interested in the challenge of ski racing. All participants will be evaluated at the beginning of each season and placed into training groups based upon ability, pace, stamina, aggressiveness and emotional maturity.

All participants in the Intro, Mighty Mite and Junior Programs will be evaluated and must be able to demonstrate sufficient skill as determined by the SPAC coaches, to be able to participate. At a minimum, athletes must be able to meet the following criteria:

1. Must be capable of skiing all major runs at Stevens Pass in most conditions, while maintaining an "open-parallel" skill level.
2. Must be able to load and ride ALL chairlifts, independently.
3. Must be capable of finding their way around the mountain independently.
4. Must be able to manage all gear (helmets, gloves, poles, bindings, etc.) independently.
5. Must be physically and emotionally strong enough to gather their own equipment after a fall and to get their equipment back on in a reasonable amount of time, unassisted.
6. Must be mature enough to separate from parents without anxiety.
7. Must follow all safety rules and stay with their group AT ALL TIMES.
8. Must show respectful behavior toward coaches and other athletes. Athletes determined to be unable to meet the criteria in the first-day evaluation, will not be accepted as members of SPAC and will receive a full refund

### **U Class Explained (Based upon age as of December 31<sup>st</sup>):**

U8	(2013, 2014) = 6 & 7 years old
U10	(2011, 2012) = 8 & 9 years old
U12	(2009, 2010) = 10 & 11 years old
U14	(2007, 2008) = 12 & 13 years old
U16	(2005, 2006) = 14 & 15 years old
U19	(2002, 2003, 2004) = 16, 17 & 18 years old
U21	(2000, 2001) = 19, & 20 years old

### **Non-Competitive Programs (These programs do NOT include competing in races):**

#### **"INTRO" Program (10 Weeks)**

The Intro program is designed for young skiers aged 6 to 13 who want to try ski racing without making a full-season commitment and/or competing in races. Our year-end goal is to make sure all participants can ski the entire mountain, have fun on and off the race course and love the sport of skiing. This program runs 10 weekends. Choose one day or two days. The program starts in early December and runs through the end of February, with time off through the Christmas holidays. No competitions are included in this program.

#### **All-Mountain JR Ski Program (10 Weeks)**

All-Mountain JR Ski Program is a 10-week program designed for skiers aged 13 + years of age. It incorporates aspects of All Mountain skiing as well as an introduction to racing. We work on building the sound fundamentals needed for all mountain skiing and racing. Choose one day or two days. The program starts in early December and runs through the end of February, with time off through the Christmas holidays. No competitions are included in this program.

## **Competitive Programs (These programs include competing in races):**

### **Mighty Mite Programs U8, U10, U12 and U14 (Ages 6 to 13 as of Dec 31)**

Mighty Mite Programs are for children 6 to 13 years old. All participants are evaluated at the start of each season and placed into training groups based upon ability, pace, stamina, aggressiveness and emotional maturity. Groups remain fluid throughout the season to best meet the needs of each athlete. The Mighty Mite Programs include traveling to two races at other ski areas as well as Mighty Mite races at Stevens Pass.

#### **SHORT SEASON Mighty Mite Program (10 weeks) U8, U10, U12 (Ages 6 to 11 as of Dec 31)**

The Short Season Mighty Mite Program is a 10-week program for children who want to have a race training experience and are ready to compete in races. The Short Season Program begins in early December, has time off for the Christmas holiday, then resumes after the first of the year and runs every weekend through the last weekend of February. Choose one day or two days. Short Season athletes can upgrade to the Full-Season Program at any time. PARENT NOTE: Whether you choose one day or two days for your program, you should still plan (if possible) to see both race days for the Mighty Mite races.

#### **FULL SEASON Mighty Mite Program U8, U10, U12 (Ages 6 to 11 as of Dec 31)**

The Full Season Mighty Mite Program runs the entire season, from early December through April. This is for athletes interested in more rapid skill development. The longer season allows a better opportunity to learn and incorporate new movement patterns. The Full Season program begins in early December, has time off for the Christmas holiday, then resumes after the first of the year and runs every weekend through early April. Choose to train one day, two days or three days. The three day program is Friday afternoon/evening, Saturday and Sunday. PARENT NOTE: Whether you choose one day or two days for your program, you should still plan (if possible) to see both race days for the Mighty Mite races.

#### **U14 Program (Ages 12 to 13 as of Dec 31)**

The U14 Program is specifically designed for the 12 and 13 year old and is a full-season, one, two or three day program. It takes into consideration the varied developmental levels of this age athlete and works with them to achieve their goals. Depending upon their personal interest and what is best for their development, athletes in this program will have the opportunity to compete at both Mighty Mite and lower level Junior races. This age group is limited by USSA as to the number of Junior level races they can attend during the season. This group is starting the transition into Junior racing. U14 may choose from:

- 1 Day program (Saturday OR Sunday)
- 2 Day program (Saturday AND Sunday)
- 3 Day Program (Friday afternoon/evening, Saturday and Sunday)

### **Junior Program U16, U18, U21 and PG (Post Graduates) (Ages 14 + as of Dec. 31)**

The Junior Program is a full-season, two or more day a week program designed for dedicated racers aged 14+. All participants are evaluated at the start of each season and followed throughout the season. Training groups will be fluid to best meet the needs of each athlete. Participants work closely with coaches to develop individualized training regimes, on and off-snow. Participation at up to eight select races is included in the program. Not all Junior athletes will attend every race. An individualized race

plan will be created by the Junior Head Coach with athlete input. Qualifying athletes choosing to attend additional races with coach approval, will incur additional race fees.

