



PROGRAMMER'S GUIDEBOOK

for

**Cross Country Canada's
Skill Development Program for
Children**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CCC's Skill Development Program for Children (SDP)

Cross Country Canada (CCC) provides its member divisions and clubs with a modern, state-of-the-art progression of skill development programs (SDP) for children. These programs conform to the Canadian Long Term Athlete Development Guide and provide a vertically integrated continuum of skier development opportunities, beginning with Bunnyrabbits (Active Start), followed by Jackrabbits (FUNDamentals) and concluding with Track Attack (Learning to Train). The "tag line" for CCC's SDP - "Cross-Country Kicks!" - reflects the emphasis on achieving program goals in an atmosphere that is fun and exciting for children.

Bunnyrabbit Program

The first level of the SDP is the Bunnyrabbit Program, which is directed at children in the "Active Start" stage of athlete development (children five years of age and younger). The new program has been developed in parallel with the first level of the Coaching Association of Canada's new competency-based National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), which now provides coaching materials specific to the needs of this age group. The objective is to introduce cross-country skiing and the healthy lifestyle associated with it through organized activity and active play. In addition, it is designed to:

- Help children develop a positive self-image.
- Be fun.
- Provide children an opportunity to make ski-friends.
- Develop fundamental movement skills.
- Help children develop an awareness and appreciation of the natural environment.

Program materials include: an enrolment kit; a kid-friendly, age-appropriate booklet; skill award stickers; and a Bunnyrabbit Program badge.

Jackrabbit Program

The Jackrabbit Program, which is directed at skiers in the "FUNDamentals" stage of athlete development (children six to nine years of age), is the second level of the SDP. It has been developed in parallel with the second level of the new competency-based NCCP, which provides coaching materials specific to the needs of skiers this age. The objective is for children to learn basic cross-country ski skills (both classic and skating) and to instill a lifelong interest in the sport, thereby enhancing their quality of life and health. In addition, it is designed to:

- Help children develop confidence.
- Be fun.
- Provide children an opportunity to ski and socialize with their ski-friends.
- Build overall motor skills.
- Help children develop outdoor winter safety skills.

Program materials include; an enrolment kit; an age-appropriate booklet that provides a comprehensive record of a young skier's ski career; and "technique" and "program"

award stickers that reward and recognize the different levels of achievement. In addition there is a special Jackrabbit Program badge.

Track Attack Program

The Track Attack Program, which is directed at children in the “Learning to Train” stage of athlete development (children 10 to 12 years of age), is the third level of the SDP. It is being developed in accordance with the requirements of with the third level of the new NCCP system. The objective is for the participants to become technically competent cross-country skiers and to utilize their skills to explore a wide range of cross-country ski activities, from back country excursions to Ski Tournaments. In addition, it is designed to:

- Develop fitness through active play, games and other activities.
- Be fun.
- Provide children an opportunity to be part of a sport “team”.
- Develop overall sport skills.
- Expose children to a variety of “adventure-based” cross-country ski activities.

Program materials include: a program-specific enrolment kit; an Attack Log (i.e. the program booklet), which describes the objectives, activities and standards that comprise the program; and 15 Incentive Cards - one for each of the 15 “Targets” in the Log.

2. REGISTRATION

2.1 Organizational Roles

Cross Country Canada

Cross Country Canada (CCC) is the national sport organization for cross-country skiing in Canada. CCC performs the following principal functions with respect to children in the early stages of athlete development:

- Provides a national Skill Development Program (SDP) for children.
- Coordinates the delivery of this program to clubs through its member divisions.
- Provides related national programs such as Racing Rocks!, NCCP, etc.

Your Division

Divisions are the provincial/territorial sport organizations for cross-country skiing and are members of Cross Country Canada. Divisions perform the following principal functions with respect to children in the early stages of athlete development:

- Appoint a Division SDP Representative to liaise between CCC and club programmers. This individual may be staff or volunteer, and may be working in the division office or from home.
- Deliver the SDP to their member clubs.
- Serve as the provincial/territorial supply centre for SDP program materials.
- Prepare and distribute your SDP Fall Start-up mailing.
- Gather and maintain SDP enrolment data.
- Promote the program to communities within their jurisdictions.

- ❑ Deliver related national programs to member clubs.

Your Club

Clubs are community-level sport organizations that promote and facilitate cross-country skiing and are members of a division. Clubs perform the following principal functions with respect to children in the early stages of athlete development:

- ❑ Appoint a SDP Programmer.
- ❑ Arrange suitable facilities for program implementation.
- ❑ Train leaders to deliver the program.
- ❑ Coordinate and deliver the program at the community level.

2.2 Your Fall Start Up Kit

In early fall you should receive a start-up mailing from your division. This mailing will provide you with the information you require in order to enroll your group and to order program materials and supplies.

2.3 Registration Steps

- ❑ Your club must complete the annual club registration process with your division for the current season **before** you enroll your group in the SDP. This requirement is related to the provision of liability insurance and is thus extremely important.
- ❑ Each child planning to enroll in the SDP (Bunnyrabbit, Jackrabbit and Track Attack levels) must **first** be a registered member of your club or division. Ensure that this step has been completed before proceeding.
- ❑ Next, gather the required enrolment data for registering your group in the SDP and forward this information, plus the correct payment, to your Division Representative. Use the forms provided by your division.
- ❑ You will then receive a “registration kit” for each child you have registered. Note that each year the contents of the kit change.
- ❑ It is important to complete the registration process early in the fall. Ideally the children in your program will receive their registration kit when they register in your program. If that is not possible, they should receive their kit at the first practice session.

