



# Vernon Ski Club Handbook

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Remember to check the website for more detailed information regarding our policies, registration and programs!



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## **Welcome to the Vernon Ski Club**

The Vernon Ski Club, established in 1935, has a long and successful history. As one of the largest clubs in the BC Interior, Vernon Ski Club continues to offer many benefits to young people while they enjoy skiing throughout their school years. It is an opportunity to build skills and develop friendships that will last a lifetime! Confidence, self discipline and pride grow through the camaraderie, friendly competition and family oriented activities that the club is known for. Many graduates of Vernon Ski Club programs have gone on to the Provincial and National Ski Teams. Some have followed career paths into coaching, instructing, management and other aspects of the ski industry. Others have gone into various fields and careers bringing with them lifelong skills they developed while part of the Vernon Ski Club.

## **Club Management**

The VSC is a not-for-profit society and, with the exception of the program director and some skiing coaches, the entire club is run by volunteers. Volunteers (parents!) do just about EVERYTHING. They sit on the executive, set club goals, develop club budgets, liaise with other clubs in the Okanagan, conduct fundraising activities, run races, maintain the club cabin, shovel snow, wax skis and (in their spare time) they may even get a run or two in on a powder day. Drawing on volunteer power to run just about every aspect of the club helps keep us family oriented and keeps our fees low. Of course, we need all the help we can get! All members are strongly encouraged to contribute their time to the continued success of the club. Refer to the *VSC Executive Policy* for information on some of the key roles within the club and review our volunteer information for more details on how you can get involved.

## **Program goals**

The mission of the VSC is to provide fun, safe opportunities to excel through alpine skiing and ski racing. We want skiing to be a lifelong passion for families. The club strives to facilitate this through its program development, policies, practices and events.

## **Program Descriptions**

Our programs have been developed with the guidance of our sanctioning bodies, BC Alpine and Alpine Canada. Whether your child is destined for the national ski team or simply wants to be a great all around skier we believe that success comes from high quality technical coaching in an environment that builds confidence and passion for the sport. The Vernon Ski Club has structured its programs to incorporate both of these aspects into all levels of training.

**Snow Mites** (4-5 year olds) (Sundays – 10 weeks) – For beginner skiers, who have been on skis before; parent participation strongly encouraged

## Race Kids

Entry Level 1; 6-8 year olds (Sundays – 10 weeks) – For the developing skier skiing green and blue runs working on good technical skiing skills

Entry Level 2; 8-11 year olds (Sundays – 10 weeks) – For the developing skier skiing blue and black runs and different terrain, working on a wide variety of skiing skills

**Race Tigers** (Entry Level 2; 9-11 year olds) (Sat and Sun – 15 weeks) For the more advanced E2 keener with eyes on higher level ski racing; intention of going onto K program

**K/J /FIS Program** (Kinder/Junior 11+ years) (Sat and Sun plus midweek – all season) Focuses on continued skill development to develop strong all-round skiers. Also includes training programs for local and provincial racing series

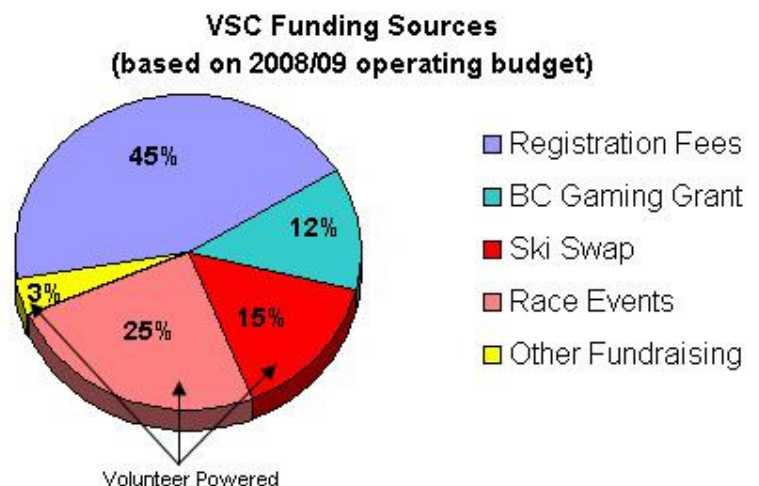
**Masters** (contact program director for schedules) – for the adult racer wanting to continue race training. Please refer to the “Programs” section of the VSC website for annual program fees.

You can register in any of our programs by using our on-line registration system that can be accessed via the links on our website. Current registration fees and additional program details can also be found on the website.