### **2 Day Junior Program (Saturday and Sunday)**

The Two-Day Junior Program begins in early December, has time off for the Christmas holiday, then resumes at the first of the year and runs every weekend through early April.

### **3 Day Junior Program (Friday, Saturday, Sunday)**

The Three-Day Junior Program includes Friday afternoon/evening (evening training will be offered according to the Stevens Pass night skiing schedule), Saturday and Sunday training. It begins in early December, has time off for the Christmas holiday, then resumes at the first of the year and runs every weekend through early April. This program is designed for the Junior athlete wishing to make a greater commitment to their development and improvement.

### **4 Day Junior program (Mid-week night, Friday, Saturday, Sunday)**

The Four-Day Junior Program is an all-inclusive program for Junior aged athletes attending school. It includes one mid-week night, Friday afternoon/evening, Saturday and Sunday training through April. This Program includes Christmas Camp. The Program begins early December and runs four times per week through April. (Night training is dictated by ski area operation)

### **Full-Time and Post Graduate Programs**

The Full Time and Post Graduate Programs are open to serious athletes aged 14 to 23 years old, striving to achieve success at the regional, national and international levels. Athletes are coached year-round including goal-setting and tracking, athlete advocacy, year-round conditioning programs and on-snow training 5-6 days per week December through April (including Christmas Camp). Early season on-snow coaching will be provided as conditions and opportunities allow. Travel, lodging, meals, lift tickets, race entries fees, fall and summer camps are additional. The training schedule at Stevens Pass will be adapted for athlete race and travel schedules. Training hours and length will be adjusted as conditions and performance dictate, but are intended to be held between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm.

### **Master's Program**

The Master's Program is for racers 21 + years old. Ski racing at its best is all about the love of the sport, and Masters is ski racing at its best. No racing career to worry about, no parents' or coaches' expectations to live up to; just the racing. And there's always another race. Join fun-loving racers of all age classes and abilities at a different ski area almost every winter weekend. Whether you're 21 years old, or 80+, never raced, or a World Cup winner, your speed is relative, but your ski racing enjoyment is absolute!

### **Freeride Program**

In addition to its alpine racing programs, SPAC is affiliated with the Stevens Pass Freeride Team to offer athletes greater choice in the winter alpine pursuits.





## Outline of Events

### **June, July, August:**

The close proximity of Mt Hood, OR provides SPAC athletes an excellent opportunity to race train during the summer. Summer race camp is a great way to secure new movements patterns and get a jump on next season's training. Mt Hood has many excellent camps to choose from. Athletes should consult the SPAC Program Director and coaches for the most appropriate summer camp for their racing and skiing development.

### **September:**

A family BBQ and ski swap is typically held in September.

### **October, November:**

Enrollment for the current season opens. Dryland training begins and is open to all Mighty Mites and Juniors. Juniors start in early October and Mighty Mites start in early November. Both groups finish the weekend before Thanksgiving. Dryland training is offered on Saturday and/or Sunday. Athletes work on improving their conditioning, balance, strength, agility, endurance and athleticism. Skiing-related movement patterns are reinforced. A parent meeting/social is scheduled for November 10.

### **December, January, February, March, April:**

On-snow training begins the first weekend in December, or the first weekend that the ski area is open. The short-season training ends about the last weekend in February. The long-season training ends early April. All dates are dependent on snow and weather conditions.

### **May:**

A family BBQ is typically planned for early May to celebrate the accomplishments of the season and recognize each athlete's contributions.

## Policies

### **PAYMENTS & REFUNDS:**

A non-refundable deposit of 50% is due by November 15th to hold your spot. Final payments are due the first day of on-snow training. No refunds will be given except in the case of injury. Refunds will be given upon receipt of doctor's advisory. All refunds are subject to a \$100 administrative fee. Refunds will be processed after the last day of scheduled training for the season and will be pro-rated. Refund requests must be made prior to the last day of training.

### **BALANCES OWING:**

By registering, the account holder accepts that SPAC will automatically bill the method of payment selected when registering (e-check or credit card) in the amount of the balance due on December 1st. Fees incurred during the season for which there is an unpaid balance, will automatically be charged to the account payment method on file, on the last day of each month.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERING:**

Stevens Pass Alpine Club staffs up to 7 races per season at Stevens Pass. Parent participation is essential so that SPAC continues to put on excellent races and draw high participation from PNSA clubs. While SPAC is a very strong partner with Stevens Pass Ski Area, it is a non-profit club and independent from the area. Tuition, fundraisers, race fees and donations fund SPAC. Therefore, a successful SPAC program requires a strong parent commitment and each SPAC family is expected to volunteer at the levels shown below or more for **each** athlete enrolled in any Mighty Mite or Junior SPAC program. If you prefer not to volunteer at the minimum levels below, the buyout amount will be added to the cost of **each** enrolled athlete's tuition at the conclusion of the season. If you prefer to opt out at the beginning of the season, the buyout can be paid at time of registration.