CCC Policy:

Each participant in CCC’s Skill Development Program for children must:

- be a member of Cross Country Canada through registration in (1) a member Club, or (2) a Division, and
- be enrolled in the Bunnyrabbit, Jackrabbit or Track Attack programs (i.e. have paid the \$5 enrolment fee)

in order to be access program materials such as the booklets, badges, stickers or other items available from time to time.”

2.4 Ordering Program Materials and Supplies

Each division will have its own protocol for ordering program materials and supplies. In most cases, you will be asked to complete the registration process first.

It is best to order early in the fall. If there is an unexpected demand for specific materials in any given year, your division will then have an opportunity to re-stock before the season gets underway, and you won't be left waiting for back orders after your club program has started up.

Order early - rush orders by courier are costly for your club.

When ordering materials you should be aware of the following:

- The Bunnyrabbit level of the SDP is aimed at children five years of age and younger.
- The Jackrabbit level is aimed at children six to nine years of age.
- The Track Attack level is directed at children 10 to 12 years of age.
- The booklets for each level of the SDP are intended to provide a comprehensive record of a young skier's career. Each one is meant to be a one-time purchase.
- Booklets should be handed out at the time the child is enrolled in a program. If that is not possible, they should be distributed at the first session of the season, preferably at an introduction meeting or a similar occasion where the parents are present and the setting is either a classroom or club day lodge. If the only opportunity to hand it out is at an on-snow session, then this should be done at the conclusion of the session, with the parents present.
- The booklets should be kept at the skier's home in a safe place. They should not return to the ski area!
- For the Bunnyrabbit Program, ensure that you order a sufficient number of "Paw Print" stickers at the start of the season. A Bunnyrabbit will earn only one Skill Award sticker while they are in the program, but they will earn a Paw Print sticker for each step they take on their way to achieving their Skill Award.
- Other stickers that will be in more demand than most are: Technique Award #'s 1 and 2; Snow Goal #3; and Sprint Green and Blue.
- The Programmer's Guidebook is an administrative tool for program organizers, not a coaching manual. This document is intended to complement the new competency-based NCCP Community Coaching resource materials.

3. SDP AWARDS PROGRAM

To encourage participation and recognize progress, stickers or incentive cards (depending on the program) can be awarded to skiers who achieve a certain skill level or complete a specific task.

3.1 Bunnyrabbit Program

- ❑ **Paw Print Sticker.** Skiers in the Active Start stage of athlete development (five years of age and younger) can earn a Paw Print sticker for each skill they master on their way to achieving their Skill Award. Stickers should be placed overtop of the shaded “bunny prints” in the centre section of the Bunnyrabbit booklet.
- ❑ **Skill Award Sticker.** Skiers will earn this award only once. They should receive it when they have accomplished all the skills identified in the Bunnyrabbit booklet and are ready to graduate to the Jackrabbit Program. This sticker should be placed over the shaded circle that says “Bunnyrabbit Skill Award”.

3.2 Jackrabbit Program

Note that the instructions below apply to the full-colour version of the Jackrabbit booklet only. Awards instructions for earlier versions of the Jackrabbit booklet can be found in those booklets.

- ❑ **Technique Award Stickers (Levels 1-4).** Skiers in the FUNdamentals stage of athlete development (six to nine years) can earn a Technique Award sticker for each skill level they master as they progress through the program. Most children will complete one level per season. Stickers should be placed overtop of the shaded circle that says “Technique Award #X”. The number on the sticker should correspond to the number in the shaded circle.
- ❑ **Program Award Stickers.** Skiers in the FUNdamentals stage of development can also earn Program Award stickers for achievement in specific areas.
 - **Snow Goals (five goals):**
 - The purpose of this award is to encourage play-time on snow (including frequent use of a ski playground or terrain park) in addition to practice sessions for the purpose of improving a skier’s balance, agility, fitness and rhythm – the key elements of good technique.
 - Award Rules: Skiers can earn one sticker per year, with the exception of the final year, in which case a bonus sticker can be earned. In order to achieve the sticker that says SNOW GOAL 1, skiers must ski at least five times (a minimum of one hour each) a season in addition to their Jackrabbit practice sessions. If they ski 10 times, they earn a sticker that says SNOW GOAL 2; 15 times, SNOW GOAL 3; and 20 times, SNOW GOAL 4. In order to earn the bonus sticker (SNOW GOAL 5), skiers must double the number of times they would ski to earn a SNOW GOAL 4 sticker during their fourth year in the program - for a grand total of 40 times on snow in addition to their Jackrabbit practice sessions. The highest achievement would be to earn four “SNOW GOAL 4” stickers and one “SNOW GOAL 5” sticker – one SNOW GOAL 4

sticker for each year the skier is enrolled in the program plus the bonus sticker.

- The centre of each shaded circle records the skier's score until a sticker has been earned, in which case the sticker will cover it.

- **Sprints (five levels):**

- The purpose of this award is to develop speed. The recommended sprint distance for skiers seven years of age is 50-75 metres; for eight and nine years of age it is 75-100 metres.
- Award Formula: If the distance is 100 metres, the actual time of the skier is used; if the distance is 50 metres, multiply the time of the skier by two, and so on:
 - Green = 2 min to 1 min per 100 metres.
 - Blue = 59 sec to 50 sec per 100 metres.
 - Purple = 49 sec to 40 sec per 100 metres.
 - Red = 39 sec to 30 sec per 100 metres.
 - Gold = 29 sec or less per 100 metres.
- Stickers should be placed otop of the shaded circle that says "Sprint X". Colours on the stickers should correspond to the colour named in the shaded circle.