## Fees and Fundraising

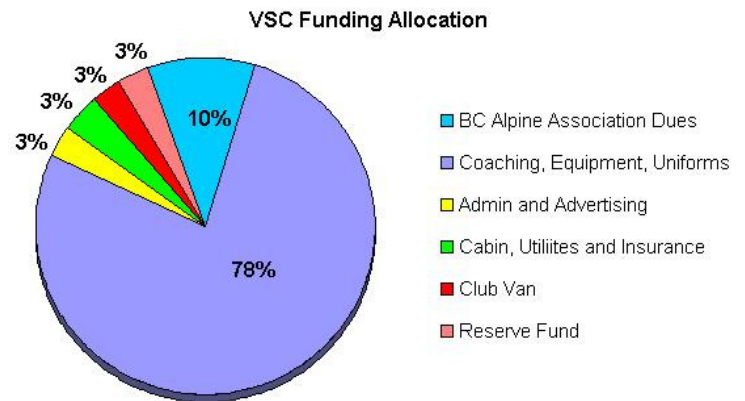
For many years the VSC has been passionate about running a quality ski program while keeping our membership fees as low as possible. To maintain our low fees we depend heavily on fundraising activities.

Some of our biggest fundraisers are locally run race events and our annual ski swap. All events are powered entirely by volunteers. Volunteering some of your time to the club will ensure the success of these fundraisers and keep your registration fees as low as possible. We *really* need a bit of your time to help run these events during the season! Please plan to provide your support ..... it’s a win-win for the entire membership and keeps money in *your* pocket.



Great programs are our priority.

Almost 80% of our budget goes directly to on-snow program support.



## Communication

We are a growing organization with many families involved. Although we would like to personally contact members regarding our ongoing programs, activities and events, this may not always be possible. For general information, the VSC website [www.vernonskiclub.ca](http://www.vernonskiclub.ca) is your primary source of information. Please refer to the website frequently for updates and activity schedules as well as club policies and guidelines. A regular newsletter will also be emailed to the membership to provide program and event updates throughout the season. Important information may also be posted at the club cabin. Please review this information when it is available and respond to requests as required.

Each program has been also been assigned a parent rep who can provide detailed information regarding the club and its activities. They are a valuable resource! Give them a call if you have concerns or questions. Contact information for the parent reps, club executive and coaches are available on the website. Any of our executive members will always welcome a call or an email if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's program.

Of course, you are encouraged talk directly with your coaches regarding your child's progress at any time during the season. Keeping the lines of communication open and developing a rapport with your coaching staff is the best way to keep our club strong and vibrant.

## Safety is #1

Some of the ways the club facilitates a safe environment is through:

- \_ skier education
- \_ small skier to coach ratio
- \_ club cabin home base and family environment
- \_ skier responsibility code
- \_ buddy system
- \_ skiing skill development
- \_ weather, terrain and off limits respect



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- \_ highly trained and committed coaches
- \_ program planning
- \_ race safety
- \_ coaching group sweepers (helps kids who fall etc., carry snacks, first aid, radio)
- \_ standard meeting places if skiers are late or get separated from their coaching group

## **Uniforms**

VSC official uniforms and vests are supplied by Halti. All K and J racers are required to purchase a club uniform that is to be worn at all times the athletes are representing VSC (training and races).

Entry Level athletes are expected to wear a VSC vest during training and race events. Wearing the club vest provides visibility on the hill which keeps our kids safe and helps everyone build pride in their club! Entry Level athletes also have the option to purchase a full uniform if desired. Please check the VSC website for additional information on how to purchase VSC uniforms and vests.

## **Start-up Schedules**

The Alpine program (K, J and FIS ) typically starts on-snow training by the end of November, as soon as Silver Star Mountain is opened. An orientation meeting for athletes and parents is also held one evening just prior to the beginning of the ski season. This meeting provides the opportunity for the program director to outline the season's activities gives members the opportunity to ask questions and obtain important information regarding coaching, schedules and events. Check the website for details.

The Entry Level (E) program normally starts the first weekend in January. On the first weekend of the E program, kids will be skiing both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday provides the Program Coordinator and the coaches with the opportunity to introduce parents to the program and outline expectations. After a (mandatory) introductory meeting (parents and kids attend), the coaches will take the kids onto the slopes where they can evaluate your child's skills. This evaluation helps ensure that your child is placed into the coaching group that will best suit their skiing development. On Sunday the kids will again meet in their groups with their coaches for a full day of skiing. Note that adjustments to the groups may continue to occur over the next week or two as the coaches have the opportunity to more closely evaluate the kids skiing skills.

For some Entry Level groups, we require a parent of a child from each of the coaching groups to act as a 'sweeper'. This duty should rotate weekly between all of the skiing parents of the children in the group. The sweeper skis with the group that day to help kids with their equipment and make sure that no one gets left behind. You can also be of help if a child gets hurt or sick or forgets their



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snack etc. It is a great way to see your kids in their training. You will carry a small back pack with a few supplies and lots of recognition!!! We will also be asking for a parent form each group to liaise with the coordinator and help with group communication. Those registered for the Snow Mites, the program will start the Sunday following the start of the Entry program. Make sure your child has a helmet and is ready to ski. Snow Mite parents, please be ready to ski with us, to assist with your child.