Athletes participating in the Intro Program (this program does not include competing in races) are exempt from the volunteer commitment, although all SPAC families are encouraged to participate. Coaches with athletes on the team will receive credit toward their volunteer commitment by coaching at home races as well as volunteer positions. Becoming active in our club as a volunteer is one of the best ways you can learn more about the sport of ski racing and connect with other members of our club. SPAC families are also encouraged to volunteer at away races.

Volunteering at a SPAC Club Race is a great opportunity to try new positions (no license requirements), shadow experienced volunteers and meet other parents, but it is also a requirement for any families participating in a competitive program. Remember, registration fees cover coaching costs while revenue from races helps us fund other club needs. If you cannot meet the minimum volunteer commitment, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator by January 1st to make other arrangements to support the team—exceptions to the Volunteer Policy require approval by the Board of Directors.

2020/2021 Minimum Volunteer Commitment per athlete (cap: 2 athletes per family):

Program	Requirement	Buyout	Charge per day not worked
One Day Mighty-Mite	2 Days	\$400	\$200
Two Day Mighty-Mite	4 Days	\$500	\$125
Junior	4 Days	\$600	\$150

**CANCELLATION POLICY:**

Schedule changes will be communicated weekly via email, web site and personal calendars (Smartsheet). Cancelled sessions primarily due to ski area closure or safety concerns will be rescheduled as possible. In the event we are unable to train at Stevens Pass for lack of snow, training may be moved to other ski areas. Additional expenses associated with travel to other ski areas for training (i.e. lift tickets, lodging, and gas) is the responsibility of each athlete. Sessions may be rescheduled on snow or as dryland training. Check the ski area website for closure information at [www.stevenspass.com](http://www.stevenspass.com).

**MAKE-UPS:**

Athletes may add additional training days for days missed by attending on another day that week or extending into the long season for short season athletes. There is no opportunity for fulltime, program participants to make-up missed sessions.

**HELMETS, MOUTH GUARDS & BACK PROTECTORS:**

All SPAC athletes are required to wear a helmet whenever they are participating in SPAC skiing activities and strongly encouraged to wear them whenever on snow. Mouth guards are strongly suggested anytime athletes are running gates, training or racing. Back protectors are strongly suggested for all SPEED training sessions and races. These are rigid safety requirements set by USSA, the national governing body for ski racing, and SPAC athletes will be asked by their coaches to wear them before being allowed to train or compete at Stevens Pass or at any other training or racing event supported by SPAC, PNSA, or West Region.

**RACES:**

Athlete participation in races is an important component to the overall development of a competitive alpine athlete. The balance of time between free skiing, drills, gate training and competitive races is different by age group and can vary for each athlete depending on their own interests and development. USSA has and will continue to provide excellent information about SkillsQuest, Alpine Training System matrix and Alpine Training System presentation to coaches, athletes and parents to provide a healthy and fun progression in skill development. SPAC urges all parents, athletes and coaches to be continuously knowledgeable about the sport, rules/ regulations and athlete development. USSA provides great information on their site ([www.usa.org](http://www.usa.org)) on all of the above. In particular, they have provided a one page matrix of skills development progression which is linked below.

[http://alpine.usskiteam.com/sites/default/files/documents/athletics/alpine/2011-12/documents/ats\\_matrix\\_september\\_09.pdf](http://alpine.usskiteam.com/sites/default/files/documents/athletics/alpine/2011-12/documents/ats_matrix_september_09.pdf)

In alignment with USSS's overall development philosophy, the Program Director and coaches give careful consideration each year to which races are appropriate for athletes at each U level. Hence, athletes are expected to participate ONLY in the SPAC program race schedule approved for their U level to support the skills and confidence development of those U level athletes. Attendance at races, outside the approved schedule, without a SPAC coach in attendance, is strongly discouraged unless the athlete requests and receives an approval from the Program Director prior to the event.

To prepare for the season, athletes and parents should review the SPAC race schedule for their U level. There may be some variation of approved races from year to year. The race schedule could also change during the season based on conditions or other circumstances. If you have any questions, please contact the Program Director for clarification.

Generally, Mighty Mites (U8-U12) will compete in 6 races throughout the season. U14s will also compete in the same 6 races plus a select few Junior level races in the middle and end of the season. Juniors will participate in up to 8 races that include Tech and Speed events. Each Junior will also have an individual race plan developed with the Junior Head Coach and/ or Program Director to ensure appropriate skill level development and competition.

