

MHSSC
SKI MANUAL
Midwest High School Ski Conference
*This is the Official Rule Book for MHSSC Ski Competition



MIDWEST HIGH SCHOOL SKI CONFERENCE

Revised 11/06/2023

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RULES COMMITTEE MISSION

The mission of the Rules Committee is to formulate a framework of rules consistent with high school ski racing nationally, taking into consideration the purpose of our ski league, which is to encourage and train young people in the sport and enjoyment of alpine skiing. Our league attempts to be inclusive rather than exclusive, yet we want to provide ample challenge to our better, more experienced racers.

Due to the size, location and other unique features of our race league, coaches wear many hats. This manual is provided to help everyone involved understand some of the complexities of organized ski racing while using the knowledge within to facilitate our own races. Please note *SKIER SAFETY IS THE CHIEF GOAL OF ALL RACING*.

Further Documentation

We follow most of the USSA official rules for alpine ski racing. In certain instances, however, we have need to clarify and document how these rules should be interpreted when applied to a high school racing league. Wherever USSA guidelines don't apply to the running of a high school race, we have attempted to interpret how the rules apply to us without changing the overall intent of the official rules.

CONDUCT

1. All member schools will enforce the USSA Code of Conduct rules for all participants.
<https://my.usskiandsnowboard.org/aip/ussa/ussa-code-conduct>
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of any Coach, Team Staff, and any or all skiers on the team, whether competing or not, (this includes foul or inappropriate language) may be reported to the Chief of Race by any coach, or worker.
3. The Race Jury will investigate the complaint and assess a penalty when necessary.
4. The decision of the Race Jury is final.
5. The coach from the racer's team who committed the violation cannot vote on the outcome/penalty.
6. The Chief of Race votes in a tiebreaker.
7. The Assistant Chief will vote in place of the Chief of Race if the Chief of Race's team is involved in the dispute.
8. Any racer who uses foul language, makes threatening gestures, or gets "in the face" of any coach or other racer will immediately be disciplined by the Race Jury according to the penalties listed below.
9. Penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct will include:
 - a. Disqualify the racer
 - b. Disqualify the whole team from that run
 - c. Disqualify the whole team from the entire meet.
10. THE CHIEF OF RACE HAS NO DISCRETION IN REPORTING SUCH INCIDENCES. HE IS REQUIRED TO DO SO.
11. Flagrant infractions are to be reported in writing to the Conference Director and the Rules and Waiver Committee for further sanctions immediately. (Day following)
12. The Conference Director will convene the Conference Rules and Waiver Committee who will determine the severity of the infraction and determine whether the racer/racers will be sanctioned from participation in MHSSC races for the remainder of the year.
13. NO RACER SHALL PARTAKE OF ANY ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE, NICOTINE (smoke, vape, chew or any form of), OR ANY CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE. FACULTY ADVISORS AND RELATED TYPE PERSONNEL MAY NOT CONSUME OR USE ANY ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE.

