



Athlete Handbook

Junior Team



## **The MWSC Team**

At MWSC we aim to provide youth with exceptional coaching, training, and a healthy environment to approach sport. We want our participants to feel that they have gained more than just technical know-how and fitness. This handbook will provide parents and athletes the outline and information needed to help guide them through training.

Over the past ten years, MWSC has helped many junior athletes to success both on and off the ski trails. MWSC Team members have won County, State and National titles. They have earned spots on Maine State, New England and U.S. Junior Teams. Many of the MWSC athletes have continued both their athletic and academic career at prestigious universities across the country, MWSC team members are currently studying at Dartmouth, Bates, Colby, Bowdoin, Middlebury, UVM, University of Utah, Carleton University, UNH, and at every branch of the UMaine system. Many of these student athletes have earned merit and academic scholarships to these institutions.

In order to achieve these gains among our participants, it is crucial that we foster a positive team environment. Team members are expected to be supportive and respectful of one another at all times. While nordic skiing is an individual sport, it is almost impossible to have success without the support of a team: parents, community, training partners, physical therapists and coaches. We recognize this reality and ask that MWSC athletes strive to be excellent community members as a reflection of our gratitude.

This handbook is intended for use by athletes on MWSC Teams. The Development (or Devo) Team is □ for athletes in middle school and older, it is the first competitive step in our proven pipeline to success. Athletes participating in this program are encouraged to develop as skiers in a fun environment while learning about what is necessary to become an elite athlete. The Junior Team is the second step, these athletes have met the specified criteria by qualifying for a Maine championship team.



## MWSC Training

Our training program is designed to work with your school and other sports schedules to maximize long-term athlete development. In this section you will find information on practices, the overall year, planning your training, and planning your own long-term success.

MWSC offers multiple practice sessions each week for a variety of age-groups and ability levels. Practices are designed to be efficient and productive. Towards that end, we ask that athletes come prepared and on time. Athletes who are practicing shooting for biathlon should allow extra time for both set up and break down of the range area—this should be done outside of practice time. Remember, some of the training you do will likely be outside of MWSC training. We hold training for the Development Team three times each week and Junior Team sessions four times each week, with an option for another specific shooting session.

There are other great training opportunities through school sports and with family and friends. Do not limit your training to scheduled practices.

Athletes should bring the following to practice:

- ⋈ appropriate training clothing
- ⋈ running shoes
- ⋈ ski equipment (rollerskis or snow skis, poles, boots, basic kick wax kit)
- ⋈ helmet (if rollerskiing or biking)
- ⋈ water bottle and carrier or drink belt
- ⋈ dry clothes for post-workout
- ⋈ post-workout snack if long travel home

## **MWSC Yearly Training Progression**

The following training progression is a general outline of how practices and individual workouts should progress over the course of the training year (beginning in May). The focus of each period is designed to generate improvement in fitness level and technical ability, and, cumulatively, this progression will bring athletes to the peak of their ability for the year during the racing season.

### **Period 1: Transition (May-June)**

Focus on fun, general motor skills, coordination, and base fitness

### **Period 2: Base (July)**

Begin ski specific training while building endurance and strength; develop general training into ski specific skills. Roller skiing begins with focus on basic skills

### **Period 3: Fitness Maintenance (August-September)**

School sports begin. Weekend outings and training events are crucial to maintaining a connection to skiing. Camps will be included around school schedules to offer a more focused opportunity during this cycle.

**Period 4: Building Fitness 1 (October-November)** \Ski specific endurance and strength plays a more prominent role in training, and directed intensity training begins. Technique emphasized more on roller skis and in ski walking/bounding

### **Period 5: Building Fitness 2 (December)**

On-snow training begins in earnest with major focus on technique and developing confidence on skis. Directed intensity also develops as racing season approaches

### **Period 6: Race Season (January-March)**

With frequent races, the focus shifts to maintaining technique, strength, and endurance while working to increase speed on skis. It is Important to maintain MWSC connection despite school ski seasons. Aroostook Cups are important in addition to weekend trips.

**\*Note: Yearly training progressions for Regional Team athletes are available from the coach at your venue. They are not included in this handbook because progressions may vary by athlete.**



## Training Zones

There are many different ways to train for skiing, including training at different intensities. Training intensity refers to how hard athletes exert themselves during training and races. Many athletes use their heart rate to gauge their training intensity. Regional Team athletes will begin to use heart rate monitors to measure training intensity. On the Development Team we will focus on “listening to our bodies” to determine our intensity. There will be plenty of time to focus on heart rates in the future.

