



**AUSBLICK SKI RACING TEAM  
ATHLETE/PARENT HANDBOOK  
2025-2026**

## **AUSBLICK SKI RACING TEAM ATHLETE/PARENT HANDBOOK FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Greetings! On behalf of the coaches and the board of directors of the Ausblick Ski Racing Team (ASRT), we would like to welcome you. You have made the choice to join a great organization, to improve your skiing skills, and maybe even pursue a dream of achieving greatness through your chosen sport. Whether your goal is to be the best within ASRT, in Wisconsin, or even the Midwest, we have programs that will help you to achieve your goal.

This handbook has been prepared to give you the information you will need to get started with the team and better acquaint you with the sport of ski racing. Especially for younger children, the main motivation for joining this team is to have fun while improving skills in a sport they can participate in their entire lives. We are happy to have your family involved with the team and look forward to many days of fun with all of you!

Whether you are new to this program or you have been involved in the past, this overview, written by parents and coaches, will help answer many of the common questions that will inevitably arise during the course of the year. Here is a list of our frequently asked questions “FAQs” that we have answered in this overview:

**What are the available ski racing programs?**

**Why is it so important to arrive on time?**

**What the heck is a U14?**

**When do the kids train?**

**What do they do in training?**

**What do they need at practice?**

**What about skis bindings and boots?**

**Why does my older child have to ski with younger kids?**

**Why do some athletes progress faster?**

**Can I watch training sessions?**

**What about waxing and tuning skis?**

**Can someone help us with tuning?**

**Will the race schedule ever change?**

**What to expect on your first MWAR race day?**

**What do I do on “race day”?**

**Can I inspect the course with my child?**

**Where is my kid’s coat?**

**Can I help on race day?**

**Can I get my kid one of those snazzy, skin tight suits?**

**Communications?**

**Fees?**

**Additional registration information for USSS/FIS athletes?**

**USSA-FIS Program Policy**

**What else do I need to know?**



**What are the available ski racing programs?** ASRT offers athletes the opportunity to compete in various programs:

**MWAR**– Midwest Alpine Racing League, or MWAR, is a local recreational ski racing program involving 6 SE Wisconsin teams and over 400 athletes ages 4-19. The season typically consists of 6 races held on Saturdays and Sundays in January & February, followed by an inter-league Spring Fling race with the Madison area league, WIJARA. When you join ASRT, you will also need to separately register with MWAR and sign its waiver before the season begins in order to participate in its races. The cost for registration for MWAR is included in your ASRT annual dues.

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

**USSS** –United States Ski & Snowboard, or USSS, is a national ski racing organization which splits the country into geographic sections. ASRT competes within Region 2 of the Central Division, which includes Wisconsin, the western UP, eastern Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri. Region 2 typically hosts 5-6 races each season over weekends in December through February, with most races held in the UP. USSS racing is generally more competitive than MWAR, and offers opportunities to participate in post-season competitions against other Regions and Divisions across the nation.

[www.region2cussa.com](http://www.region2cussa.com)

**FIS** – International Ski Federation, or FIS, offers more competitive ski racing opportunities for advanced athletes at least 16 years old by December 31st.

[www.fis-ski.com/alpine-skiing](http://www.fis-ski.com/alpine-skiing)

**High School** - Many ASRT athletes compete on their high school ski teams in addition to the programs listed above, and several ASRT coaches also coach a high school team. ASRT does not have a separate program for these athletes, however, athletes in this group are sometimes referred to as the High School program and some do train on the Ausblick ski hill.

**Why is it so important to arrive on time?** The kids need to be ready to ski when training begins (5:30 pm for MWAR athletes). We realize this is a real challenge for everyone but please do your best to get your child to the hill early so he/she can get their gear on and maybe stretch those muscles, and take a free run or two, to be ready for training with the coaches! Arriving late can cause the athlete to miss important introductions to the particular skill set being developed during that practice.





