

## **Intro to Ski Racing 101 (the not so abbreviated version) Helpful Information for Team Discovery**

Welcome to the 2008/2009 Team Discovery ski racing season! Team Discovery participants who want to race will compete in the Youth Ski League (YSL). We have prepared this guide to help you get acquainted (or re-acquainted) with ski racing in the YSL. Please don't be afraid to ask if you have additional questions or if we have missed something.

### **I'm a J6, what are you?**

In ski racing, athletes are categorized by age. In the YSL series, J7 through J3 boys and girls may participate. This means that skiers 14 years and younger (as of December 31, 2008) are eligible for the YSL series. Older skiers in the Team Discovery program can compete in the Smartwool Series.

Age 6 and under*	J7
Age 8 and under*	J6
Age 10 and under*	J5
Age 12 and under*	J4
Age 14 and under*	J3
*as of 12/31/08	

### **YSL series 2008/2009 race schedule:**

- 1/25 Ski Cooper (Giant Slalom, GS)
- 2/8 Breckenridge (GS)
- 2/22 Winter Park (Slalom, SL)
- 3/8 Summit County (location TBA – GS)
- 3/22 Eldora (SL)
- 3/29 Vail (YSL series championship – GS)

### **Race sign-up**

Ski racing is fun! We encourage every Team Discovery athlete to try at least one race. In order to race in the YSL series, participants must be members of the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Association (USSA). USSA is the national governing body for ski racing, and sanctions races from YSL all the way to World Cup. USSA registration can be done on-line at [www.ussa.org](http://www.ussa.org). Click on the membership tools link on the right. J4 and younger racers need an alpine youth membership. J3's in YSL should buy a non-scored student membership. Older racers will need an alpine competitor membership.

You will sign-up for YSL races individually using the team's members-only website ([www.teamwinterpark.org](http://www.teamwinterpark.org)). Registration will be available three weeks prior to each race. Each race host will send us a race fact sheet that we will post to the website that includes registration fees, discounted lift ticket prices, etc. once we receive it.

Winter Park's athlete quota (per race) for the 2008/2009 race season is 40 athletes (our previous quota was 33). Registration is on a first come, first served basis. Once we have 40 athletes on the list, additional athlete registrations will be put on a wait list (see FAQ #1 below). We do everything possible to get everyone into the race, including wait listed athletes.

- If you are registered for a race but do not start, you will be moved to the bottom of the registration list for the next YSL race.
- If you do not get into a race, you will be moved to the front of the registration list for the next YSL race.
- Team Discovery athletes have registration priority for all YSL races. If space is available, skiers from the Sharks or other programs may attend with their coach's approval.
- We do not expect any quota issues for the March 22, 2009 Eldora SL race. For this reason, all Shark skiers are encouraged to attend this one to try YSL racing.

After you have registered your athlete through the website, you will still need to visit the registration table to pay your race entry fee and sign a liability waiver for the specific venue. It is very important that this be completed prior to race day. On race day, coaches will register all Winter Park athletes as a team, as such; we need your money and signed forms prior to Sunday.

Prior to each race, you will receive an 'email blast' with helpful information specific to that race (e.g., meeting time and place, where to park, etc.). For this reason, it is very important that you confirm that your teamwinterpark.org profile (and email address) is up to date. The email is sent to the address on file for each athlete. If you have more than one Team Discovery athlete, you might consider assigning each skier a different address as the email blast is your confirmation that the athlete is entered in the race.

### **Check this out...**

One more resource for athletes and parents is: [www.live-timing.com](http://www.live-timing.com). Prior to each YSL race, a roster will be posted online. It is not a bad idea to check the roster to make sure you have been listed in the correct age category. Also, some ski areas (Winter Park does this) will post times LIVE, offering the next best thing to being there in person (not all YSL race hosts post live results; some will post hours to days after the race is completed).

### **Sweet! I made it into the race; I am on time....now what?**

Coaches will distribute race bibs in the morning before loading the lift. You will need to purchase lift tickets prior to this so that you are ready to load the lift. We will go over any last minute schedule changes and then inspect the course. We will inspect the course as a TEAM. Yes, ski racing is an individual sport, but one of the great aspects of YSL racing is the TEAM Score. After inspection, the coaches will go to the start and on course to help the athletes prepare for their race run. Athletes are on their own to get to the start with enough time before their race run, the coaches will give guidance.