- **Hat Tricks (5 levels):**

- The objective of this award is to recognize the exceptional accomplishment of achieving a high standard for technique, speed and commitment.
- Award Formula: Combine a Technique Award with a Sprint and Snow Goal Award to collect an all-round achievement award – the Hat Trick Award
 - Hat Trick #1: Technique Award #2, Sprint Award (blue), Snow Goal 2.
 - Hat Trick #2: Technique Award #2, Sprint Award (purple), Snow Goal 3.
 - Hat Trick #3: Technique Award #3, Sprint Award (purple), Snow Goal 4.
 - Hat Trick #4: Technique Award #4, Sprint Award (red), Snow Goal 4.
 - Hat Trick #5: Technique Award #5, Sprint Award (gold), Snow Goal 4/5.
- Stickers should be placed otop of the shaded circle that says "Hat Trick #X". The number on the sticker should correspond to the number in the shaded circle.

3.3 Track Attack Program

- **Incentive Cards (15 "targets")**. Skiers in the Learning to Train stage of athlete development (10 to 12 years) can earn an Incentive Card for the successful achievement of each of the 15 Track Attack "Targets". Once a card has been awarded it should be inserted into the appropriate slot provided on one of the flaps in the Attack Log. The location can be determined by matching the Target number and name of athlete on the card with the corresponding number and athlete on the flap.
 - The Track Attack booklet – the "Attack Log" - contains descriptions of each Target and a place for the related incentive card to be mounted for display.
 - The Incentive Cards depict famous cross-country skiers.
 - In order to complete the program in three years, a skier needs to achieve an average of five targets annually.

4. SDP SUPPORT STRUCTURE

4.1 The Support Structure

A support structure is essential for a successful cross-country ski program. The seven key components of a support structure are:

- 1) the club;
- 2) the ski facility;
- 3) a progression of athlete development opportunities;
- 4) the club head coach;
- 5) the programmer/coordinator;
- 6) club coaches; and
- 7) parents.

The Club

The club is the base or foundation of the cross-country sport system. A multi-program cross-country ski club offers a wide range of programs that cover the full spectrum of cross-country ski activities for all age groups from 3 to 70+ years of age.

There are approximately 375 cross-country ski clubs in Canada, many of which offer a Skill Development Program (SDP) for children. In fact, many of these clubs began as a single program (Jackrabbit) club, and eventually a full club system developed around it.

The more established and successful your ski club is, the more resources your program can access. For example, a well developed full service club might offer a variety of club events, a club newsletter, liability insurance coverage, a progression of athlete development opportunities for skiers of all ages, coaching development opportunities, lit trails, a day lodge and a high standard of trail grooming. The stronger your club, the more time and energy you and your coaching colleagues can invest in the development of a quality ski program for children.

The Ski Facility

A successful SDP requires, as a minimum, an area where a group of children can ski. Ideally, your community will have a cross-country ski facility operated by a club or a ski resort. This facility should include a lit ski playground/terrain garden for the youngest skiers, and a warming hut or day lodge at the trailhead. In addition, there should be well marked and well groomed trail systems with varied terrain, as this becomes increasingly important when the skier graduates from the under six age group and moves into the more advanced levels of the program. This is the ideal, however, and although many groups have facilities of this kind to work with, even more groups do not. Many will use a golf course, community park or school-yard. These locations may require more creativity and effort to set up an appropriate learning environment, but they can be very effective if

prepared properly. Whatever your situation, the appropriate packing and track-setting of the ski area where your group practices is an important component of the learning environment, and a necessary one in order to teach technical skills.

If your group does not have an established cross-country ski facility close enough to your community to use on a regular basis, it is worthwhile to make arrangements for occasional excursions to a neighboring community that does have a good facility. It is important for young skiers to be exposed to a modern, well developed ski facility.

A Progression of Athlete Development Opportunities

An established club is expected to have a progression of athlete development opportunities. The progression would begin with a Bunnyrabbit program, and would continue with a Jackrabbit program, a Track Attack program, a club Junior Racing Team program and so on. These programs within a program must not only offer a progression but be vertically integrated in order to work to potential. It is very important that each step is thoughtfully integrated with the next to reduce the chances of skier drop-out in the critical early teen years.

Definition: a vertically integrated **athlete development program** is a series of individual club programs that provides a clear and continuous progression of skier development opportunities, usually up through the senior age category.

Does your club have:

- ✓ ONE athlete development program?
- ✓ ONE overall athlete development strategy?
- ✓ ONE club head coach?

Vertical integration is a critical consideration when tackling the problems of skier dropout.

Club Head Coach

A club head coach is an essential component of a successful club athlete development program.

General responsibilities may include the following:

- coordinating all the club athlete development activities (i.e. Bunnyrabbit through to Senior Racing Team);
- overseeing the development of all the club coaches including beginners; and
- coaching the club elite athletes (optional).

Specific duties may include the following:

- organizing a meeting of all the club coaches (beginner coaches through to veteran coaches) in late August or early September to discuss and plan the program for the

year. All club coaches should be a part of the planning and budgeting process so that everyone learns the way the program works;

- ❑ coordinating one joint practice for all the different athlete development groups once a week, from the youngest beginner skier to the top senior skiers in the club, in order to encourage club identity and cohesion within the overall program. These groups should at least start their practice with a common warm-up activity;
- ❑ regular attendance at SDP sessions (Bunnyrabbit, Jackrabbit and Track Attack). The purpose of this is to assist the less experienced coaches, to get to know the younger athletes and to ensure the integration of programs;
- ❑ providing technical leadership, to include holding technique instruction and waxing clinics for the coaches;
- ❑ providing technical support at competitions in which SDP participants are involved;
- ❑ coordinating elite club skiers to assist with SDP sessions on a regular basis; and
- ❑ serving on the club Board.