The most effective way to become a better athlete is by training at a variety of intensities (You can’t sprint everything)! We will break training into different intensity zones that describe our level of exertion.

### **Training Zone: % Max HR: Perceived Exertion:**

<b>L1</b>	55-70%	conversational pace 2-4 on a 1-10 scale
<b>L2</b>	70-80%	Breathing in conversation 4-6 on a 1-10 scale
<b>L3</b>	80-87%	Talk only short sentences 6-8 on a 1-10 scale
<b>L4</b>	87-92%	Few words at a time 5-15km pace 7-9 on a 1-10 scale
<b>L5</b>	92-97%	No talking 5km-Sprint race pace 9+ on a 1-10 scale
<b>Strength</b>	55-85%	



## MWSC Training Plans

These plans are meant to provide a training guideline for coaches and athletes to use. Remember to keep training and practices fun, having a clear plan will help practices to move smoothly, but still be adaptable and allow free ski time and games.

### MWSC Generalized Lesson Plan

1. **Intro**—5 min. cover lesson, route, effort, safety
2. **Warm up**—10 min. 500m-1km easy jogging calisthenics—jumps, lunges, push ups, sit-ups, etc. **or** ski tai chi—walk through technique focus if appropriate with older groups yoga/stretching
3. **Main body**—20-30 min. Emphasize fun! Set boundaries for loop or rules for game technique component should come early
4. **Cool down**—5 min.
5. **Group**—5 min. cover questions

### Distance Lesson:

1. **Intro**—5 min. cover lesson, route, effort, safety
2. **Warm up**—5 min. calisthenics—squat thrust, ski walk, v2 jumps, push ups, sit ups 1x10-15 indoors **or** ski technique focus, 3-4x50-100m forced technique or fun drills
3. **Main body**—20-30 min. Cover a loop together or in small groups. Pick terrain that emphasizes the technique for that day Uphill/Downhill days are great! Tours, especially off track, are an often forgotten skill development lesson.
4. **Cool down**—10 min. Easy activity or short game
5. **Group**—5 min. cover questions

### **Coordination/Games Lesson:**

1. **Intro**—5 min. cover lesson, rules, safety
2. **Warm up**—10 min. Easy skiing or terrain park warm up
3. **Development**—10-15 min. 5 min. passing, no pole drills, Frisbee, etc. **or** 5 min. partner drills (jumps, synchronized skiing, etc.)
4. **Game**—20 min. plan safely! games involving terrain or both upper and lower body are preferable
5. **Cool down**—10 min. Easy skiing at own pace followed by yoga/stretching
6. **Group**—5 min. cover questions



## **Proper Training Attire**

Being prepared to ski train can include a lot of things because of the nature of the sport! It requires planning, knowing when and where to be, what you are going to be doing, having the correct equipment, and to be both physically/mentally ready to train. Now we will not talk about all of these topics here now, I will instead focus on a small but important portion as we move towards fall and then winter. It is the importance of having the proper training attire, now I am not talking about ski boots, or just hats and gloves (which are important as well), but about how we properly layer our bodies to be as comfortable as possible. We will be concentrating on this now because not having the proper attire can detract from your outdoor experience greatly, and lead to sickness and injuries. So below I will outline the basics of what we are expecting athletes to use while training.

The first portion of our attire will deal with taking care of our core. Our core is the central portion of our bodies, from our shoulders to our quads. This area incorporates the largest mass of our body as well as all many of our vital organs. If your core gets cold enough you can suffer from hypothermia, a condition that can be as mild as a chill and shivering to potentially much more harmful condition with sever lasting affects on the body. To avoid conditions such as hypothermia as well as simply being uncomfortable it is important that that the proper clothing is worn and in the right manor. Rule one is NO COTTON, another way to think of this is “COTTON KILLS”, while the fibers in cotton clothing lend themselves to feeling good and comfortable they do very little to insulate when they are damp or wet (say when you get sweaty during a workout) and very little to dry your body. Substitute synthetic fabrics for cotton for all layers while exercising; this becomes especially important in the winter. Rule number two is to have layers. During exercise your body temperature will rise and you will want to be able to remove some layers during strenuous efforts to be more comfortable, but when you have finished a workout you will want to be able to reapply layers to keep your self warm as you cool down again. It is very difficult to do this if you are wearing a t-shirt with a large winter coat over it, try substituting one synthetic t-shirt, followed by a synthetic long sleeve shirt, then maybe a vest, and finally a coat. Dressing like this first means you have no cotton on your body and secondly gives you the options of adding and removing layers to stay comfortable. The same steps that are listed above need to be followed when dressing your lower body as

well. Stay away from cotton; wear multiple layers such as long johns, spandex race suit, and removable warm-up pants. Dressing in this manner again gives you the ability to regulate your temperature to stay comfortable.