**What is this U8, U10, U12 classification?** We follow the classification of athletes set by USSS (United States Ski and Snowboard), who group children in age categories for competition purposes. The “U” stands for “under”, and the number is the age of the athlete on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each season. They generally run in two-year increments. Thus, for example, a U14 athlete for the 2026 season will be any athlete of the ages 12-13 as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2025.

**Athlete age classes for the upcoming season are as follows:**

Class U18: birth date 1/1/08 thru 12/31/09

Class U16: birth date 1/1/10 thru 12/31/11

Class U14: birth date 1/1/12 thru 12/31/13

Class U12: birth date 1/1/14 thru 12/31/15

Class U10: birth date 1/1/16 thru 12/31/17

Class U8: birth date 1/1/18 or later



\*\*\*Athletes must be at least 4 years of age and must be able to board and ride the chairlift on their own, as well as ski down the hill independently on intermediate style (blue) runs, in a controlled, safe manner. For U18s, an athlete may be up to 20 years of age before December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year and enrolled in a certified high school program for MWAR\*\*\*

**When do the kids train?** Like any sport, your child’s progress will depend upon the time he/she spends doing it. One of the prime goals of the program is to build within them a passion for the sport. With that passion, we never cancel training when Ausblick is open! We ski in the rain, in the bitter cold, in a strong wind, when it’s snowing or in blizzards. We encourage the kids to practice the drills they learn whenever they can make it out to Ausblick to ski.

ASRT practice begins with “Christmas Camp” which consists of morning practices over a 5-day period during the holiday school break. The exact dates for this year’s camp have been posted on the website and/or sent to you via email. For USSS/FIS athletes, there may be training opportunities prior to Christmas Camp, for which you will be notified via email. This could also be the case for MWAR athletes, so look for the emails in December (and sooner).

Beginning in January (or potentially December, weather permitting), practices are held Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights 5:30-8:00pm at Ausblick. U8-12 MWAR athletes have practices on Monday and Thursday; U14-18 athletes have practices on Tuesday and Thursday. USSS and FIS athletes will have practice from 5:00-8:00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

**What do they do in training?** To expand your child’s skiing skills, they will work on technique and tactical drills, including skiing on ski bumps, skiing on one ski, skiing gates and free skiing, among many other drills. The kids spend a lot of time on fundamental drills that build a base of strength and agility. This prepares them to handle encounters, like a rut or something unexpected at higher speeds on a

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race course. By the time your child has a few years in the program, they will most likely be an expert skier – something they will have for the rest of their life!

**What do they need at practice?** We will practice in rain, snow, cold and blizzards. Please dress them accordingly. Warm fingers and toes are important! They won't get much out of training if they are physically miserable. Also, all athletes must wear helmets and goggles. We will not allow them to ski with the group without protective headgear and eyewear. It is a good idea to visit the MWAR website to determine what gear is required for races: [www.midwestalpineracing.com](http://www.midwestalpineracing.com). Also, your child should have a snack and eat dinner before practice as there will not be a break for dinner.

**What about skis, bindings, and boots?** All sports require the proper equipment. Please ask a coach or another experienced parent before you buy anything for your child. We may be able to help you avoid buying equipment that's not "right" for the sport and end up saving you money. There may be special team discounts from local stores such as Les Moise. The coaches are current about what is available. Additionally, the annual Ausblick ski swap held each Fall can be a great place to pick up previously used and well-maintained racing equipment (but have a plan and know what you need).

**Why does my older child have to ski with younger kids?** All athletes have a wide variety of skill levels. Over the years we've found that it makes the most sense to put athletes into smaller sub-groups based on their current skill levels. The coaches work with small groups on specific skills that are appropriate for their current abilities. Unfortunately, that sometimes puts friends into separate groups. We also have seen some advanced young skiers working with a group of young teenagers. If we were to group the kids for training by age only, they would not progress as quickly as any of us would like. That's not fun, and fun is important.