Programmer/Coordinator

The programmer (or program coordinator) is the SDP administrator. This person may or may not be the team leader or coach a group, depending on the size of the program. This position doesn't necessarily require ski skills, but it does require good organizational skills and the ability to recruit volunteers. Responsibilities include:

- ❑ local promotion of the program;
- ❑ phoning;
- ❑ transportation;
- ❑ coordinating facility use, grooming;
- ❑ all aspects of registration;
- ❑ social events;
- ❑ coordinating special activities, ski swap, excursions, etc., possibly in cooperation with other club members (e.g. trips to a ski tournament, a back-country outing, a provincial cup competition, an inter-school ski day, etc.);
- ❑ ordering and distributing of materials and supplies;
- ❑ administration of registration kits and badges;
- ❑ coordinating the provision of refreshments;
- ❑ information distribution: SDP newsletters; the bulletin board; etc.;
- ❑ coordinating local leadership training courses – Introduction to Community Coaching, Community Coaching courses, waxing clinics, etc.;

- ❑ liaising with the club head coach;
- ❑ overseeing the risk management program (safety equipment at practices, paperwork, circulating accident report forms to coaches, etc.);
- ❑ preparing year end reports; and
- ❑ performing the tasks listed below under responsibilities of a “team leader” if the team leader position is not filled.

Club Coaches

Club coaches lead group sessions. If the group is children under six years of age, this role may be filled by community coaches in training, but if the group is six years of age and older, these individuals should be certified community coaches - technically competent, good role models and able to present the program well. General responsibilities include the following:

- ❑ planning and conducting sessions for their own group of children (dryland, on-snow and classroom sessions);
- ❑ teaching and evaluating ski technique;
- ❑ teaching ski preparation skills and respect for ski equipment; and
- ❑ providing inspiration and enthusiasm.

Team Leader

If your club SDP is large, it may be necessary for one of the coaches to take the role of team leader in order to oversee the planning and coordination of all the group sessions. This person should have a good understanding of the program. Responsibilities may include the following:

- ❑ coordinating the training and development of all the coaches working with this program, including new coaches recruited to replace retiring coaches;
- ❑ ensuring suitable substitutes for coaches who cannot make a practice session;
- ❑ liaising with the club head coach and the next level of athlete development program above the SDP;
- ❑ ensuring the provision of current information on equipment selection, ski preparation etc.;
- ❑ coordinating, before the program starts up, a meeting with the parents to explain the philosophy of the program and the plans for the season;
- ❑ ensuring coordination of games when groups assemble together, and the coordination of appropriate equipment; hoops, soccer balls etc.;

- coordinating the regular involvement of appropriate "role models"; and
- coordinating use of the ski area to suit the needs of the different ages/skill levels within the groups.

Assistant Coaches

Assistant coaches provide support to the coach who is leading a group. An assistant may be a trained or certified community coach helping with every session, or they may come to one session a year as a special guest. They may be a high level coach/athlete assisting the group with ski technique, or a parent dedicated to the task of keeping mitts on the hands of Bunnyrabbits.

Parents

The parent is *the* critical partner with whom the programmer and club coaches work to ensure children have a positive experience with the program. Refer to section 8.4 for additional information.

4.2 Your Ideal Club!

A full service cross-country ski club delivers a full range of programs to a broad cross section of the community, as well as a progression of athlete development opportunities for skiers of all ages and skill levels. A diagram of a full service club model has been included below

Points to note are the following:

- ❑ This is a generic model. Each club will have it's own special programs, names for programs and a way of "grouping" responsibilities for each committee.
- ❑ This is an ideal model. Few clubs are sufficiently developed to offer the full range of programs outlined here.
- ❑ This is a model of a volunteer driven, amateur sport club that is, through membership in a Division of Cross Country Canada, a part of the Canadian cross-country skiing sport system.
- ❑ It does not address the management of paid staff, although paid staff are becoming an important consideration with regard to trail and facility maintenance, coaching and program delivery in larger clubs.
- ❑ It distinguishes between CCC/Division "programs" and club "partnerships". For example, a CCC/Division program would be a loppet, a junior racing team, a NCCP coaching workshop , etc. A Club partnership would refer to an organization with an independent mandate, such as the Ministry of Forests, a commercial ski area, or the Federation of Mountain Clubs. Arrangements with other organizations, whether formal or informal, play an integral role in the operations of any cross-country ski club. However, they have not been included on this chart if they are distinct organizations.
- ❑ A "coach" is an individual who helps athletes (skiers) of any age or skill level to have a better sport experience.
- ❑ An "athlete" is anyone who wishes to improve their fitness level and develop their ski skills, regardless of their age.
- ❑ A "full service club" provides a clear and continuous progression of skier development opportunities (*especially critical is the vertical integration of the programs for youth, so each child can clearly see the next program to which they may aspire*);
- ❑ A full service club would have ONE athlete development program, ONE overall plan, ONE head coach and a good integration of the components.
- ❑ The club coaches would work as a unit, including planning the transition of a skier from one level of a program to the next as their skills and interests develop.
- ❑ Older racers would work with the youngest skiers at least once a week.
- ❑ Athletes of all ages would share in some sessions, even if it is only the first 15 minutes of one session a week.