After you have dressed your core properly it is time to think about all of our extremities. The farther away from the center of your body you get the harder it is to keep those parts warm, think about your hands, feet and head. Your head is another very important portion of your body and it is in your best interest to try and keep it comfortable. During the winter it is important to keep your head covered up most times even if it is not very cold out because you can lose a lot of your body's heat through your head, by keeping your head warm and comfortable you will be more likely to keep your entire body warm and comfortable. Now it is not just about keeping your entire body warm it is also about protecting body parts that are susceptible to being frozen or frost bit, your ears. Ears can freeze very easily and can be very uncomfortable, by keeping your head covered you can keep your ears from freezing, if you do choose to take a hat off think about using things like a head band or ear muffs to protect your ears. Next are your feet, just like the rest of your body you will want to make sure that you are not wearing cotton sock in your boots, they will get wet with your sweat and you are much more likely to frost bite your feet. Again this can be very uncomfortable and even cause prolonged discomfort (even the loss of a toe or entire foot if bad enough, though very unlikely). Finally your hands, having a couple different thicknesses of gloves will go a long way to keeping you comfortable in different temperatures and not wearing cotton. Preventing cold related conditions like frost bite is our primary focus by talking about how to dress, as I have stated already it can be a very uncomfortable condition to deal with and once you have suffered from it on a body part you will always be more susceptible to getting it again in cold weather.

We are very aware about the way that we dress for training for two main reasons. First and foremost is health, a close second is enjoyment, if you are uncomfortable your skiing experience will suffer, and after all we are all doing this to have a good time!



## **Potential Expenses**

The following list includes expenses you might incur this season. It is extremely unlikely that any skier will have to pay for all of these things in a single year.

**Licenses:**

NENSA \$30

USBA \$25

USSA (if JO or Nationals) \$140

Local Club dues \$5-15

**Equipment (team prices):**

Skis \$300-\$350

Poles \$80-150

Boots \$200-300

Bindings \$80-160

Basic Wax Kit \$75

Rollerskis \$180

Pole Tips \$15

Uniform \$310

Training Clothes \$?

Bike Helmet \$50

Hydration Pack/bottle \$30

**Tuition and Camps:**

Summer Tuition (Devo) \$150

Winter Tuition (Devo) \$300

Dryland Tuition (Junior) \$350

Winter Tuition (Junior) \$500

NENSA J2s or EHSC \$300

USSA Junior Olympics \$1500+

*Included in MWSC Tuition are the costs of coaching, training, camps, wax, subsidized travel for 3 trips (Devo Team) and 4 trips (Junior Team), and financial assistance with championship events.*

**MWSC Scholarship Application** Deadlines: Winter- October 28th, 2011

Parent(s) Applying: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Household Income (as listed on Federal Tax Return): \_\_\_\_\_

Does your athlete work? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Does he/she contribute to skiing expenses? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Please describe reasons for applying for scholarship and any unusual circumstances: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the athlete(s):**

How many years have you been on the MWSC Teams?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why is it important to you to be on the MWSC Team? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Travel Scholarships:**

For what event(s) are you requesting aid?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

*MWSC requests that all recipients of scholarship aid volunteer a minimum of 8 hours at their local ski club. Additionally, we hope that one parent will commit to volunteering for an event at a local club.*

Signed (parent): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signed (parent): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signed (athlete): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## MWSC Team Contract

Please complete this contract and return it to a coach when practice begins for the season.

As a member of the MWSC Team, I agree to:

- ∞ Act as an ambassador of the MWSC program, my community, and my sport
- ∞ Promote a positive, healthy, and respectful team atmosphere
- ∞ Communicate openly and honestly with my coach and my teammates
- ∞ Take a professional approach to my schoolwork, training and racing
- ∞ Arrive at all scheduled team practices and events on time and prepared
- ∞ Take an active role in understanding my own training with the help of MWSC coaches
- ∞ Work to meet and maintain basic athletic performance standards
- ∞ Maintain good academic standing (B average with no failing grades required for travel)
- ∞ Strive to maintain good health for myself and my teammates
- ∞ Complete 5 hours (Development Team) or 25 hours (Junior Team) of community
- ∞ Service relating to the goals of MWSC programs

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MWSC Team Contract**

As the parent of a member of the MWSC Team, we (I) agree to:

- δ Support my child in adhering to the contract above
- δ Communicate honestly and openly with the MWSC Coaching Staff
- δ Work to provide transportation to and from MWSC scheduled events for my child and his or her teammates
- δ Strive to create a healthy, supportive environment for athletic accomplishment

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

At MWSC, we strive to provide a respectful, productive and positive environment for athletes and coaches alike. Coaches are expected to behave in an ethical and professional manner and to maintain world-class knowledge in their respective fields. We expect our athletes to do the same.