THE JURY

1. The Jury of a race is comprised of the following members:
 - a. Chief of Race - the host of the race. Role is to run the race and make sure all issues are attended to and is the Referee of the night. Member of the "Fast Track" jury.
 - b. Assistant COR – besides being a part of the jury they are to assist in any way with the COR in running the race, including course inspection and course safety. Member of the "Fast Track" jury. Participating Head Coaches – besides being part of the jury they are to assist with if possible with course maintenance and helping the race run smoothly.
 - c. Chief Gatekeeper organizes and oversees the gatekeepers who have been assigned to officiate the race. Collects gatekeeper score sheets and delivers them to the referee immediately following each run.
2. The Jury watches that the rules are adhered to throughout the entire race. Duties include but not limited to:
 - i. checking the racecourse and the set course
 - ii. checking the snow conditions for safety,
 - iii. checking the start, the finish area,
 - iv. granting of re-runs (COR/Referee only may grant, not the timers)
 - v. cancellation of the race if the safety of the competitors is endangered
 - vi. decisions on protests
 - vii. adheres to the philosophy that when there is doubt, the racer receives the benefit of the doubt
 - b. Members of the Jury must remain at the race until dismissed at the conclusion of the race by the COR/Referee after he/she has determined that there are no protests to be heard by the jury. If a member of the jury leaves before being dismissed, the remaining members of the jury will determine the outcome.
3. Because the rules are sometimes subject to interpretation, we have the jury to make these interpretations if necessary. Because of the limited time and personnel, disputes will be handled as follows:
 - a. A "Fast Track" jury to arbitrate disqualifications on the hill will consist of the COR/Referee and Assistant COR. A hearing will take place as soon as feasible, or at the conclusion of the race. The head coach may appeal the findings of this hearing and request that the dispute will be taken before the formal jury within 15 minutes of the posted DQ.
 - b. The formal jury will consist of one coach from each participating team. After the initial vote, in case of a tie, the COR/Referee will be the tiebreaker. In this case, the COR/Referee may vote twice. The protesting team does not have a vote in this dispute. The jury will hear only from the disputing racer in question.
 - c. The COR/Referee will be the head of the Jury and will be responsible for bringing all information bearing to the decision to the meeting.
 - d. the jury makes decisions on all questions not clarified by the rules
 - e. The Race Jury will consist of a head coach from each school racing. Each one will have one vote. The Race Jury will be responsible to make final decisions based on condition of the hill to run the race.
 - f. Any jury member can call a DQ - if a DQ goes to the Race Jury the advantage goes to the skier if there is a question.
 - g. A jury member cannot call a DQ on hearsay.

GENERAL RULES

1. Non-conference events are not regulated by conference rules.
2. Invitational Racers are not governed by conference rules.
3. A racer whose name is on a specific school's roster is considered on that school's team and must race for that team for all conference and state meets.
4. All racers must be properly attired (i.e., wearing proper bibs and helmets) as defined by the Conference. NO BIBS, NO HELMETS, NO RACE.
5. Each school must provide one worker per team. Names of such workers should be provided to the Chief of Race at the time of racers names along with score sheets. If the worker is a student, the student cannot be a gatekeeper. NO WORKERS, NO RACE.
6. 1st, 3rd, 6th races will be GS
7. 2nd, 4th, 5th races will be slalom
8. Each "VARSITY" MHSSC meet will consist of two runs of the same discipline.
9. All DQ and DNF posted within 15 minutes of the end of each run. Protests must be given to the COR/Referee within 15 minutes of posting time by the coach involved.
10. In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel a race would be made between the Director and the teams involved in the race. If a mutual decision cannot be agreed upon by the teams and the Director, the next step would be to check if the race hill is open for racing. If the race hill is still open for the race in question, the race is still on. However, a majority schools must be present to run the race. If the Chief of Race is from a school, which would FORBID participation in a race if their school were closed, he shall designate a new Chief of Race and provide the new Chief with all necessary materials before the race.
11. Only representatives who have attended the course setting clinic at the beginning of the season will be permitted to set courses.
 - a. A representative may petition the Rules and Waiver Committee to set courses if they can show proof of qualification in writing and they cannot attend the course setting clinic at the beginning of the season.

GENERAL RACE RULES

1. In general, USSA rules are followed with a few exceptions outlined in this document
 - a. The COR must receive all varsity and JV teams and bib number changes at least thirty-minutes (30) prior to any event.
 - b. The running order of the team or the racers cannot be changed after the Chief of Race draws the final starting order.
 - c. Only in the event of illness or injury prior to the start of the race, may another racer substitute a racer and the substitute racer must race in the same seed as the replaced racer.
 - d. Substitutions among seed racers in the same event are not allowed.
 - e. Failure to report at the starting gate in seed order results in a racer being placed at the end of scheduled order.
 - f. There will be no more than two forerunners unless the COR/Referee determines otherwise.
 - g. ONLY the Chief of Race/Referee and/or course setter can pre-run the course.
 - h. Team Running Order. The running order for the first run will be as follows: Team 1, followed by team 2, team 3, team 4, and team 5. Running Order for the second run will be reversed from the first run as follows: Team 5, followed by team 4, team 3, team 2, team 1
 - i. Racer Running Order. Seeding of racers will follow the team running order with the first racer from team 1 going first followed by the first racer from team 2 going next and so on.
 - j. Girls Varsity, Boys Varsity, Girls Junior Varsity, Boys Junior Varsity will be the order of racing. If there are any exhibition racers, they will race at the conclusion of the Junior Varsity race.