**Why do some athletes progress faster?** All athletes will be treated fairly. However, there are some athletes who are always at practice, always in the starting gate on the coldest day, always there for the last run, always asking for feedback, always wanting to be faster. A motivated athlete will encourage more feedback. Each team member will be assigned a specific coach on our staff who is responsible to know your child and what his/her goals are for the season.

**Can I watch training sessions?** You are always welcome, and we encourage you to come watch us ski gates, but you must stay clear of the training lanes (e.g. a parent of a football or tennis athlete never watches from the field, or the court). Ski racing is unlike any other sport. In skiing you can watch along the side of the hill and see them move. It's pretty amazing to watch them progress during the season! However, we will say this as tactfully as we can: Don't smother them! Come watch for a while, and then let them practice on their own, please do not

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shadow your athlete. And please, never, never criticize or “coach” a coach in front of the kids!

**What about waxing and tuning skis?** For new parents, you need to be aware that your sons and daughters are skiing on all kinds of conditions. The thaw-freeze-thaw-freeze cycle creates a lot of ice. Your kids will ski on solid ice, sometimes in deep “ruts” on steep terrain. Waxed skis help them not only with speed, but also with control. Ski racers require razor sharp edges. If you don’t keep skis tuned regularly, they WILL basically be hindered from improvement. Ski tuning equipment can be found online and/or at stores like Les Moise.

**Can someone help us with tuning?** Yes. The coaches and other parents can help you learn how to do this. Plus, Les Moise in Brookfield will tune ski team member skis. We try to host a tuning clinic each year during the season. We are also available to offer one-on-one instruction for any parents who want to learn. As you begin the program, make sure you get the skis waxed and have Les Moise tune them for you. As time goes on, you and your child will learn more and be able to do most of the basic servicing of the equipment on your own.

**Will the race schedule ever change?** It is possible, but the MWAR dates for races and the central division races for USSS seldom change during the season unless there is a lack of snow which would make a race impossible to hold at a particular venue. But, it’s always a good idea to check in with the coaches and to review the calendar on the team website.



**What to expect on your first MWAR race day?** Here are some general points to help you through that first race:

- There will be a “Fact Sheet” produced by the hill hosting the race which will be posted to the calendar event on our website or emailed to the ASRT email list, usually the Wednesday before race day. This will have detailed information and times for the race. It is important to read it.

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- Arrive at the Hill at least 45 minutes before the posted course inspection time.
- Purchase a discounted lift ticket for your athlete while they are “booting up” or, in some cases, before the race at the ski hill’s website. Also, you will likely need to complete the hill’s waiver before the race for your athlete – it is best to do this online the week before the race – the Fact Sheet will confirm.
- There are two race courses. One for U12 athletes and younger, and one for U14 athletes and older.
- Have your athlete in the lift line at least 15 minutes before course inspection begins, so they can be at the top and locate the ASRT coach for the event, at the stated course inspection time.
- Athletes will then inspect the course with an ASRT coach (there will be several at each race wearing an ASRT coat).
- Once the race is about to start, review the run order (usually available on the MWAR website the day before the race) to determine the approximate time your athlete should be at the top of the course to race in their listed place. There are parent volunteers at the top, lining up the kids to race.
- After the athlete finishes his/her run, there will be an ASRT coach at the bottom of the run waiting for them, to briefly review their run.
- After the first run, the athlete should get something to eat and drink.
- After all athletes have completed their first run, the race course will be reset, and the whole routine begins again, with inspection for the second run.
- For disqualifications, it is important for the parent or the athlete to review the posted “DQs” after each run of each race. This is the only way to confirm if your child has been disqualified. If your child is listed as disqualified and you object, see an ASRT coach immediately. There is a time limit (see MWAR rules on its website) to protest a disqualification. Live Timing is only a gauge and is not official timing. In addition, there is a fee to protest that must be paid on the spot.
- Awards typically follow within 15 minutes of completion of both runs by all athletes, and are based on the combined results of both runs.