After the races, the race host generally will be ready for the awards ceremony 30-60 minutes after the last racer. Awards are presented to the top ten in every age class, and team awards are given at every race. We believe it is very important for all racers to stay for awards and support their teammates and fellow competitors, please plan your travel schedule accordingly. Winter Park has a great reputation for its team spirit, everyone plays a part!

### **Rules Parents and Athletes Need To Know**

The YSL series is meant to be FUN and to offer a chance for athletes (and parents) to learn the ‘ins and outs’ of ski racing. Of course, ski racing has many rules. For a complete list and stimulating read, see [www.ussa.org](http://www.ussa.org). If a race official ever approaches you for a violation, please treat the interaction as a learning experience. Most importantly for athletes, say ‘thank you’ and make an effort to do better in the future. In the YSL race series, there are several rules that are strictly enforced. Please help us keep race day fun and exciting by abiding by the following.

- A. Parents are not allowed in the race arena. This is a safety and liability issue that the YSL council is serious about upholding. Because of this, it is especially important that our youngest athletes meet on time in the morning so that they will be supervised on the hill.
- B. Parents are not allowed in the start house or chute – it just gets too confusing. It is OK and we encourage parents to be in the start area or staging arena. This is a great time and place to give last minute words of encouragement, take pictures, bring candy to coaches, etc. This is also a great place to make lots of noise for our Winter Park athletes as they leave the start! Also, cold kids love it when parents are available to bring gear down.
- C. YSL rules allow for only one pair of skis (per skier) at the start. The Team Discovery coaching staff feels that a skier is better off skiing on their race skis prior to the race rather than switching between 2 pairs of skis. If you are concerned about wax, buy wipe on wax sheets to use in the start.
- D. Course inspection. Athletes are not allowed to make parallel turns through the course while inspecting. Skiers need to stay in a snow plow or with skis across the hill (side slip). For this reason, it is difficult to catch up to the group if you are late without skiing ‘too fast’ on the hill. When in doubt, slow down even more!

### **FAQ**

#### ***1. What if I sign-up for the race but am on the wait list?***

The host race administrator will let us know by the Thursday before the race how many extra athletes we are able to send. We will do everything possible to get you into the race and to let you know as soon as possible if you get in, usually via email.

***2. What if I am unable to pick up my bib in the morning?***

Don't worry; your bib will be with the coach at the race start. Please do your best to be on time. However, if you miss the group in the morning you will still need to inspect the course (on your own unless you are able to catch up to the group – please see 'Course Inspection' above).

***3. What happens if I miss my start?***

Winter Park has a great track record of very few missed starts. If you do miss your start, find the coach in the start area and we will do our best to get you in. Remember, YSL is meant to be a learning process.

***4. What happens if I lose a ski?***

Unfortunately in ski racing, if you lose your ski, that race run is over. It's best to gather your equipment and move as quickly as possible to the edge of the race arena. If able, exit the race arena and ski to the bottom. In YSL, each start is a race. If you lose a ski first run, you still get to race second run. If you fall but do not lose a ski, get up and keep going, your finish may still count towards the team score.

***5. What happens if I catch up to someone on the course?***

Occasionally this happens. If the skier in front of you is preventing you from skiing your fastest, stop, pull to the side of the course and immediately request a re-run from the nearest course official.

***6. The time showing on the scoreboard is not the time that was announced, what do I do?***

Relax, don't worry, race times on the scoreboard are not considered "official results". Most often the correct time has been recorded in the timing shack. Please do not go into the timing shack to ask for the correct time, this makes race administrators very grumpy. If there seems to be an error, only the coach may approach the race jury for a verification.

***7. What if I was disqualified (DQ) but I know I skied a clean run?***

Sometimes a course official makes a mistake. If you would like to protest your run, find a coach and we will file a protest (protest fees and time limits do apply). If you ever have a question or concern about your run, please consult with your coach first rather than directly contacting a race official.