COR/Referee has the option to insert exhibition racers according to gender at the end of the Girls or Boys Junior Varsity race.

- k. Six (6) skiers may be entered for the girls' events and six (6) skiers may be entered for the boys' events.
- l. If a racer loses a ski anywhere except the last two gates, he/she is disqualified. The racer may finish with one ski after breaking the plane of the second to last gate on two skis. The finish line does not count as the last gate.
- m. DQ's must be posted immediately after the race. If a racer wishes to place a protest, it must be placed through the head coach, within 15 minutes of the posting of DQ's. The coach will appeal to the Chief of Race, who in turn sees the gatekeeper. The Chief of Race, upon verbal request from the coach, may decide to convene the Race Jury for a decision. The racer and/or coach may not talk to the gatekeeper in question.
- n. If a racer is to be disqualified, a card must be filled out and signed by the gatekeeper or by a jury member on the incident.
- o. All gatekeepers should be placed where they can properly observe their gates (out of racer's way).
- p. Racers are required to remain some distance from the course while observing the race.
- q. Some identifiable marking should identify gatekeepers.
- r. Racers are also advised that gatekeepers alone are authorized to give the "GO" or "BACK" command.
- s. Gatekeepers should make an effort to help the racer by offering the "GO" or "BACK" command.
- t. If a racer does not finish the course in 120 seconds, he/she will be disqualified.
- u. A racer who is interfered with must immediately ski out of the course and notify the nearest gatekeeper and/or COR/Referee.
- v. Racers late for his or her start will start at the end of their race.
- w. Bibs must be visible at all times.

COURSE SETTING

- 1. The COR/Referee is responsible for selecting the course setter.
- 2. Only representatives who have attended the course setting clinic at the beginning of the season will be permitted to set courses.
- 3. A representative may petition the Rules and Waiver Committee to set courses if they can show proof of qualification in writing and they cannot attend the course setting clinic at the beginning of the season.
- 4. Changing of the course by taking out or adding gates; if the COR/Referee alone inspects the course; his/her decision is final. The course setter should be informed of such changes if her/she was not present at their inspection. NOTE: it is always preferable for the COR/Referee to request that the course setter make the required modifications in the course under the direction of the COR/Referee.
- 5. If racers are available to assist in course setting, they may, but will not be allowed to drill or determine the turning gate.

COURSE INSPECTION

- 1. COR/Referee should inspect the course immediately after it is set, alone or accompanied by members of the Jury.
- 2. Competitors are not allowed to free ski in the racecourse arena
- 3. Competitors may inspect course by ascent or descent.

4. Competitors may slip in the race line of the course only when authorized to do so by the COR/Referee or the starting official at the start. Otherwise, inspection must be made from outside of race line without skiing in the course.
5. Shadowing the course before or during the event will result in disqualification.
6. No racer should be on the course after the course is closed.
7. The Chief of Race may allow wedging (snowplowing) or side-slipping to groom the course at any time he/she deems it necessary.

RE-RUNS PREREQUISITES

1. A Racer who is hindered while racing by the error of an official, by a spectator, by an animal, or by other causes can apply to any race official for a re-run immediately after the occurrence of the interference.
2. The racer must ski out of the course IMMEDIATELY if he/she feels there is interference.
3. For a provisional re-run to be granted, the racer must report immediately to the finish area and contact the COR/Referee to make a decision. Only the COR/Referee may grant a provisional re-run.
4. In case of timing error, a re-run will be granted with approval of COR/Referee.
5. After the race, the Race Jury will hear the protest from the racer for the re-run not the coach's. The race jury will make the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of the racer's provisional time.