Attendance at some races (ex: Sun Cup, U14 Championships, and races other than SPAC selected races) requires additional fees for both training days and race days.

PARENT NOTE: On race days, families typically meet between 7-7:30am in the Pacific Crest Lodge (if you're at Steven's Pass) or at the main lodge at whichever ski mountain the race is held. Coaches like to have the kids geared up and ready to warm up and slip the course by 8:00am.

#### **USSS MEMBERSHIP:**

All SPAC athletes are expected to be members of USSA. Mighty Mite aged participants need a Youth membership. U16/ U18/ U21 classified Junior-aged participants need a Competitor membership. USSA membership allows athletes to participate in USSA sanctioned races and insures the hosting organization against injury. Moreover, U21/U18 athletes that plan to race in FIS levels races are required to purchase a FIS license in addition to a USSA license. Initial sign up and yearly renewals for both licenses can usually be done at the same time online or through mail. For membership information and forms go to [www.ussa.org](http://www.ussa.org).

# Training

## Philosophy of Training

SPAC training consists of a balance of directed free skiing / ski improvement, race training, inter-squad races and competitive racing. The blend changes as racers improve and become more experienced. The primary focus remains the same.... FUN!

*“Great racers at their optimum spend most of their time free skiing, not in the gates.”  
Bill Egan, US Ski Team Head Coach*

Training groups will change often, sometimes daily. How the athletes are grouped on any given day will be dependent upon the developmental needs of the team and conditions. Some days athletes will be grouped by pace, other times by program, often by a shared “deficiency” in their skiing, occasionally by gender and for behavior management, if necessary. Training groups will be made each morning at the coaches meeting.

Early-morning speed training will be available to Junior Program athletes and selected U14s, *by invitation only*. There is a minimum skill base that must be achieved before speed training can take place. Safety first! Moreover, ONLY participating athletes and coaches are allowed on the hill during this training. No one else is allowed on the hill unless specifically approved in advance for EACH session by the Program Director for course setup/ tear down related support. This is a non-negotiable safety rule by Stevens Pass and if broken, it can jeopardize SPAC’s ability to offer such training at Stevens Pass.

We also believe that the best athletes in the world excel because they have been exposed to different athletic experiences. The more athletic experiences a racer has, the more tools they will bring to ski racing. The more they will understand of themselves in “time and space”. We know that children grow to be the best people they can be, when they are given the opportunity to follow all their interests; sports, music, drama, art, church, and school. And ultimately, it is time spent with their family that is most meaningful. Therefore, we break regular training during the holidays to give families time to enjoy together.

*“Ski racers should not specialize early, not before the age of 15 - 16 or even 18 – 19. Playing many sports, games, and activities is crucial to athletic development. Art, music, drama, academics, family adventure should all be supported, every “passion” encouraged.”  
Bill Egan US Ski Team Head Coach*

While training, we will begin by focusing on each athlete’s strengths. We don’t want to focus on athletes’ weaknesses so much that we neutralize their strengths. Nor do we want to develop their weaknesses at the expense of their strengths. We **DO** want to develop their strengths as far as we can before we get bogged down in their weaknesses. There is something that they are doing well or they wouldn’t be here. It’s our job to remind them of that!

We also want to promote taking ownership for what they can control, their effort. “It’s you, not the ski.” “Do you give the credit to your skis when you do well: how can you blame your skis when you do poorly”? It’s not about whom you beat; it’s about whether or not you did all you could do. In training (a race is just a really short training session), we are striving for success. Winning races is not the measure of a person’s worth or their success. Success is more than winning the race; it’s doing your best job. A

podium finish that comes from a less than stellar effort, will pale in comparison to any run the athlete walks away from knowing they did their very best, regardless of their race result. Therefore, one question we will constantly direct them toward is “Do you practice hard or hardly practice?”

Our philosophy on coaching is simple. Most “race coaches” don’t understand skill acquisition. They think by doing a drill or skiing gates enough, “IT” will happen automatically. SPAC coaches understand skill development and how to create progressions. All the coaches work together to develop and present one common message. One common message helps the athlete focus on their goal and see where they stand on their journey.

Our training goals are simple. We will celebrate even the smallest victories. We live in the moment...and take time to reflect on and recognize all successes. We make taking chances safe. We **PLAY EVERY DAY!!**

*“Learning a new movement is a radical act. We have to travel with our bodies, quite literally, into the unknown. To do so, we necessarily face the moment when we risk the possibility of failure. But there is a paradox in that moment of risk-taking. To be willing to risk, a person must first be comfortable with (or at least tolerant of) feeling vulnerable. In a performance-oriented environment, with its goal of perfection, no one wants to feel vulnerable; no one wants to make a mistake. The willingness to risk is suppressed, the ability to learn thwarted.”*

*Mermer Blakeslee*

### **Training Logistics**

Athletes should meet at the SPAC Shack at 8:45am, ready to depart and train at 9:00am. If you are late, it is your responsibility to find a training group on the mountain, or return on time after lunch for assignment. Lunch break will be from 11:00am – 12:00pm. Training ends at 2:00pm for Intro and Mighty Mites, 3:00 pm for Juniors.