4.3 Example Infrastructure of a Full Service Club

| | | Chairperson | | | | | | | Treasurer |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|-----------|
| Chair Trails & Facilities | Chair Coaching Dev't | Chair Event Hosting | Chair Fundraising | Chair Social Activities | Chair Athlete (Skier) Dev't | Secretary Registrar | Chair Back Country | Chair Promotions | |
| <p>Trail System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dev. & maintenance • list trails <p>Day Lodge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construction and maintenance <p>Grooming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equipment purchase & maintenance • grooming & tracksetting <p>Ski Playground</p> <p>Trail Maps</p> <p>Safety Program</p> <p>Security</p> | <p>Local Clinics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ski prep. • technique <p>National Coaching Certification Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro Community Coach • Competition-Introduction • Competition-Development • Competition-High Performance <p>Mentoring</p> <p>Practical Training</p> | <p>Officials Dev't</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCC Officials Certification Program <p>Mentoring</p> <p>Races</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Time trials • Fun Relays • Sprints • Midget Champs • Regional Cups • Prov/Terr. Winter Games • Prov/Terr. Cup • Canada Cup • West/East Canadians • National Champs • International Events <p>Loppets</p> <p>Ski for Light</p> | <p>Bingo</p> <p>Ski Swap</p> <p>CCC Calendar Sales</p> <p>Sponsorship</p> <p>Bottle Drives</p> <p>Other...</p> | <p>Club Socials</p> <p>New Year's Ski</p> <p>Lantern Ski</p> <p>Club Excursions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to other ski areas • to events • ski tours <p>Year End Wrapup</p> <p>Other...</p> | <p>Parents & Tots</p> <p>School Ski</p> <p>Skill Dev't Programs for Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bunnyrabbit • Jackrabbit • Track Attack <p>Club Junior Racing Program</p> <p>Sr Racing Team</p> <p>Club Camps</p> <p>Regional/Prov./Terr. Camps</p> <p>Adult Skill Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Womens Ski Fest • Learn to Loppet <p>Masters Camps, Racing Team</p> <p>Disabled Skiers Programs</p> | <p>Newsletter</p> <p>Email Network</p> <p>Membership Coordinator</p> <p>Information Distribution</p> <p>Daypasses</p> | <p>Cabins/Chalets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construction & maintenance <p>Organized Tours</p> | <p>Club Website</p> <p>Local Newspaper</p> <p>Radio</p> <p>Brochures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilities • programs <p>Daily Trail Reports</p> <p>Public Service Announcements</p> | |

4.4 Role of the Club Head Coach

In any successful amateur sport club, regardless of the sport, the role of the club head coach is much the same. Inevitably, the club's success can be attributed to a volunteer support structure built on the principles of planning, team work and mentoring. We recommend that you apply these principles in your club program, and discover the rewards!

The head coach, or coach coordinator, is expected to have a strong coaching background and to have a minimum certification of Competition-Development Coach.

General Responsibilities

The key areas of responsibility for this position are:

- to oversee the development of all club coaches;
- to coordinate the athlete development activities; and
- to coach the racing team (optional).

Duties/Tasks

In carrying out these responsibilities, the head coach performs the following duties/tasks or ensures that others perform them:

- At the beginning of the season (late August or early September), all of the club coaches (beginner through to veteran coaches) meet together for a day to review the objectives of the program, the club philosophy and what should be covered in a practice/training session. This is the time the club coaches are updated on news from the ski world, such as changes in emphasis on technique or the official acceptance of sprint formats at the international level. It is the start-up of the club program for the season. Some groups within the club membership would have been training during the summer, but this is the *formal* beginning to the season.
- All of the club coaches from beginner through veteran participate in the planning and budgeting process for the program. That way, everyone learns why things are done the way they are.
- Once a week, all groups/programs meet together and train from one location. This ensures that everyone sees each other at least once weekly, from the youngest beginner skier to the elite senior skiers in the club. This will usually be at on a Saturday and will continue through both the dryland and on-snow sessions.
- Early in the fall, the club coaches have a meeting with the parents to explain the philosophy of the club's athlete development program and the plans for the season.
- At least once a week, the head coach visits the practice sessions for the beginner groups. Sometimes they will assist with the practice, but the real purpose of the visit is to provide evaluation and feedback to the less experienced coaches, many of whom are parents.

- The head coach also coordinates elite skiers from the club to work with the younger skiers once a week. This is implemented for the benefit of *all groups of skiers 14 years of age and younger.*

4.5 The Parent

Parents are responsible for acquiring suitable ski equipment, ensuring skis are properly prepared for practice sessions, transporting the child to practices (or dropping off/picking up the equipment from school), ensuring the child spends time on skis in addition to the practice sessions, ensuring the child is dressed appropriately for the weather, and so on. In addition, parents can support the program as a whole by: becoming coaches, assistants, or the Programmer; helping with administration, fund-raising, ski swaps and special excursions; making materials for games or the ski playground; and so on. Parents are an extraordinary resource that can become partners in making the program a success.