GROUND'S FOR INTERFERENCE

1. Blocking of the course by an official, a spectator, an animal or other hindrance.
2. Objects in the course such as a lost ski pole or ski of a previous skier.
3. Activities of the first aid service which hinder the racer.
4. Absence of a gate knocked down by a previous racer and not properly replaced.
5. Other similar incidents, which, beyond the will and control of the racer, causes significant loss of speed or lengthening of the racing line and thereby materially affect the racer's time.
6. Malfunction of the time keeping system.

VALIDITY OF A RE-RUN

1. If the competitor was already disqualified before the incident entitling him/her to a re-run the re-run is not valid. The official who observed the incident will immediately call the COR/Referee. If the "Fast Track" jury is not available for an immediate appeal, the racer should proceed to the start, race, and must accept time of second run if approved by the jury.
2. Subsequent to the race, the jury will vote on validity of request for a rerun. The re-run will be given as soon as the competitor can appear at the start line.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

1. VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR
 - a. Violent and/or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated and can lead to disqualification from races and/or expulsion from MHSSC. Penalty to be determined by Rules Committee.
2. PROFANITY
 - a. A racer is automatically disqualified if he/she uses profanity anywhere on the racecourse, the start area, or the finish area.
3. COURSE INSPECTION

- a. Competitors will be disqualified for free skiing in the racecourse arena: ribbons, fences, or ropes define race arena.
- b. Competitors will be disqualified if they slip in the race line of the course without authorization to do so by the COR/Referee at the start. Otherwise, inspection must be made from outside the skiing line in the course.
4. FREE SKIING OR SHADOWING COURSE
 - a. If a racer skis along the side of the course, shadowing the line, he/she will be disqualified.
5. LOSS OF SKI
 - a. If a racer loses a ski anywhere except the last two gates, he/she is disqualified. The finish line does not count as the last gate.
 - b. The racer may finish with one ski after breaking the plane of the second to last gate on two skis in either GS or Slalom. The finish line does not count as the last gate.
 - c. If a racer pops out of their bindings in the starting gate, they are DQ'd
6. MISSING A GATE
 - a. Failure to break the plane of the gates with both skis and boots constitutes disqualification. Legal passage in single pole Slalom and Giant Slalom, both tips and feet must pass the turning pole on the same side following the natural course of the slalom. (That would be rule 804.3 USSA/FIS rule book)
7. OUTSIDE HELP
 - a. Racer is disqualified if he/she receives any outside physical help in any form.
8. DRUGS, ALCOHOL OR TOBACCO
 - a. Racers/Students will be barred from any and/or all competitions for the remainder of the season on first incident involving drugs, alcohol and/or any form of tobacco.
9. DISHONESTY
 - a. Dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to disqualification from races and/or expulsion from the conference. Penalty to be determined by the Rules Committee.
10. HEAD PROTECTION
 - Competitors are required to wear helmets designed and manufactured for ski racing.
 - Helmets shall have no spoilers, protruding parts, or foreign items attached.
 - **Giant Slalom (GS):** Hard-Sided helmets (hard-ear) helmets ARE REQUIRED when racing on GS courses. Hard-Sided Helmets are a full helmet that covers the ears entirely with the hard helmet structure. Hard-sided helmets are also allowed to be used in a Slalom (SL) race with or without a face/chin-guard, however the face/chin-guard must be removed for GS races.
 - o Face/Chin Guards are not allowed for Giant Slalom. A competitor with a face/chin guard in GS will be disqualified.
 - o A competitor with a soft-sided helmet and in a GS racecourse will be disqualified.
 - **Slalom (SL):** Hard-sided or Soft-sided helmets may be worn.
 - o Hard-sided helmets are allowed to be used in a Slalom (SL) race with or without a face/chin-guard, however the face/chin-guard must be removed for GS races. When using Hard-sided helmets in SL, use of a face/chin-guard is recommended for Slalom.