If your child is taking part in early morning speed training, they will meet at a pre-determined time and place to load the lift. They will then be expected to meet-up with the regular group at a time determined by their coaches and communicated to the athletes before the end of speed training.

While training, all athletes must make every attempt to stay with the group. If an athlete becomes separated from their group, they are to wait at the bottom of the lift where the separation occurred, until the group loops around again. Sometimes separation occurs when an athlete takes a different route to a different lift. If after waiting 20 minutes, their group does not appear, they are to head to the SPAC Shack and wait for their coach. Athletes are required to stay with a “buddy” at all times while cycling a course and for bathroom breaks.

### **Schedule**

An initial training and race schedule will be produced in November, available on the website. The schedule will be updated to meet the needs of the team and to align with any limitations and opportunities that weather and snow conditions provide.

# Racing

## Philosophy of Racing

Races are fun and exciting! Races give an athlete a chance to evaluate their progress and an opportunity to create a map for improvement. A race provides an arena to measure many skills, those required to ski technically and tactically sound as well as character, personal fortitude, mental toughness and sportsmanship. Races won't make you faster or make you ski better.

A world-class ski racer spends their time on snow divided into thirds. One third is spent free skiing, one third training and one third racing. To help racers mature and improve, more of their time will be initially spent free-skiing and training with less racing. As they become adept and skilled, we will direct them toward a different balance that includes more racing.

While going to races is great fun, there are numerous risks associated with attending too many races. Weekly race attendance severely diminishes training time thereby squelching improvement, an overdevelopment of rote memory (by constantly being in gates) reduces the athletes ability to respond in unexpected situations, a solely performance-based race regime creates racer burn-out, and encourages the valuation of personal worth based on an outcome largely out of the athletes control, ultimately leading to poor self-esteem.

- **Mighty Mites**

Mighty Mite racers compete in Slalom (SL) and Giant Slalom (GS). No child has to race; however, at the appropriate point in their development, attendance at races is encouraged. Mighty Mite races are generally two-days. Racers may choose to participate in one or both days.

While ski racers train as a group, competition is individual. Each athlete is responsible for registering themselves for races. We will communicate details and produce reminders, but ultimately each racer is responsible for making sure they are registered in time with appropriate fees paid.

When traveling to away races, a Mighty Mite team parent will often coordinate group lodging reservations. To assist this volunteer effort, it makes a big difference when each family communicates their needs, in a timely manner, and then secures their reservation by the deadline with their own credit card. A lodging parent volunteer is only responsible for securing a block of lodging which can only be held for a specific period of time.

Each family is responsible for their own meals. However, a Mighty Mite team parent will often coordinate a team/ family dinner the Saturday night of races. These dinners are always a memorable highlight of each away race!

The team will meet at a pre-determined time and location early on race mornings. Prior to the meeting time, you will need to purchase a lift ticket and go to race check-in to pick-up your bib. Attach your ticket to a boot buckle or helmet...not your coat! Put your bib on over whatever clothing you will be wearing to race in.

When the course is set and ready for inspection, athletes will inspect the course with their coach. There is etiquette to course inspection, which every racer will be held accountable for knowing. Parents MAY NOT inspect the course or enter the race arena. The coach will stop often along the course to discuss tactics and strategy.

When not actually racing their runs, time will be spent training under a coach's supervision. Training groups will be determined around the race start order. After inspection, until race start, the team will cycle and warm-up together.

During the race there will be coaches at the top and bottom of the course. The remainder of the coaching staff will cycle with athletes on the hill to keep them warm and working on skills. Parents are not allowed inside the roped off start area. Parents and families are encouraged to help move clothing from the top of the course to the bottom, watch the race and cheer the accomplishment of all the racers.

Race times will be posted on a scoreboard at the end of the run. Posted times are not official. After all competitors have had their run, DNF (did not finish) and DQ's (disqualified) will be posted. Athletes are discouraged from monitoring the score board before and after their run.

Athletes are expected to attend the awards ceremony wearing their SPAC uniform and cheer the efforts of all the competitors according to the dictates of good sportsmanship.

- **Juniors**

Junior racers compete in Slalom (SL), Giant Slalom (GS), Super Giant Slalom (Super G) and Downhill (DH) depending on their skill level and ranking. The Junior Program race schedule will include up to eight race starts, additional starts may be added as needed for an athlete's development. The addition of races to an athlete's schedule will be a decision made by the athlete, coach and family together. Additional coaching fees will apply for additional races.

Junior races can be two or more days. Juniors can compete in a number of different series, based upon their skill level and points. U16's should expect to participate in the U16 Series. U21's and U18's compete in either the Evergreen Cup, Northwest Cup series, FIS races, and any combination of the aforementioned depending on their interests, ability, race results, points and rankings. For a comprehensive explanation of each series of races, points and rankings calculations, see your current Competition Guide and/or the USSA and PNSA websites.