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR START-UP DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS. WEATHER AND SNOW CONDITIONS MAY INFLUENCE OUR PLANS!**

## **Christmas Camps**

VSC hosts ski camps at Silver Star through the Christmas season. Some camps may require a registration fee. Camps are normally held for K and J racers as well as Race Tigers. Check the VSC website in mid-December for schedules

## **Dryland Training**

Dryland training is an important part of the ski program. Training normally starts at the end of September and will be held until on-snow training begins at the end of November. The dryland program is targeted toward athletes in the K and J program, however Race Tigers (E2) are also invited to attend. Physical fitness is key to skiing and racing success, injury prevention and enjoyment of skiing. The training is challenging and fun. Exercises are specific to the sport of skiing as well as to the age and physical development of the skiers in order to develop all components of fitness. Times and location will be posted on the VSC website in mid-September. Weekend hikes and biking adventures are also organized throughout the fall. Parents are welcome....if you can keep up!

## **Awards/evaluations**

At the end of the Entry Level program all skiers receive an evaluation from their coaches which includes skills worked on, areas of strength and development, and areas to continue to work on. Throughout the season skiers work on goal setting with their coaches so that they can attain their goals and recognize the progress they have made in their goal. All kids receive a participation certificate and possibly a level completion certificate. K and J racers receive continuous feedback from their coaches as well as a written evaluation at the end of the season. At the annual spring awards barbecue other sportsmanship, leadership, improvement, and performance awards and special recognitions are given out.

## **Equipment**

Helmets are mandatory for participants of ALL VSC programs. Participants in the K/J programs (age 11 and up) require a full race helmet, soft eared helmets are not allowed for racing or race training. Dressing warmly in good quality ski wear goes a long way to having a great day on the hill. For younger children, it is particularly important that they are dressed in a warm water proof ski suit, warm, good quality mittens and helmet liners on particularly cold days. Remember that scarves cannot be used as this can present a safety hazard on the chair lifts. If you need to purchase ski equipment for your kids please talk with your coach for some guidance. Also check out our race equipment list on the website. The Ski Swap is a great opportunity to purchase good quality used equipment as well as new equipment at reasonable prices. During the ski season, check the club cabin bulletin boards and website for used equipment for sale. Entry Level parents, feel free to post 'wanted' ads on the bulletin board or talk to K-Level parents.... many families have good quality equipment stashed in their garage!.

## **Cold Weather Guidelines**

In general, for the all of the entry programs, temperatures below minus 20 C will result in cancellation of the program for the day. The Program coordinator may also cancel programs if wind chill is excessive or when conditions may lead to frostbite or injury. If we can predict the weather ahead of time, a cancellation notice will be posted on the club website the night before. For K and J programs, training in bad weather will be at the discretion of the coaches

On days of inclement weather, PLEASE CHECK THE VSC WEBSITE BEFORE LEAVING FOR SILVERSTAR to view any cancellation notices. Also check the Silver Star website for up to date snow and weather reports.

Make sure your children are dressed appropriately for the weather. Entry level coaches will use the club cabin for a snack and warm up/dry out break if needed. It is a good idea to send extra mitts, ski socks, sweater etc. in kids' back packs.

## **Nutrition Guidelines**

Well fed kids make great skiers! Breakfast is the most important meal for our skiers. Not only does it make them more alert, ready to ski hard and get the most out of the program and coaches, it is also important for increasing their safety on skis. A good breakfast also makes them more tolerant of less than wonderful weather. We also insist that all kids have a healthy snack in their ski jacket that they can have during snack time whether that be on the chair, at the top of a run, or at the club cabin. Some ideas for healthy snacks include granola bars, homemade muffins, energy squares or cookies, trail mixes, fruit leather, cheese sticks, whole grain crackers, ½ peanut butter sandwich (we will let you know if we have any allergies in the club this year). There is not an

opportunity during program training time for your child to purchase a snack from one of the food vendors on the hill. Please do not send chocolate bars, candy and other sweet treats for snacks. For kids and families having lunch in the club cabin we encourage healthy, well balanced meals. The soup packages heated in the microwave are handy but pose quite a risk for burns, and are high in salt and do not contain much nutritional value to keep the ski racers going. Parents, please help your kids with the microwave if it is to be used. There is room in the cabin to put your lunch pack while you ski. We may ask for some parents to contribute some healthy food options during some of the events and training days. We will do at least one nutrition education session for the entry level skiers as well as for the K and J racers. Environments that facilitate healthy eating make it much easier for kids to make healthier choices more often; this is what our intention is. If any parents and/or kids are interested in going on a nutrition tour in the grocery store please check the box on the registration form.