- o Soft-sided helmets, when used, ARE REQUIRED to ALSO use that helmet manufacturers specific face/chin-guard attached to helmet.

- o A competitor racing Slalom with a Soft-Sided Helmet without a manufacturer-specific face/chin-guard attached will be disqualified.

- NOTE: Age and use affect the protective qualities of all safety helmets. Older helmets and any helmets that have been damaged either in a racing fall or from other impact may no longer provide sufficient protection – even if there are not visible indications of damage. Anyone with questions regarding their helmet should contact the manufacturer for any specific guidelines regarding its safety or use.

- The Midwest Highschool Ski Conference, associated teams and schools, coaches, and other affiliated volunteers or individuals do not specify nor recommend nor make any warranties as to the fitness for use of any particular ski helmet design or brand name.

- The Midwest Highschool Ski Conference, associated teams and schools, coaches, and other affiliated volunteers or individuals does not undertake any responsibility, liability, or duties to any competitor in connection with the requirement that helmets be utilized.

- It is the sole responsibility of the competitor and in the case of a minor, their parents, or guardians, to select an appropriate helmet for accident protection in ski racing.

Failure to follow the conference helmet policy will result in racer not being allowed to race and/or racer will be issued a DQ if seen in violation of the helmet policy.

Note: if planning to only get one helmet, a recommendation is to purchase a hard-shell, hard-ear helmet which can be used on both GS and SL racecourses. This same hard-shell, hard-ear helmet can also have a chin-guard mounted and used in SL racing. Note: chin-guards are not allowed for use in GS races and must be removed, and will result in a DQ if used on a GS course.

11. POSTING OF GATEKEEPER DISQUALIFICATIONS

- a. DQ'S must be posted immediately after the race with the time of the posting.
- b. If a racer wishes to place a protest, it must be placed through the head coach, within 15 minutes of posting of DQ's.
- c. All gatekeepers' disqualification cards must be filled out indicating the infraction with diagram and signed by the gatekeeper. An invalid card will not be accepted.

12. PLACE OF SUBMITTAL

- a. All protests are to be called into the Chief of Race immediately. Protests must be made within 15 minutes of the infraction/posting or they will be disallowed.

13. SETTLEMENT OF PROTESTS

- a. The Jury will meet either in person or on the radio to deal with protests as they are encountered. In dealing with a protest against disqualification, the official/officials who witnessed the infraction should be present with Jury member/members.
- b. A vote will be taken, and the majority shall rule. The decision is to be made public immediately after the vote.

SCORING

1. Each event (GS or SL) will consist of two (2) individually scored runs.
2. The best four (4) finishes for each event will be counted for each team.

3. The four (4) times will be added together to get a team score for each run.
4. Total times from both runs will determine the team's final score.
5. A DQ, DNS, or DNF will be given a 200 second time for that run.
6. The final team standing and individual standing will be arrived at by using this point system:
 - a. Boys & Girls Teams
 - i. 1st Place 12 Points
 - ii. 2nd Place 9 Points
 - iii. 3rd Place 7 Points
 - iv. 4th Place 5 Points
 - v. 5th Place 3 Points
 - vi. 6th Place 3 Points
 - b. Boys & Girls Individual
 - i. 1st Place 3 points
 - ii. 2nd Place 2 points
 - iii. 3rd Place 1 Point
7. The season team standings will be determined using the aforementioned point system.
8. The top 12 Varsity boy's teams and top 12 Varsity girl's teams, or the maximum number of teams allowed by the state committee, for boys and girls will race in the State Meet.
9. All individuals who finished first, second, or third in a meet or accumulated 5 points will also be invited to the State meet provided that their team does not qualify.
10. Those individuals who finish "First" twice overall, during the regular conference meets will automatically qualify for the State meet, provided they race in 3 conference meets - unless cleared by the Rules and Waiver Committee.
11. To qualify for the State meet, the racer, whether individually or as a member of a team, must race in 3 conference races. If a racer is unable to meet this requirement due to extenuating circumstances, he/she must petition the Rules & Waiver Committee.
12. Separate standings will be kept for the Boys' Teams and the Girls' Teams.
13. In the event of a team tie in the overall team conference point system team standings will be determined using the following criteria:
 - a. Head-to-head
 - b. In the event that the above teams are still tied, the team with the most first place finishes will be awarded the decision.
 - c. If after a and b, the teams are still tied, the teams will be awarded co-champions.

