

FACT SHEET: Minneapolis Alpine Ski Team 2023-2024 Season

Alpine skiing is a sanctioned winter sport of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) offers alpine ski racing as a varsity and junior varsity sport for boys and girls in grades seven through twelve who attend a Minneapolis Public School (MPS). Most students and parents who participate in alpine skiing are unfamiliar with how the sport is administered. This “Fact Sheet” provides a quick overview of high school alpine ski racing with Minneapolis Public Schools.

Organization

- Since 2000, the Minneapolis Alpine Ski Team (MAST), a 501c3, has been providing organizational and financial support for the alpine ski teams of Minneapolis Public Schools.
- Students in grades seven through twelve who attend a Minneapolis Public School are eligible to compete for their high school in the sport of alpine ski racing.
- MAST welcomes students of all ability levels, from beginner to expert. Our coaching staff will work with you to help you improve whatever skills you bring to the slopes. However, it will be your commitment and hard work that will determine just how far you will progress in the sport.
- MAST is funded through a combination of sources: Minneapolis Public Schools, Club Membership Fees, MPS activity fees, and fundraising.
- Fundraising opportunities are available to MAST athletes and families to help offset costs.
- MAST is incorporated as a 501 (c) 3 non-profit and governed by a Board of Directors.
- Due to limitations of funding and the availability of training space, participation is limited even though we roster over 100 athletes every year.

Coaching Staff

- The MAST coaching staff consists of Mark Conway, Joel Hedrick, Eleanor Goodnow Daniel Polland, Mathew Polland, Paige Alampi, Will Kirkpatrick, and Liam Huyen. We hope to add several new assistant coaches for the ‘23-‘24 season.
- Additionally, MAST athletes benefit from the time and energy of a large and experienced staff of volunteer coaches.
- All the coaches work hard to maximize skill development for all athletes and to teach safe skiing habits and maintain safe training environments at all times.

Training

- Practices are held at Hyland Ski and Snowboard Area in Bloomington.
- All athletes are required to purchase an unlimited season pass to Hyland for \$474 (if purchased before November 1; \$499 after November 1.) Athletes can purchase the pass directly through MAST until October 24th and save the expense of paying MN state sales tax or you can purchase directly from Three Rivers Parks/Hyland Hills.
- Our season officially opens on Monday, November 13, 2023, and closes on February 13, 2024. If Hyland Hills Ski Area is open that first week, we will be training on-snow. If Hyland is not open, we will start the season with dryland training at Washburn HS Stadium from 4:30-6PM.

- Generally, practices are offered six days a week, Monday-Saturday. Students and parents are encouraged to discern and establish a training schedule that works best with the athlete and his/her academic goals and outside responsibilities/commitments. The more you train, the more skilled you will become.
- A finalized training and race schedule will be published sometime in late October. Training times can and do change depending on training space availability. In the past and generally, MAST offers two to three training sessions Monday through Thursday: 3:30-5:45; 5-7:15; 6:30-8:45. We usually hold two sessions on Fridays (3:30-5:30 and 5-7:15) and one on Saturday morning from 7:45-10:30AM or 10:30-1:00PM on Saturdays and over Winter Break.
- MAST will offer five to seven (optional) supplemental training sessions at ski areas that offer more challenging terrain, such as Wild Mt and Welch Village. The cost to attend a supplemental training session is usually around \$55-60 per session, which includes a lift ticket and bus transportation.
- We are hoping to offer our extended training camp (optional) at Giants Ridge over winter break. We are hoping to hold a four-day, three-night camp this year from Monday, December 18 through Thursday, December 21.

Commitment and Expectations

- Athletes are expected to attend a minimum of four practices a week if in senior high and three practices a week if in junior high. Most athletes easily meet these requirements and actually attend five or six practices a week. If you aspire to ski on varsity someday, a higher level of commitment is necessary.
- MAST is not a ski club. It is a competitive athletic team. The coaches strive to help you become the best ski racer you can be, no matter how much previous experience you have in the sport. The coaches expect athletes to come to the hill each day with singular focus: to develop and improve their technical and tactical skills in the sport of ski racing. The coaches put together a training plan for each practice and expect athletes to participate fully in that plan.
- Use of the chalet is limited to warming up and using the bathroom. If you need to eat during practice, bring something from home and eat it on the hill during a chairlift ride. Bring a water bottle out to the hill to hydrate while training.
- We realize that weather conditions and highway traffic loads can impact driving, but we expect athletes to be on time for practice and to stay for the duration of practice.
- At the end of practice, all athletes are needed to help with cleaning up the hill and storing away the equipment.