However, we recognize that there will be difficulties and conflict between teammates, amongst the entire team, and between athletes and coaches from time to time. When such conflicts arise, we expect timely, direct communication. Please discuss issues with the parties involved, not amongst the entire team. Direct, honest communication is often the best remedy.

## **Safe and Positive Sport Environment**

### **Discrimination and Harassment:**

It is the goal and policy of MWSC that all athletes train and participate in an environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment. Discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, or any other basis protected by law will not be tolerated. Similarly, MWSC prohibits any form of abusive or intimidating conduct in connection with any of its programs or activities. Athletes or coaches who engage in discriminatory or harassing conduct or who intimidate or threaten any other individual will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Athletes who suffer any unlawful discrimination, harassment, threats of violence, or intimidation should make a report to their athlete rep, coach, or the President of MWSC without fear of retaliation or reprisal. Athletes are expected to raise any serious issues of concern early on so that MWSC may investigate and address the matter in a timely and productive manner.

### **Sexual Harassment; Reporting and Investigation:**

MWSC prohibits sexual harassment of any type by any employee, athlete, coach, or third party.

Sexual harassment can generally be defined as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's participation on a team or MWSC program;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting such an individual; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's training, participation or performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Some examples of sexual harassment are: 1) repeated, unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; 2) continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature; 3) graphic or degrading comments about an individual or his or her appearance; 4) the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and 5) any offensive physical contact.

Because harassment can be so damaging to the morale and effectiveness of all employees, athletes, and coaches, it is important that affected individuals take action to address the conduct immediately and make use of MWSC's internal grievance procedures. Any incidents of discrimination or harassment should be reported immediately to your athlete rep, coach, or the MWSC President. A prompt investigation of all allegations of

discrimination and/or harassment will be conducted in as confidential a manner as possible and MWSC will take appropriate action. Athletes can make complaints without fear of reprisal or retaliation. Cooperation in any investigation is expected. Any employee, athlete or coach who is determined, after investigation, to have engaged in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. MWSC will not tolerate retaliation against any athlete who in good faith complains about unlawful discrimination or harassment or who participates in the investigation of any complaint. Any employee, athlete, or coach who retaliates against an individual who makes a complaint or participates in an investigation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Reports of retaliation may be made using the same process described above.

Maine Winter Sports Center

**ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **ATHLETE PLEDGE**

I pledge to uphold the spirit of the Maine Winter Sports Center (MWSC) Code of Conduct (the “Code”), which offers a guide to my conduct as a member of the MWSC Team (the “Team”).

I have familiarized myself with the Code and understand that acceptance of its provisions is a condition of my selection to the Team.

### **As a member of the MWSC Team, I agree to:**

- ∞ Act as an ambassador of the MWSC program, my community and my sport
- ∞ Refrain from any illegal activities, unethical competitive practices or use of prohibited substances
- ∞ Promote a positive and respectful team atmosphere
- ∞ Communicate openly and honestly with my coach and my teammates
- ∞ Take a professional approach to my work, training and racing
- ∞ Arrive at all scheduled team practices and events on time and prepared
- ∞ Take responsibility for a long-term project ,which will benefit my sport and community
- ∞ Perform a minimum of 100 hours (50 hours REG-E) of ski-oriented community service each year
- ∞ Take an active role in planning my own training with the MWSC coaches
- ∞ Work to meet and maintain basic athletic performance standards
- ∞ Strive to maintain good health for myself and my teammates
- ∞ Abide by the MWSC Athlete Code of Conduct

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **As a MWSC Coach, I agree to:**

- ∞ Act in a professional manner, as an ambassador of my program, community and sport

- ⊘ Promote a positive and respectful team atmosphere
- ⊘ Communicate openly and honestly
- ⊘ Arrive at all scheduled team practices and events on time and prepared
- ⊘ Strive to maintain good health, for myself and my team
- ⊘ Strive to provide the best possible training, travel and racing arrangements
- ⊘ Work diligently to help athletes develop as professionals and people
- ⊘ Abide by MWSC policies and codes of conduct

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>PARTICIPANTS' AFFIRMATION</b>
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I have read and accept this Code of Conduct. I agree to the rules, guidelines, jurisdiction and procedures stated in these documents as a condition of being selected to participate as a member of the Team.

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Signature

Date

Maine Winter Sports Center

Cross Country/Biathlon