



HVST – FAQ’S for NEW PARENTS

Here is the list of our FAQ’s that we hope will answer any queries you may have:

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 - DOES MY ATHLETE NEED A SEASON PASS?
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- CAN I WATCH TRAINING SESSIONS?

Does HVST have age restrictions for athletes?

HVST welcomes all athletes ages 6 to 19 with great attitudes who have the desire to improve their alpine ski racing experience and who meet the basic skill prerequisites.

What skiing ability level is required?

HVST requires that all athletes must:

- Be able to get on and off a chairlift unassisted* safely and in control
- Be able to ski Intermediate runs at Hidden Valley with control and safety •
Be able to stop and start at any point during a run with control and safety •
Be able to put and take off skis at any point on the slopes

These basic requirements will ensure that your athlete gets the most out of our program and above all, ensures their safety and enjoyment of the sport. **HVST is NOT a learn-to-ski school!**

*Younger/smaller athletes who meet all above criteria, but are just too short to get on the chairlift independently, will be able to join the team but **MUST** be accompanied by an adult during ski practice who can help them ride the lift until they become independent.

Does my athlete have to “try out” for the team?

On Day 1 on snow, all new athletes will be assessed by HVST coaches to ensure that they meet the above mentioned joining prerequisites. Returning athletes do not need to be reassessed each year. .

On Day 1 on snow, new athletes will be broken into age group and, under the guidance of a HVST coach, be asked to perform a few basic skiing maneuvers and asked to free ski in front of the coach. The coach will then place the new athlete in an appropriate group within the HVST, based on demonstrated skiing ability and age.

If a HVST coach deems post assessment that the new athlete was unable to meet the joining prerequisites, they will be encouraged to return to ski school for a period of time and re-join the team later in the season, or the next season, depending on ability.

HVST has groups for all levels of alpine ski racers and ages vary widely within each of the groups.

What have I got myself into?

HVST has three programs for athletes interested in alpine ski racing. All three programs are open to athletes aged between 6-19 years of age and include dryland training and NASTAR racing on most weekends.

• Try Before You Buy

All new athletes are permitted one day on snow training to “try HVST out” for a day to ensure that the team is something they wish to pursue. This Day 1 on snow is typically the assessment day and will give new athletes and their families a good feel for what HVST is about. If for some reason the athlete decides after Day 1 on snow that HVST is not for them, there will be no charge for registration and you are free to leave.

If an athlete decides that HVST is for them, registration fees will be charged. Any athlete who decides that the ski team is not for them on or after Day 2 on snow, the athlete will still be required to pay full registration

• Does my athlete need a Season Pass?

Regardless of what team your athlete joins, they will need a valid lift ticket for each day of training. This is a separate cost to the HVST registration fee and purchases are made directly through Hidden Valley Resort (and not through HVST).

Most of our athletes utilize a Season Pass for ease. These are available for purchase via the Hidden Valley Resort website or in person at the Hidden Valley Resort. Discounted tickets are available from March each year, and steadily increase in price as the season draws near.

For those athletes new to the team and joining the Introductory Team, it may be more economical to purchase up front a punch card or a bundle of day tickets when only skiing on a Saturday. **You will need to do the math** = weighing the cost of the various lift ticket options up with how often your athlete will ski each week.

Some athletes purchase a lift ticket just before each practice, but this is far from ideal. It is the most expensive way to purchase a ticket and also takes up a lot of time lining up at the ticket window each morning.

• ***The Introductory Team***

This “Intro Team” program is run as a Saturday morning only practice, where athletes will ski and receive fundamental skills training with coaches across various areas of the Hidden Valley Resort. The Intro Team trains from 9:00am - 11:30am on Saturday mornings. The Intro Team is a great way for your child to be introduced to the fun and thrill of ski racing.

Please note, the Introductory Team is not for kids who have never skied before. Athletes should be able to fulfill the basic ability requirements as listed above to ensure that they gain the most benefit from the program. Above all, we want Intro team members to love skiing.

• ***The Development Team***

The “Devo Team” program is a little more serious than the Intro program. Training is held at Hidden Valley Resort on Tuesday or Thursday evenings from 6:00pm – 8:30pm and on Saturday mornings from 9:00am – 11:30am.

Devo Team members receive more advanced coaching and training to prepare athletes for alpine ski racing. They will learn how to ski a simulated race course at Hidden Valley and the techniques associated with ski racing for Giant Slalom (GS) and Slalom (S). Devo Team members Devo Team members are encouraged to participate in one WIJARA race per season to put their training to the test.

• ***The Travel Team***

The “Travel Team” program is more intense in training requirements and is geared to prepare athletes for GS and S competitions at various race events, primarily in the Midwest. The Travel Team trains on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Saturday and/or Sunday mornings (when not attending a race). Occasionally, coaches will call special practices to further prepare travel team members for upcoming races. The Travel Team typically competes in all 4 WIJARA club level races (in Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois) and for the most skilled athletes, in the Central Division USSA and FIS races in northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Athletes can qualify for the Rocky Mountain division and National level races by performing well in the USSA and/or FIS race events.