## **Races and Activities**

There are a number of races scheduled throughout the season for all members of the VSC. Typically, there are two Entry Level races held within the Okanagan Zone plus the season wrap-up, the Nancy Greene Festival, held at Sun Peaks. We encourage all entry level skiers to participate in races. The emphasis is on fun, skill building and sportsmanship. For the Entry Level races, most are team events where your child will be racing as a team with their coaching group. It is not mandatory that skiers participate in race events, however we strongly believe in the 'fun-factor' of these races and have seen many benefits to attending. If you are uncertain if racing is appropriate for your child please discuss your concerns with your coach or a member of the executive.

At the K and J levels there are several Okanagan Zone races as well as provincial events, invitational and qualifying events. As with the entry level, participating in races is not mandatory, but there are many benefits to having our athletes test their skills in a competitive environment. Our race schedule is managed by our coaches and Program Director. Race notices will be posted on our VSC website as well as on the BC Alpine website as they become available. Throughout the season, the club also hosts several local 'fun days' and social events. These events are intended to be family affairs and parents are encouraged to participate. Watch for event schedules on the VSC website and in the newsletters.

## **Volunteer Support**

The club thrives on the continuous support of volunteers to help run programs, events and activities throughout the season. To ensure our continued success, it is critical that club members actively support the development of the club through our fundraising activities. Hosting race events are a primary source of income for our organization and help to offset the costs of running a quality program. High caliber race events in particular can provide thousands of dollars to the club. It is necessary that all members support the activities of our club. Please refer the VSC volunteer policy for a complete summary of volunteer requirements. In addition to the minimum



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required volunteerism, we also encourage you to become involved with other areas of club management and development. Continued support from dedicated volunteers will ensure that our club will continue to grow and thrive.

**You DO NOT need to be an expert skier or ski racer..... Rest assured, we can use the skills of everyone in the club!**

Please respond to the regular calls for volunteers that will be posted on the VSC website as well as at the club cabin.

## Level 1 Officials Course

For those who have little or no ski racing experience, the club will hold a Level 1 Officials course early in the ski season. This course is approximately 3 hours in length and is intended to familiarize members with the basics of running a ski race. This basic knowledge is very valuable to all members.

## Club Cabin

We are very fortunate to have a club cabin on the mountain. It provides a home base for all of our athletes, coaches and families. It also serves as a race headquarters, social gathering place, equipment storage etc. etc. It takes some upkeep and cleaning though! In the fall and spring we often have club cabin work bees where we call on the expertise of our members to keep the building well maintained. It is also important that all members participate in the daily/weekly cleaning that is required to keep the cabin in great shape. The club DOES NOT hire cleaning staff so it is the responsibility of the members to support regular upkeep activities. There will be a sign-up sheet in the cabin where you can select your clean-up day during the season. Cleaning equipment and directions are in the bathroom of the club cabin. All it takes is a little sweeping, wiping, mopping, and of course, taking out the garbage. It is the responsibility of all members to clean up after themselves each day so the cleaning team has a minimal amount of work. There are plenty of garbage and recycling bins in the cabin.

The club cabin phone number is **250-558-1136**. HOWEVER, please do not leave messages on the club cabin answering machine. The messages are not checked regularly and may be missed. Please contact your coaches, your program coordinator or your executive parent representative directly if you require information. Please check the website for contact information.

A few basic cabin rules:

- all skis and poles must be kept in the basement and properly stored.
- Coaches and members registered in 2+ day programs get preferential use of ski storage area; only regularly used skis should be kept there
- all personal clothing and other items should be taken home nightly



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- personal lunch items must be cleaned up and removed nightly
- use of office and upstairs lounge is restricted to coaches and parents

## **Ski Swap**

The VSC Ski Swap is held every year in mid-October. The Swap is a major fundraiser for the club as well as a significant community event. Thousands of items pass thru the doors of the ski swap every year and it provides the opportunity for skiers throughout the region to purchase both new and used equipment. As with any fundraising, the Swap is powered 100% by volunteers. We need your support to run this important event. There are several types of positions to be filled and the club will be calling for volunteers late in September to help run the event....no experience necessary. Remember, all volunteers get to shop early! This is a great way to find equipment for your entire family.

## **The Bottom Line**

The executive of the Vernon Ski Club are passionate about building a vibrant club. It is their mission to provide quality ski programs for athletes of all ages. We welcome the involvement of all of our members and need your feedback to help make us better. Always feel free to contact your program directors, club executive members, or parent reps with any concerns or questions you may have.

**HAVE FUN ON THE SLOPES!**