Like Mighty Mites, Junior-aged ski racers train in a group and compete as individuals. Each athlete is usually responsible for registering themselves for races. FIS races can be exceptions. We will communicate details and produce reminders for U16's and expect U21's and U18's to stay in constant communication with their coaches to determine their race schedule, but ultimately each racer is responsible for making sure they are registered in time with appropriate fees paid. At the Junior level, the standard USSA entry form found at the back of your USSA Competition Guide will be required. The host team's website often accessed through the PNSA web site or the SPAC Smartsheet is your resource for logistical questions about entry fees and deadlines. Those addresses are available in your USSA Comp Guide.

When Junior racers travel to away races, a Junior team parent will often coordinate group lodging reservations. Like Mighty Mites, each family will be responsible for communicating their needs, in a timely manner, and will be further responsible for securing their reservation by the deadline with their own credit card.



Each family is responsible for their own meals. The Junior team parent will often help coordinate team dinners the evenings of the first two race days when a group of athletes are attending a given race.

As racers mature, and move-up into the Junior age-classes, we will teach them and then expect them to act more and more autonomously at races. These are the logical and necessary steps to prepare athletes for racing at the highest levels.

The U16 years will serve as the athletes' transition period. Coaches will conduct course inspection with the athletes and work the top and bottom of the course but athletes will be responsible for making their race starts, cycling and training with guided independence. As U21's and U18's, athletes will be solely responsible for managing their personal logistics at races and the coach's responsibilities will include; getting the athletes to the race if traveling together, representing them at meetings and keeping them informed of last minutes changes by race organizers, working the start of the race, monitoring and managing DQ's, DNF's, DNS's and protests, and using their expertise to lend advice and offer support as needed.

## Equipment

The required equipment for participation in SPAC is a helmet, mouth guard, skis, boots and poles. Wearing a team uniform is encouraged. Other safety equipment and special race clothing is available, but not required.

- **Boots**

Boots are the most important equipment to ski racing. An appropriately sized boot with the proper flex is required to be able to utilize proper ski technique and maximize the potential of athletes' skis. "Shell-fitting" is the most accurate way to size a boot. We recommend shell fitting because new liners tend to give a false impression that the boot may be too tight. After determining the correct size through the shell-fitting process, you should definitely try on the boot with the liner. Boot flex should be determined by weight, performance and level of aggression of an athlete.

- **Skis**

Due to the nature of USSA competitions, considering the scope of abilities, ages and physical maturity, USSA does not specify competition rules regarding ski length and radius for USSA events. There are restrictions for side cut and length of skis for all levels of FIS racing. Athletes competing in FIS events must compete on equipment that is in compliance with FIS rules. USSA does not currently plan to institute rules regarding ski length and radius for future seasons. However, this matter continues to be reviewed and each athlete is responsible for racing on appropriate equipment.

There are however, standheight and boot sole thickness restrictions. Standheight is the measurement of from the base of the ski to the top surface of the binding heel plate. Standheight can be no greater than 50mm for children 14 and younger, and no greater than 55mm for racers 15 and older. Boot sole thickness is the measurement from the sole of the boot to the surface of the footbed under the heel. Boot sole thickness cannot be greater than 45mm for all athletes.

Mighty Mites need only one pair of properly maintained skis. It is suggested that that ski be a slalom ski in a GS length for the best versatility, performance and to allow for growth. At the Junior level, athletes with a high level of competency will want 2 to 3 pair of skis, depending on the events they will compete in. Most likely that would be a SL ski and a GS/SG ski. A good skier, which is what we are training at SPAC, does not perform well because of their equipment. Equipment is merely a tool. A great turn is always going to be faster than a mediocre turn on great equipment.

In order to make the right ski choice you are required to take into account several factors. The primary considerations are the height and weight of the athlete. There are other considerations that might play a role in ski choice for an athlete, such as what the racer has been using and how that model and size worked for them. Often ski choice is as simple as moving up a size if the ski design did not change.

For the smallest Mighty Mites, those who ski on skis below 120cm, there is no discernible difference between ski brands. All skis manufactured in those smaller sizes have the same technical components.

Before making a purchase of boots or skis, is it **STRONGLY** suggested that you get feedback from the head coach.

- **Poles**

Specialized poles are not required for Mighty Mite level racing. At the Junior level, athletes may wish to have GS, SG and/or downhill poles. Proper pole height is determined by turning the pole upside down. When grabbing the pole just under the basket, the elbow should be at 90 degrees. GS, SG and/ or DH poles may be slightly longer.

- **Helmets**

Helmets manufactured for ski racing are required for all SPAC athletes at all times. USSA and FIS require helmets for all athletes competing in downhill, super G and GS races and training. USSA further requires helmets for GS events for all age classes.

**TIPS FOR BUYING A HELMET:**

- To determine size, wrap a length of string around your head above the eyebrows and ears. Measure the string and use this measurement as a guideline.
- A properly fitted helmet will not move on the head. When tipped to the front & back the helmet will tug slightly at the scalp, but not slide on the hair.
- A young child's helmet should be lightweight (*a child's neck is 30% to 40% as strong as an adults*).
- Don't buy a helmet to "grow into" ...the safest helmet fits today.
- Never wear a hat beneath a helmet...the hat will compromise the fit and therefore the performance.
- Make sure the helmet will accommodate your goggles, sunglasses and/or prescription glasses.