***Enjoy the day with your athlete!***

**What do I do on race day?** Race days are always filled with anxiety, triumph, and for some, disappointment. How do you best support your child? Give them some room! Your child is learning to become a ski racer. We are teaching them basic disciplines like figuring out where they need to be and how to plan their day. There is always a kid that forgets their boots, or helmet, or gloves. Within reason, let your child figure out how to get to the start at the proper time, with the things they need. You can help them of course, but it’s a good idea for them to learn this and become more self-reliant. You really don’t help them in the long run by always doing these things for them. Once ready, we will do things as a team. We will prepare as a team, inspect the course as a team, and race as a team.

**Can I inspect the course with my child?** **Unless you are a registered coach, absolutely not!** Rules only allow coaches, athletes and officials on the race course, period.

**Where is my kid's coat?** Another important race day lesson. The start of the race course is always a very confusing place. 200+ kids, coaches, all furiously preparing for the big event. We teach the kids to support each other by "running" coats and warm-ups to the finish area. (The boys and girls don't race at the same time...if they are being nice to each other, they will run each others' coats down to them...ahh team spirit!) Inevitably, though, there is an athlete who forgets about his/her coat and other gear and can't remember where it is or where they left it...which is usually followed by a frantic parent desperately trying to find their child's \$400 coat among all the scattered clothing at the top of the run or in the lodge. **MARK YOUR CHILD'S NAME CONSPICUOUSLY IN THE CLOTHES.** There will be many identical size 12 black Spyder pants in a pile. Same goes for all of their equipment!

**Can I help on race day?** PLEASE DO!!! We want to help get your kids ready at the start, and also watch their runs to give them feedback. Lugging coats is our last priority. We need your help! There are a lot of jobs at a race, and if you learn how to be a gate keeper, you can watch your daughter or son compete from just a few yards away from the action! We ask that a parent of an athlete volunteer to help out at two races per year.

**Can I get my kid one of those snazzy suits?** For young racers, a GS racing suit probably makes its biggest impact in the athlete's mind. They feel faster just by putting it on! You can buy them from a racing supply company online or a local retail race store, or ask around to see if anyone has one their son/daughter has outgrown that they'd like to sell.

**Communications?** Please check the following websites regularly:

Ausblick Ski Race Team: [www.ausblickskiraceteam.com](http://www.ausblickskiraceteam.com)

MWAR: [www.midwestalpineracing.com](http://www.midwestalpineracing.com)

USSS Central Division, Region 2: [www.region2cussa.com](http://www.region2cussa.com)

Also, email is a primary communication channel for the team, so please be sure to check yours regularly and let us know if you change your email address.

**Fees?** \*\*\*These fees are approximate for ASRT and subject to change and do not include race day fees\*\*\*

MWAR - \$750 (Christmas camp an additional \$55)

MWAR & USSS - \$1,325 (U12 development group \$955)

MWAR, USSS & FIS - \$1,325



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There are additional fees to attend MWAR races (namely, ticket fees), for USSS/USSA annual dues (U12 and under \$165, U14 \$265 and U16 \$335), for USSS/USSA and FIS races (ticket prices, lodging and meals) and for FIS license (\$155).

In addition to the above, there may be opportunities for athletes to ski additional races/events like the Spring Fling (MWAR), various USSS/USSA Championships and Nationals, which will involve separate fees.



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### USSS/FIS REGISTRATION information for athletes:

To fully register for USSS/FIS for the upcoming season, you must:

1. Register for ASRT - requires credit card payment
2. Register for National, Regional and Local Division USSS and obtain a USSS/FIS license (you do this directly with USSS, not thru ASRT, at <http://usskiandsnowboard.org>). As of 2023, all USSS registration is completed at the National level.

