

# TEAM GILBOA

## ALPINE SKI RACING

### U14 Race Day Supplement

This document is designed as a reference guide to support the U14 Parent Meeting discussion. The intent is to clarify some common questions about:

- How is a race day organized?
- What is my athlete supposed to do on race day?
- What are the coaches doing on race day?
- How can I as a parent support my athlete?

### Race Day Overview

A typical race day for U14 athletes will consist of 2-4 race runs that are typically from a single discipline (GS or slalom). The general schedule for a TG athlete looks like:

- Morning meeting outside on snow with TG coaches (Usually around 8am)
- Warmup either in training courses or free skiing as per TG coach direction
- Course inspection for first run
- First race run of the day
- At this time, athletes typically have a break before inspection and racing for additional runs, that time can be used to: eat/hydrate, free ski, warm up/change clothes, etc.
- This cycle repeats for each run of the day with inspection, race, break

### Athlete Race Day Expectations

The athletes have a fair amount of independence on race days. The TG coaches set expectations at practice and in the morning meeting of how they should use their time.

Some highlights include:

- Freeski/training warmup: The coaches will help direct, but it is the responsibility of the athletes to follow through
- Arrive on time for inspection
- Check in with coaches who are stationed throughout the course during inspection
- Arrive on time for their race run
- Check in with coaches immediately following their run to seek out feedback (at the finish, with the coach in the middle, or both)
- Utilize time between runs wisely, it is impossible for the coaches to monitor every athlete
- If there are any more questions on first run performance seek out feedback from lead coach

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### **What are the coaches doing?**

The U14 Staff works very hard to help the athletes learn how to be competitors on race day. A big part of that work is done by helping the athletes establish routines vs. simply giving them instruction. These routines (morning warmup, inspection, pre-run, post-run) help the athletes develop skills that will serve them well throughout their ski racing career.

Some of the what the coaches are doing and why:

- Setting daily goals, and reviewing the schedule with the athletes at a morning meeting
- Holding athletes accountable for executing their morning warmup
- Stationing on the hill during inspection so that athletes inspect with their peers, but are guided in this process by the staff
- Providing feedback on individual pre-race routine
- Using simple cues with athletes before their run that will help them execute their inspection plan
- Providing post run feedback that is specific to the goals for the day

During the execution of a race run, the coaches are typically:

- At the start: helping athletes get in line, overseeing their pre-race routine, and providing one or two cues that they feel will help your athlete perform
- In the middle of the course: shooting video or observing the race. Typically start and finish locations are not advantageous for viewing your athlete's athletic performance
- At the finish: Providing some immediate feedback to the athlete. It is important for parents to understand that while coaching at the finish line is the most visible coaching your athlete will receive, it can be one of the least impactful times for your athlete to receive feedback. A coach near the finish is most effective when they ask your athlete questions to help them reflect on their run, set a positive tone in preparation for the next run, and encourage the athlete to check in with the coach who is observing in the middle of the trail between runs

### Race Day Video

When TG staff is shooting video on race days, they will attempt to make the video available for the athletes to view in-between runs on an iPad. The time and location will be announced to the athletes in the morning TG meeting, and may be posted on The JUMP as well. At the conclusion of the race weekend, all video will be uploaded to the Team Gilboa U14 page at [www.sprongo.com](http://www.sprongo.com).

### Coaches and Officiating

At times Team Gilboa coaches may be filling different officiating roles, this is most typically as the Referee. While this does take up some of the coach's time and focus, having coach referees

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is important to a well run ski race. The referee is the representative of the athletes on the jury, and advocates for the athletes in all jury decisions.

Coaches will occasionally fill other rolls at a race, such as Chief of Race or Technical Delegate. This is much less common, but is an important part of their individual professional development.

### **How can I support my athlete?**

As parents, it can be challenging when you realize that your athletes performance is ultimately outside of your control. Some things that are within your control that you can do to help your athlete have a good experience are:

- Help them arrive on time for the morning meeting
- Remind your athlete that they are ultimately responsible for their equipment (some U14s need more help than others getting themselves and their equipment to a race venue)
- If the athletes don't know or understand the schedule, don't be afraid to encourage them to seek out advice from a teammate or coach
- If your athlete is unhappy with their performance, encourage them to talk to their coaches about it
- Learn a race day volunteer roll to help the race run efficiently and on time (while you may feel that your U14 "needs your help" throughout the day, most U14s also want to develop a sense of independence and feel that their parents trust them to get where they need to be on time)
- Know that ski racing is an incredibly challenging sport, with many variables that impact athletic performance. It can take a lot of time and hard work to realize performance gains
- Help your athlete celebrate their successes, no matter how small (recognize personal bests and progress VS. only focusing on the outcome)