Tips on How to Involve the Parent

Provide the following information for parents when they register their children in the program:

- an overview of the program, it's goals and objectives;
- sample booklets and other program materials to look at – materials that help to explain the program;
- an outline of the program plan (season plan) for the group in which their child is enrolled. Include information such as:
 - ✓ the number of sessions and where they will be held;
 - ✓ if there will be dryland sessions;
 - ✓ how often there will be sessions;
 - ✓ which week days;
 - ✓ when the program begins;
 - ✓ where to meet at the ski area;
 - ✓ how long the sessions will be for each age group;
 - ✓ cancellation policies;
 - ✓ the special activities in which this group is scheduled to take part;
 - ✓ activities that will be out of town, etc.
- an estimate of the cost involved for the group their child is in, including equipment needs, special activities, etc.;
- copies of “Equipment for Cross-Country Skiing” (section 3.4) and instructions on how to find more information on ski equipment (i.e. initial parent meeting);

- suggestions on how parents can help. Be specific: coach; assistant coach; programmer; grooming and tracksetting; special events coordinator; registration; refreshments; fundraising; phoning; refreshments, etc.;
- contact numbers for the programmer and club coaches, and encouragement to ask questions;
- the time and location of information meetings for parents; the main topics that will be covered; and whether their participation is mandatory. Be sure to set the date for this meeting soon after registration – before parents have purchased ski equipment for their children.

Ensure that parents know that they are an important and respected part of the program.

If parents are interested in improving their own ski technique or want more information on ski preparation, help them! You may not be able to assist them yourself, but you can direct them to an individual or a program who can. Some clubs offer free parent ski lessons while the children are taking part in skill development sessions. Even if parents do not want to be involved as coaches, or in any support role, *they are a very important influence on their children's skill development outside of practice sessions. It is important to help parents learn as much about skiing as possible.*

The Parent Meeting

A meeting with the parents soon after registration day is a must. You may choose to have more meetings than this, depending on the activities that your program is undertaking, but you **MUST** have at least one meeting with the parents at the beginning of the season. On the agenda you should include the following:

- the goals/objectives of the program;
- an outline of the program for the season;
- equipment requirements;
- clothing requirements for sessions;
- the parent's responsibilities; and
- how the parent can help.

5. SDP Appendices

5.1 CCC Coaches Code of Conduct Form

Preamble

1. The athlete/coach relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. They must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of a sport organization are channeled. Thus, how athletes regard their sport is often dependent on the behaviour of the coach. The following Code of Conduct has been developed to aid coaches in achieving a level of behaviour that will allow them to assist their athletes in becoming well-rounded, self-confident and productive human beings.

Coaches' Responsibilities

2. Coaches have a responsibility to:

- a. treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status;
- b. direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the athlete;
- c. consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of their sport and of coaching. For example, coaches should:
 - 1) refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches, especially when speaking to the media or recruiting athletes,
 - 2) abstain from the use of tobacco products while in the presence of their athletes and discourage their use by athletes,
 - 3) abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages when working with athletes,
 - 4) refrain from encouraging the use of alcohol in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at the playing site, and
 - 5) refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of their duties;
- d. ensure that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
- e. communicate and cooperate with registered medical practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their athletes' medical and psychological problems. Consider the athletes' future health and well being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue playing or training;
- f. recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other coaches or sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over their own;
- g. regularly seek ways of increasing professional development and self-awareness;
- h. treat opponents and officials with due respect, both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly. Actively encourage athletes to uphold the rules of their sport and the spirit of such rules;
- i. in the case of minors, communicate and cooperate with the athletes' parents or legal guardians, involving them in management decisions pertaining to their children's development; and
- j. in an educational institution, be aware of the academic pressures placed on student athletes and conduct practices and games in a manner so as to allow academic success.

5.2 Parents Code of Conduct

- Keep in mind that children are involved in organized skiing for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Remember it is the children who are competing in an event, not you! The youngsters at the start line aren't you! If they make a mistake, it is *their* error; if they win an award, it is *their* achievement. Glory or grief, it is *their* competition.
- Encourage skill improvement, sportsmanship and an honest effort by recognizing achievements in these areas.
- Cheer *all* the competitors. Recognize and applaud a good effort when it is deserved. Be supportive and positive to *all* the children competing in the event. Praise the efforts of *all* the young skiers after a competition, especially if they did not do well. Be sincere!
- Encourage your child when he/she is competing, but be careful what you say. Yelling instructions can make children nervous. Shout only general encouragement or key words that have been previously discussed with the coach and your child.
- Teach your child that the rules of the competition are mutual agreements, which no one should evade or break. Encourage your child to respect the rules and the officials who make decisions on rulings.
- Never "pace" your child during a competition. It is against the rules! A child could be disqualified as a result of this type of infraction. Remain stationary and off the actual competitive course as your child skis past you.
- After the competition, give the child peace, quiet, dry warm clothes and perhaps a drink.
- Be supportive of the coach and help him/her when you can. Coaches give their time and resources to provide skill development and ski activities for your child.
- Be supportive of and thank organizers and officials. They are volunteering their free time to provide your child an opportunity to participate in a competition. Encourage your child to say thank you to at least one official before they return home.
- Remember to keep competition in perspective. It isn't a World Cup, or an answer to world hunger, or the Olympics. *Let it just be fun!*

5.3 Facility Safety Checklist



Facility: _____ Date: _____

Inspected by: _____

| Item | Adequate | Inadequate | Corrective Measures* | Observations |
|---|----------|------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Practice Area | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Ski Trails | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Daylodge and Waxing Area | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Equipment | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| First Aid Kit & Procedures | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Others | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| *Ensure corrective measures are taken if safety standards are inadequate. | | | | |

5.4 CCC Athlete Development Grid

| STAGE | COACH LEVEL | FACILITIES | TECHNIQUE | BASE INDICATORS | TRAINING | COMPETITION | COMMENTS |
|--|---|--|--|--|----------|-------------|--|
| BUNNYRABBIT PROGRAM Active Start stage. Age 5 and under.* | NCCP Community Coach In Training.** Minimum 10 hours training. | Ski playground with terrain garden. Shelter in close proximity to ski playground. | Develop a wide range of abilities through a variety of activities year round. Bunnyrabbit Skills Award. On snow: getting up. Focus on fundamental movement skills (balance, gliding, diagonal without poles). Time on skis in addition to sessions (as many ski playground experiences as possible). | Love of the outdoors. Supportive parents. Good coaching. | N/A | N/A | Ensure positive experiences by using appropriate equipment. Sessions: 6-8 weeks, one session per week. 30 to 60 min. organized activity depending on age of child. Learning should be accomplished through a mix of play and discovery in situations in which children learn to ski naturally, with limited formal instruction. |

* Five years of age or under as of the December 31st that is part of the current ski season.