- **Mouth guards**

Mouth guards may be purchased from local sporting goods stores and fit at home or may be purchased and fitted by your dentist. They may be attached to your helmet face guard or held on the helmet under the goggle strap.

- **Back Protectors**

Back Protectors are STRONGLY SUGGESTED for training and competing in speed events; Super G and Downhill. They are recommended for GS, especially for Junior level athletes, and eventually may be required by USSA. They can be purchased through the race catalogs referenced in the equipment resources listed below.

- **Protective Equipment**

Shin guards, pole guards, chin guards and padded clothing can be purchased for racers. Shin guards, pole guards and chin guards are used in slalom to protect racers against gate impact. Athletes don't need guards unless they are hitting the gates or fear of hitting the gates is keeping them from developing toward skiing a tighter line. Speed suits are not required for

Mighty Mites, but from a “social” perspective are advised. Junior-aged racers should wear speed suits for gate training and races.

**Equipment resources:**

Locally

**Westra Sports**

20 SW Everett Mall Way Ste 1

Everett, WA 98204

**Sturtevant's Bellevue**

1100 Bellevue Way NE

Bellevue, WA 98004

**World Cup Service Center**

1817 130th Ave NE

Bellevue, WA 98005

Online

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

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

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

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

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

Used Equipment

SPAC Website: <http://www.spacracing.com/>

PNSA Website: <http://www.pnsa.org>

## SPAC Code of Conduct

Being a Member of the Stevens Pass Alpine Club is something each racer should be proud of. While ski racing is an individual sport, each racer is a Member of SPAC. You train and compete not only for yourself, but also for your team, and as a member of the SPAC team, each racer needs to be considerate and supportive of their other team members at all times.

In addition, each racer, as a Member of SPAC, enjoys certain privileges at Stevens Pass, not available to the general public. SPAC, as you know it, would not be possible without the support and assistance of Stevens Pass. This support and these privileges cannot be taken for granted and cannot, and must not be abused. You must remember that while skiing / snowboarding at Stevens Pass, whether training or merely for fun, you will be considered to be a Member of SPAC. This is a responsibility that each racer must be aware of at all times.

### Racer Responsibilities:

- ◆ Race training will be held in designated areas only.
- ◆ Racers are responsible to follow ski area rules & regulations at all times.
- ◆ Racers may ski only on SPAC designated courses.
- ◆ Racers may only enter courses from the top, never under the tape/rope boundaries.
- ◆ If you fall and are not hurt, quickly move away from the race/training area.
- ◆ No sunglasses should be worn during race training.

The following are some infractions that may result in immediate suspension or expulsion from the ski area and/or SPAC, *with no refund*:

- ◆ *Possession, sale or consumption of any alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs or narcotics, use of any tobacco products.*
- ◆ *Reckless skiing.*
- ◆ *Bullying: Verbal, Social, Physical. For more information and examples, go to [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov).*
- ◆ *Disruptive or foul language.*
- ◆ *Disregard of ski area rules and safety regulations.*
- ◆ *Excessive speed and/or jumping in public areas.*
- ◆ *Skiing out of the ski area boundaries or in a closed area.*
- ◆ *Vandalism, theft.*
- ◆ *Blatant disregard of verbal instructions by authorities of the ski area or SPAC*
- ◆ *Fighting.*

### Discipline Policy

SPAC will take disciplinary action it deems appropriate when it concludes a racer or parent has not followed the Code of Conduct, or has otherwise engaged in behavior detrimental to SPAC. This policy is designed to provide guidelines for enforcing the Code of Conduct and correcting unacceptable behavior.

#### • SANCTIONED TRAINING / RULES PROCEDURE

The responsibility for enforcement of the Code of Conduct during sanctioned training and races rests with the Program Director or designee. Violations of the Code of Conduct occurring during training and races should be reported to the Program Director or designee for disciplinary action per the following guidelines:

1. All SPAC coaches may verbally reprimand (in a non-abusive fashion) a racer or parent for violations of the Code of Conduct or unacceptable behavior. The coach must report the reprimand to the Program Director as soon as possible. The Program Director shall, as soon as possible, inform the parent(s) of a racer's verbal reprimand. The Program Director shall inform the Board of Directors at the next regular Board meeting of any verbal reprimands administered by the SPAC coaching staff.
2. A verbal or written reprimand is a serious disciplinary action and may be accompanied by a racer's suspension of training or racing for the day the reprimand is issued, at the Program Director's discretion. A verbal reprimand accompanied by a suspension for a day must be reported to the Board of Directors at the next regular meeting. A copy of a written reprimand must be provided to the Board of Directors' President as soon as possible.
3. The Program Director, with the concurrence of the President, may suspend a racer for additional days of training or racing (not to exceed three in total) or from participation in one race for major violations of the Code of Conduct or for other unacceptable behavior. Any such suspensions shall be confirmed in writing and reported to the racer and the racer's parents. The President shall immediately report any suspensions to the Board.
4. For major and repeated violations of the Code of Conduct or other unacceptable behavior, the Board may suspend a racer from more than three days of training or more than one race or dismiss a racer from SPAC. Discipline requiring Board actions shall be initiated by a written report from the Program Director to the President. The President shall submit the request to the Membership Committee and the Membership Committee shall investigate the incident and request. The Membership Committee shall report the results of its investigation and recommendation within 72 hours to the Board, the racer, and the parents of the racer. The racer or racer's parents shall have 48 hours to respond to the investigation and recommendation of the Membership Committee. In accordance with Article 2 Section 4 of the Bylaws, the President or any Director may call a Board meeting on two days' notice for consideration of the Membership Committee's investigation and recommendation and the racer or parent's response.

• **CONDUCT AT ALL OTHER TIMES**

All SPAC racers are expected to honor the SPAC Code of Conduct at all times during the training season. Violations of the Code of Conduct at times other than during sanctioned training and races should be reported to the Program Director or President of the Board of Directors. The President will decide to: Administer a verbal warning; or: Convene the Membership Committee per item above; or: Defer disciplinary action to the next Board meeting.

## **Summary**

We hope this handbook has been helpful to inform, educate, prepare and excite every athlete and parent for what is a tremendous life learning experience with Stevens Pass Alpine Club. As with most handbooks, it is intended to cover the most important information but by no means will answer every question that may come up before or during a season. We invite you to always reach out to the Program Director, the coaches or the Board of Directors if you ever have any questions. The SPAC community is more connected through the sharing of information and feedback, which will enhance the positive experience for all members. Thank you for your great support!

# List of Races hosted by SPAC And Important Dates 2020 - 2021

## Terminology

**B Netting:** Specialized protective netting used to protect racers and maintain course boundaries.

**Banner tape:** Used to mark course boundaries.

**Bib:** Worn by racers, used for numerical identification.

**Break-away:** Flex-gate

**Brushes:** Training aid, used like gates to mark course.

**Chief of Course:** Responsible for course maintenance, oversees course setter.

**Chief of Race:** Oversees all aspect of a race.

**Closed Gate:** Space between gates is parallel to or follows the fall line.

**Delay:** Gates set in course so as to alter or delay racers path downhill and creating a rhythm change within the course.

**DH:** Downhill

**DNF:** Did not finish. Racer did not complete the course to the finish.

**DNS:** Did not start. Racer did not race.

**DQ:** Disqualified. Racer did not complete course but did finish.

**Dryland:** Off snow training session.

**FIS:** International competitive ski racing association.



**Flex-gate:** Plastic pole with hinged bottom, used as turning pole.

**Flush:** 3 to 5 closed gates, close together in a row.

**Fore runner:** Person who skis course to evaluate safety, timing systems, provide reference for gatekeepers and provide feedback on course to Chief of Course.

**Gate:** Two poles used to mark the path the racer takes down the hill.

**Gate Keeper:** Verifies that each ski racer passes through gates.

**GS:** Giant Slalom

**Hand Timing:** Use of stop watch for determining racers time. Used as back-up to computer timing system.

**Hairpin:** Two closed gates, close together.

**Homologation:** The sanctioning of an area of terrain to be used for race courses in FIS or USSA competition.

**Inspection:** Competitors opportunity to investigate a course prior to running it.

**Invitational:** Non-USSA or FIS sanctioned ski race. Invitation to compete comes from host organization.

**Junior:** Competitive ski racer aged 14+ by their Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> age.

**Jury:** Responsible for all decisions pertaining to the race, arbitration of disputes and upholding rules and collaborates with the TD. Jury members are; the TD, Referee and Chief of Race.

**Mighty Mite:** Competitive ski racer aged 6-13 years based on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> age.

**Officials License:** Certification by USSA or FIS to act as Referee, Chief of Race, Chief of Course, Chief of Timing, Start Referee, Finish Referee.

**Open Gate:** Space between gates is perpendicular to fall line.

**Panel:** Fabric stretched between two poles used as gates.

**PNSA:** Pacific Northwest Ski Association

**Points:** Junior racer scoring for each seeded competition they finish. Used in National and International ranking. Points effect race start order. Lower points reflect better results.

**Referee:** Oversees the race.

**Scrape:** Remove excess wax from ski base.

**SG:** Super Giant Slalom

**SL:** Slalom

**Slip:** Lingo meaning to inspect the course

**Start Referee:** Oversees start area.

**Starter:** Sends racers through the starting gate.

**Stubbies:** Short training gates

**TD:** "Senior" race official that acts as representative of the sanctioning bodies of ski racing. Consult race organizers on procedures and rules interpretation.

**Time of Day:** The difference between what time of day it is when a racer leaves the start and crosses the finish.

**USSA:** United States Ski Association

**Wrench:** Tool used to secure gates in snow.