What group will my athlete be placed in within the program

Depending on what team you register your athlete in (Intro, Devo or Travel), groupings will be made by the Head Coach and Assistant Coaches initially based on the athlete's skiing ability and then age. Ages vary widely across all levels of team membership. Groupings are flexible, and athletes may move between groups as they progress throughout the season.

HVST uses the USSA system for categorizing athletes into age groups (for initial HVST grouping purposes and racing). Athletes are typically grouped:-

- U19 - for the 2020/21 season YOB 2003-2004
- U16 - for the 2020/21 season YOB 2005-2006 and/or are under 16 years old as of January 1st of the competition season
- U14 – for the 2020/21 season YOB 2007-2008 and/or are under 14 years old as of January 1st of the competition season
- U12 – for the 2020/21 season YOB 2009-2010 and/or are under 12 years old as of January 1st of the competition season
- U10 – for the 2020/21 season YOB 2011-2012 and/or are under 10 years old as of January 1st of the competition season
- U8 – for the 2020/21 season YOB 2013+

These age groupings are also used for NASTAR and WIJARA racing grouping purposes.

When do the athletes train?

Like any sport, your athlete's progress will depend upon the time they spend practicing it. One of the prime goals of the HVST program is to build within our athletes a passion for the sport. With that passion, we rarely cancel practice when Hidden Valley is open! We ski in the rain, in the bitter cold, in strong wind, when it is snowing or blizzards. We also encourage the athletes to practice the drills they learn whenever they can make it out to the hill to "free ski".

Regardless of what team your child is registered on, all athletes are welcome and strongly encouraged to run (for free) the NASTAR race course on most Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 1:00pm at Hidden Valley. This is a perfect way for athletes to put into practice what they have learnt and race against the clock in a fun environment.

Why is it important to arrive on time

Athletes need to be ready to ski when training starts, not just arriving in the parking lot, or sitting in the lodge putting their boots on. We understand that it may be a challenge for everyone, but **please do the utmost to get your athlete to the hill and gear on prior to the commencement of the training session.** We also strongly recommend and encourage athletes to get a few warm up runs in before training sessions officially commence.

Arriving late causes an unequal distribution of coach resources and could mean your child is in an incorrect group for that session. Much time is wasted trying to connect a late comer to their group when everyone else is out skiing. Coaches will not bring their group down the hill to meet a late comer – it is up to the late comer to find their group out on the hill. HVST has radios to help connect athletes with coaches.

What do athletes do when training?

To expand your athlete's skiing skills, they will work on technique drills, ski bumps, learn to ski on one ski, ski gates and have snowball fights! The athletes spend a lot of time on fundamental drills that build a base of strength and ability. This prepares them to handle encounters (like a rut or something unexpected) at higher speeds on a race course. By the time your athlete becomes a teenager, they will most likely be an expert skier – something they will have for the rest of their life.

What do they need at practice?

HVST will practice in rain, snow, cold, warm sunshine and blizzards. Please dress athletes accordingly. Warm fingers and toes are important! Athletes will not get much out of training if they are physically miserable. Also, all athletes must wear helmets and goggles. We will not permit athletes to ski with a HVST group without protective headgear and eyewear. Please review the HVST equipment List on the website <https://www.hvst.org/info>

What about equipment (skis, boots, bindings, clothing etc)?

All sports require the proper equipment. **Please ask a Coach before you buy anything for your athlete.** HVST may be able to help you avoid buying equipment that is not “right” for the sport or your athlete's ability level, saving you money!! There may be special team discounts available from local stores or some of the ski equipment manufacturers. The Coaches are up to date about what equipment is available and most suitable for your athlete. Please review the HVST equipment list on the website.

Team coats are provided by HVST to all athletes. HVST uses a lease agreement for coat distribution each year. Athletes will be fitted for a coat and asked for a holding security payment, which is returned at the end of the season when the coat is returned in good order. More details on the coat leasing will be provided upon joining, but basically you get a free coat to wear (and return) each season.

Can my athlete bring an iPod or phone to training?

Please don't. Your athlete will inevitably fall in training. They also need to be fully aware of their surroundings and listen attentively at all times to their coaches instructions. So, for their own safety, HVST will not permit athletes to train with an iPod or phone with ear phones etc. Please help support HVST on this issue. Please ask that your athlete keep their phone safely in the jacket pocket.

Why does my older athlete have to ski with younger athletes?

Our younger athletes have a wide variety of skill levels. Over the years, we have found that it makes the most sense to place athletes into smaller sub-groups based on their current skill level. The coaches work with that small group 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 athletes for training by age only, they would not progress as quickly as any of us would like. That is 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 who is responsible to know your athlete and what his/her goals are for the season. Even if that coach is not working with your athlete during a particular training day, the coach is expected to keep tabs on their progress (or lack thereof) and is your athletes "go to" coach for input, counsel advice and feedback.

Can I watch training sessions?

Parents are always welcome, and we encourage you to come out and watch the athletes ski gates, or even join us to free ski with the group. Ski racing is unlike any other sport. In skiing, you can watch along the side of the hill and see them move. It is pretty amazing to watch them progress during the season! However, please let the coaches coach and don't get involved in the training process or smother/coddle your child during practice sessions. Come watch for a while, and then let them practice on their own. Please never ever criticize or "coach" a coach in front of the kids.