** Refer to section 11.3 for details.

| STAGE | COACH LEVEL | FACILITIES | TECHNIQUE | BASE INDICATORS | TRAINING | COMPETITION | COMMENTS |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| JACKRABBIT PROGRAM First step in the FUNDAMENTALS stage. Ages 6 & 7.* ATOM | NCCP Trained Community Coach. ** Minimum 26 hours training. | Ski Playground with terrain garden. Varied terrain, groomed tracks for skating and classic techniques. Lit trail system. Day lodge in stadium area. | Practice and master fundamental skills through a variety of activities. Technique levels 1 & 2. Focus on balance, agility, and rhythm. Use games that reinforce technique being taught. Use "Snow Goals" to encourage time on snow. Good technique habits are developed through repeated practice. | Love of the outdoors & some agility. Supportive parents. Good coaching. | Develop general fitness through participation in a variety of sports/activities on a regular basis, year round. Include sprints (approx. 5 sec.) in games (i.e. tag or obstacle courses). Introduce basic flexibility exercises. | Club Fun Days. Year End Activities: relays, treasure hunts, games with little sprints. Race distances start at 0.5 km and should not extend beyond 1km. | Ensure appropriate equipment including waxable skis, & waxes. Sessions: Minimum 16 practice sessions on-snow per season. 8 weeks, 2x/wk. 60 min. organized activity plus supervised active ski play. Time on skis in addition to sessions - as many ski playground experiences as possible (i.e. 3x per week in addition to practice sessions). Basic ski care. |

* Seven years of age or under as of the December 31st that is part of the current ski season.

** Refer to Section 11.3 for details.

| STAGE | COACH LEVEL | FACILITIES | TECHNIQUE | BASE INDICATORS | TRAINING | COMPETITION | COMMENTS |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| JACKRABBIT PROGRAM Second step in the Fundamentals stage. Ages 8 & 9.* PEE WEE | NCCP Certified Community Coach.** Minimum 28 hours training. | Varied terrain, including challenging technical trails. Groomed tracks for skating and classic techniques. Lit trail system. Day lodge in stadium area. | Develop motor skills through participation in a variety of sports/activities requiring different skills. Technique levels 3 & 4. Equal use of techniques. Develop downhill abilities. Focus on balance, agility and rhythm. Use games that reinforce technique being taught. Use "Snow Goals" to encourage time on snow. Good technique habits are developed through repeated practice. All basic cross-country ski skills should be learned by the end of this stage. | Love of the outdoors & agility. Supportive parents. Good coaching. Screening for talent. | Develop general fitness through a variety of activities/sports on a regular basis, year round. Flexibility/stretching; emphasis on proper technique. Include general aerobic activities 2-3x/week. Introduce endurance oriented activities through games and relays. Develop strength using exercises that incorporate the child's own body weight. Include hopping and bounding activities as well as use of medicine balls and Swiss balls. Include sprints (approx 5 sec.) in games (i.e. tag or obstacle courses). | Club Fun Days. Ski Tournaments. Team relays. Club, regional races, (and provincial races when held within region). Minimum of four FUN formal or semi-formal competitive experiences per season. Race distances: start with 0.5 km and progress to a maximum of 2 km. (5-8 min. max.) Sprints: 200m. Begin after Christmas. -Not below -15C. | Ensure appropriate equipment for both techniques. Introduce pre-snow season activities. Group sessions Oct 15 to Mar 1. (2x/wk) Total of 40 sessions. Time on skis in addition to practice sessions. Develop team social atmosphere. Competition focus is on personal improvement, and done in a team environment when possible. Teach basic self care skills: fluid replacement, winter safety, ski care. Encourage inter-club social & fitness oriented activities, i.e. camps during the ski season. |

Important note for all age groups re: race distances. Early season races should be at the shorter end of the range. The maximum distance should only be raced a few times towards the end of the season. Take into account the ability and fitness of the skier; the difficulty of terrain; the elevation (altitude) of the race site; and whether they are in the first or second year of their age class when establishing a race distance or deciding which race to enter. The objective is to have the skier race at high speed with good technique, rather than struggle to finish the distance. Keep it "Fun and Fast" to develop the next Olympians.

* Nine years of age or under as of the December 31st that is part of the current ski season.