Competition

- During the season, students from all Minneapolis high schools compete together as three teams of boys and girls: Southwest and Washburn each field varsity teams of boys and girls. We also form a third varsity team from our membership that we call MAST. In competitions, the MAST squad consists of students from South, Roosevelt and other Minneapolis schools. Should students from North, Edison, or Patrick Henry wish to join the team, they would compete as part of the MAST team in races.
- MAST sets its own competition schedule. Races are held at both Hyland Hills and other ski areas around Minnesota. We compete in a three race series in the Metro East Conference which includes teams from Hastings, Hill-Murray, Mahtomedi, St. Thomas Academy, and Visitation. We also hold three to four dual meet races at Hyland each

season that allow athletes to test their skills against some teams that also train at Hyland such as Wayzata, Mound West Tonka, Academy of Holy Angels, DelaSalle, and Benilde-St. Margarets. MAST also enters teams in two to three invitational meets a season held at ski areas around the state. And our three Minneapolis teams all compete in the Minnesota State High School Section IV Championships and, for those who qualify, the MN State High School Alpine Championships.

- The varsity squads consist of 10 male and 10 female athletes for dual meets and 6 male and 6 female athletes for invitational races and Section Championships. The varsity roster is determined by time trials and race results and can change at any time, depending on who is skiing fast that week.
- Dual races generally start at 4:30 PM on weekdays. Roughly half of our dual races are held at Hyland Hills and the other half at other ski areas around the State. Invitational races and the Section Championships are held during the school day.
- At most dual meets, all team members race. Those designated “varsity” score in the varsity race and everyone else competes as “junior varsity” and scores in the junior varsity race.
- All MAST athletes have the opportunity to earn high school letters and athletic honors in alpine skiing.

Transportation

- Athletes are responsible for securing transportation to and from Hyland for practices and races. Many families set up carpools.
- MAST will charter a bus to transport athletes to supplemental training sessions, camps and “away” competitions.

Parent Involvement

- Parent involvement is critical to the success of MAST. Parents are encouraged to become involved with the team in a variety of volunteer roles (instructors, race workers, accounting, marketing, fundraising, website management, statistics, equipment, photography, cooking, etc). Ski racing could not exist for Minneapolis students without the active involvement and support of parents.

Costs

- Suggested and Optional MAST Team Membership Fee: \$275. MPS partially funds four paid coaches and bus transportation to away races. The optional team fee helps to fund additional coaches and cover a portion of the other cost associated with operating a ski team (i.e. race entry fees, training equipment and services such as gates, drills, two-way radios, timing system, online video sharing, etc. No student will be turned away for non-payment of the optional team membership fee.
- \$75 MPS Activity Fee (helps fund additional coaches).
- \$474 for an unlimited season pass at Hyland Ski and Snowboard Area if purchased through MAST through October.
- \$55-60 for MAST supplemental training opportunities at more challenging training venues (optional; approximate cost per training session).
- \$30-35 to help cover the cost of a lift ticket at competition venues other than Hyland Hills.

- Approximately \$650 for our optional four day, three night winter break camp at Giants Ridge.
- \$??? for all ski equipment.

Equipment

- Athletes need to secure the following equipment: slalom race skis and bindings; boots; poles with pole guards; alpine race helmet; shin guards; warm winter outdoor clothing, basic ski tuning supplies (edge tuning system, wax, iron, scraper).
- Optional equipment as athletes improve and they become more competitive: GS suit (to enhance aerodynamics), additional tuning equipment/waxes.
- Used race equipment can be purchased during September and October when local ski teams hold “ski swaps” at their home ski areas ([Buck Hill](#), [Hyland](#), [Powder Ridge](#), [Afton Alps](#), etc).
- Used race equipment can also be found on various online websites. Please be advised to review any online purchases with your coaches before making the purchase. They are happy to assist you to make sure you are getting the proper equipment in the correct size and for a fair price.
- [Pierce Skate and Ski](#) offers deeper discounts to MAST athletes on new equipment when purchased in September through mid-October.
- The MAST website offers detailed information on how to buy used equipment at ski swaps. Go to: <http://www.mplsalpineski.org/equipment.html>
- MAST coaches and parents hold tuning seminars to help you learn how to keep your edges sharp and bases waxed.

Communications

- *All of our communication is done by email to parents and athletes.* Consequently, be sure that we have your correct email addresses and that you check your email daily once the season is underway.
- Athletes and parents and guardians can get on the MAST Update distribution list by filling out a simple form here: [New Athlete Inquiry Form](#).
- Once you are on our MAST Update distribution list, you will receive all communications regarding the registration process, pre-season orientations and trainings, equipment, sales, fundraising, MAST apparel, and volunteer opportunities. Once our season opens, the MAST Updates will keep you informed about training, racing, camps, results, and everything else you need to know in order to make the most of your involvement.
- The MAST Website address is: www.mplsalpineski.org. Please check out our website carefully. Not only will you find current and in-depth information about MAST, but also useful information about ski racing, ski tuning, gate judging, equipment, etc.

For Immediate Questions, Contact:

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