AWARDS

1. The first-place team at each meet will receive medals - Varsity and Junior Varsity.
2. Individual Awards (Varsity)
 - a. Medals for top three in each race (GS & SL)
3. Trophy for overall champion based on combined GS and Slalom placement points.
4. Racer of the Year will be determined by total point accumulated throughout the six (6) regular season races. One male and one female will be awarded. Ties will be broken using Team Scoring Rules.
5. All-Conference Selection Criteria
 - a. 1st team – 2 or more victories – conference/state qualifier

- b. 2nd team – 1 victory or 5 points – conference qualifier
- c. Honorable Mention – 2 to 4 points earned

JUNIOR VARSITY CONFERENCE RACE

1. See ARTICLE 8: Awards, Section 1 for varsity qualifying teams.
2. The JV Conference Race will be comprised of 20 teams, with the allocation of boys and girls teams being determined on a pro-rata basis each year after registration has been finalized.
3. Schools will only include their first JV teams for purposes of determining the total number of teams.
4. JV ONLY: For an athlete to be eligible to compete in this race, they MAY NOT have competed in 3 or more varsity races during the year. A JV skier who competes in the State meet is allowed for one race, however this race will be included in the total consideration for JV conference qualification.
5. The race will be run using a point placement to determine team and as well as individual winners.
6. Six (6) racers will make up a team with the best four (4) racers placement points. Section 7. Run order will be done by lottery for both Giant Slalom and again for Slalom.
7. Start Order - girls slalom followed by boys slalom. The giant slalom race will start approximately 40 minutes after the conclusion of the boy's slalom run.
8. A team may race a 7th racer in place of another racer. They must share the same bib number and be inserted in the same seed. Those split racers will not be eligible for individual medalist. You cannot flip flop your running order.
9. You can split your team and have six (6) athletes compete in the Giant Slalom and six (6) different athletes compete in Slalom. They must share the same bib. Those split athletes will not be eligible for individual medalist. You cannot flip flop your running order.
10. EACH SCHOOL WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AT LEAST ONE PARENT WORKER FOR EACH TEAM ENTERED.
11. Race venue will be determined on a rotating bases from hill to hill. Section 13. Awards – Team
12. The first-place male & female teams (Combined GS & Slalom) at the Conference Championship Meet will receive a trophy
13. Medals to each racer of the top three teams.

GATEKEEPERS D.Q. CARD

GATE NUMBERS _____

GATEKEEPERS
NAME & SCHOOL _____

RACER BIB #

1ST RUN

☐

WOMEN

☐

2ND RUN

☐

MEN

☐

Diagram Violation Below:

REASON

- ☐ Improper Inspection
- ☐ Missed Gate
- ☐ Straddled Gate
- ☐ Only 1 Foot Through
- ☐ Did Not Finish (DNF)
- ☐ Received Aid
- ☐ Other (describe on back)

*REMEMBER:
GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP IS AN ATTITUDE - NOT AN ACTION.*

*DRAFTED BY:
George Loomans
Chad Poepping
Denny Severin
25 July, 2007*

*Edited By:
Terry McMahon
Dave Nagler
Scott Faland
December 20, 2013*

*Chris Spadanuda
Dan Wellman
Scott Faland
December 1, 2021*

*Chris Spadanuda
Dan Wellman
Scott Faland
September 22, 2022*

*Chris Spadanuda
Dan Wellman
Scott Faland
November 06, 2023*