** Refer to Section 11.3 for details

| STAGE | COACH LEVEL | FACILITIES | TECHNIQUE | BASE INDICATORS | TRAINING | COMPETITION | COMMENTS |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| TRACK ATTACK PROGRAM | NCCP Competition Coach Intro – LTT.** | Varied terrain, including challenging technical trails. | The focus on snow is balance, agility and rhythm. | Good ski technique. | Develop mental skills. | Ski Tournaments. | Narrow the focus to three sports. |
| Learning to Train stage. | Minimum 40 hours training. | Groomed tracks for skating and classic techniques. | Good technique habits are developed through repeated practice. | Predisposed towards the outdoors and endurance sports. | Fitness is increasingly important. Include general aerobic activities 3-4x/week. Further develop endurance through games and relays. | Midget Championships. | Ensure appropriate equipment. |
| MINI-MIDGET | Ages 10 & 11.* | Lit trail system. Day lodge at ski area. | Use games that reinforce technique being taught. All basic cross-country ski skills should be refined before the end of this stage. Encourage unstructured play time on snow. | Supportive parents. Good coaching. | Flexibility/stretching: emphasis on proper technique. Develop strength using exercises that incorporate the child's own body weight. Include hopping and bounding activities as well as use of medicine balls and Swiss balls. | Club, regional (and Provincial/Territorial Cup races when held within region). 5-10 competitive experiences per season. Race distances: start with 1 km and progress to a maximum of 3 km. 8-10 min. max.) Sprints: 200m. Generally begin after Xmas. | Emphasize team building. Group sessions begin Sept. 15. (1.25 hrs). 3x /wk off season, 2x /wk comp. season. Total of 50 sessions (includes competitions, special activities). Include winter safety and ski care education. Competitive focus should be on personal improvement. |
| | | | | | Include speed exercises in the practice sessions by using specific activities that focus on agility, quickness, and change of direction. | Introduce ancillary capacities. | Ensure "adventure based" activities are built into season plan. Make good use of snow season. |

Important note for all age groups re: race distances. Early season races should be at the shorter end of the range. The maximum distance should only be raced a few times towards the end of the season. Take into account the ability and fitness of the skier; the difficulty of terrain; the elevation (altitude) of the race site; and whether they are in the first or second year of their age class when establishing a race distance or deciding which race to enter. The objective is to have the skier race at high speed with good technique, rather than struggle to finish the distance. Keep it "Fun and Fast" to develop the next Olympians.

*** Refer to Section 11.3 for details*


5.5 Season Plan Chart

| SEASON PLAN | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|----------|----------|---------|--|-------|--|
| | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | |
| 5 YEARS & UNDER | REGISTRATION – ALL AGES | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 4 | 8 WEEKS/ 8 SESSIONS 40 MIN Saturday A.M. | | |
| 6-7 YEARS | | | | | 8 | 8 WEEKS/ 16 SESSIONS 1 HR Tuesday P.M. Saturday A.M. | | |
| | | | | | 10 | 18 WEEKS/ 40 SESSIONS 1.25 HR Tuesday P.M. Saturday A.M. | | |
| 8-9 YEARS | | 4 | 8 | | 10 | 22 WEEKS/ 50 SESSIONS 1.25 HR Tues. and/or Thurs. P.M. Saturday A.M. | | |
| | | | | | 10 | 24 WEEKS/ 60 SESSIONS 1.5 HR Tues. and/or Thurs. P.M. Saturday A.M. | | |
| 10-11 YEARS | 3 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 10 | | | |
| | | | | | 11 | | | |
| 12-13 YEARS | 4 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 11 | | | |
| | | | | | 4 | | | |
| YEAR END ACTIVITIES | | | | | | | | |


Important to note: the number of sessions includes special activities, waxing workshops, etc. The time allocated to a session does not include supervised 'ski play' time or the social time scheduled at the end of each activity/practice.

5.6 Fundamental Skills Checklist

FUNDamental Skills Checklist - Level 1

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  | Ready Position | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Falling and Rising | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Side Stepping | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Star Turn | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Diagonal Stride – Running Step | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Herringbone | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Free Glide | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Snowplow Braking | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | General Comments | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

FUNDamental Skills Checklist - Level 2

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  | Diagonal Stride – Gliding Step | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Herringbone | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Double Poling | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Free Glide | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Kick Turn | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Snowplow Stop | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Snowplow Turn | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | General Comments | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

PROGRESS REPORT FORM

Podunk Jackrabbits - Progress Report

Name: I.M. Realfast

Date: March 10th, 20xx

Skill Level Completed: Level 3

Skill Level Working On: Level 4

Coach: Tom Green

| <i>Skill</i> | <i>Comments</i> |
|------------------------|--|
| Diagonal Stride | Good. Good glide, weight shift and forward upper body lean. Needs more work on landing recovery foot beside or ahead of glide foot. |
| Double Poling | Good. Good upper body flex, arm follow through and straight legs. Work on the pole plant to make sure tips are not too far ahead (not ahead of the handles) |
| Free Skate | Good. Good glide on each foot. You need to work on "lining up" your toes, knees, hips, body and same side shoulder in the direction of your glide ski. |
| One-step Double Poling | Good. Passed this skill previous season. |
| One Skate | Needs more work. You need to work on "lining up" (see Free Skate) and on using a "Double Pole" to start both left and right glides. |
| Step Turn | Needs more work. You are good on the Ready Position, but you need to work on small, quick steps and shifting your weight from ski to ski. |
| Diagonal Skate | Good. Remember to keep your gliding skis flat on the snow. |
| Kick Turn | Excellent. Good Kick Turns, even on steeper slopes and in deep snow. Don't forget to work on this important skill for back country skiing! |
| Downhill Tuck | Good. Good bending of upper body to horizontal. Good arms and hands position (well forward of body). You need to work on a deep bend for the low tuck, so your thighs are parallel to the snow. |
| Classic Skiing | Excellent. Good Diagonal Stride for 10 minutes. |
| Skating | Needs more work. More practice needed for One Skate technique. |

Summary: I.M. has been a very enthusiastic skier in all of our classes. His skills and interest in skiing have developed a lot this year. He should have no problem getting his Level 4 Award next year, if he keeps up the good work! I have really enjoyed having him in my group.