If you do not complete step 2 above on a timely basis, your child will not be allowed to participate when they show up at a USSS race, which we obviously don't want to happen. These are USSS rules, which ASRT does not control.

### USSS RACE REGISTRATION:

Go to [www.skireg.com](http://www.skireg.com) and login. This website is where you select, register and pay for the individual races your athlete plans to attend.



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Additional information for new USSS athletes:

Scored: U16 and older athletes

Non-Scored: U14 and younger athletes

Many USSS races are held in the Upper Peninsula and start on Friday or Saturday mornings through Sunday, so most ASRT athletes typically stay over Thursday or Friday through Saturday nights. Hotels tend to fill up early in the season so book your rooms early. A list of suggested hotels is on the team website.

Check the Region II website [www.region2cussa.com](http://www.region2cussa.com) regularly. Schedules, race results, parent volunteer sign-ups, and various other information and breaking news can be found there, as well as links to other useful sites.

### **USSA-FIS Program Policy**

The Ausblick Ski Race Team (“ASRT”) USSA/FIS Program is designed for committed athletes and families who wish to race and compete successfully at regional and national levels and is not intended as a training-only alternative to the MWAR program.

Registration with the ASRT USSA/FIS Program and payment of the registration fee (determined annually) is a prerequisite to receiving representation by the ASRT at USSA/FIS race team captain meetings (“TCMs”) and coaching from ASRT coaches at USSA/FIS races (note: no athlete may compete at USSA/FIS events without TCM representation and USSA/FIS coach support). Athletes who wish to participate in the ASRT USSA/FIS program must be registered for that program by close of registration. Registration of an athlete with USSA and/or FIS is not registration with the ASRT USSA/FIS Program. An ASRT MWAR athlete’s participation at a USSA/FIS event under the representation of another club, program, or coach is prohibited without the consent of the Ausblick Ski Race Team Board of Directors and is grounds for termination of the athlete’s participation in the ASRT without refund.

The ASRT USSA/FIS Program endeavors to develop our athletes in such a way that the athletes are performing their best at the most competitive and consequential races of the season. To accomplish this, our USSA/FIS athletes and families are expected to:

- Regularly participate at scheduled weekly practices (M, T, TH)
- Participate at a majority of off-site trainings including ASRT hosted camps in Colorado or training projects at ski areas such as Mt. La Crosse, Granite Peak, Marquette Mountain, and Snowriver Resort
- Attend at least the majority of the USSA or FIS races supported by ASRT
- Volunteer at USSA or FIS races (families)

ASRT USSA/FIS athletes who do not meet these expectations may be removed from the ASRT USSA/FIS program at the discretion of the Board of Directors.



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For a fee, ASRT athletes who are not registered with the ASRT USSA/FIS Program may participate in the following USSA races, with ASRT representation at race TCMs and with ASRT coaching support:

- Ski Brule SL Weekend (early December)
- Ski Brule USSA Central Championships (Brule Finale)

ASRT athletes who are not registered with the ASRT USSA/FIS program will not receive ASRT representation or coaching support at any FIS race.

If you are not registered with the ASRT USSA/FIS Program and wish to participate in one of the above races, you must:

- Obtain the appropriate USSA membership for your athlete
- Register your athlete for the appropriate races (Scored or Non-Scored) on SkiReg.com
- Inform the ASRT board member who serves as the USSA/FIS coaching liaison (currently Bill Bruss) at least 2 weeks in advance of the scheduled race
- Pay in advance of the scheduled race a daily race fee (daily fee determined each year) to ASRT (the Ski Brule SL Weekend race fees may be applied to USSA/FIS registration fees if the MWAR athlete elects to register for that program before the close of registration)

**What else do I need to know?** Visit the team website often and watch for email updates throughout the year. If you have any further questions whatsoever, please just ask one of the board members, one of the coaches, and/or a parent who has had an athlete on the team for a few years...we'll get you an answer to your question.

## **SKI FAST!**

