

2017 ALPINE EQUIPMENT SELECTION GUIDELINES

EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES TO OUR NEW AND EXISTING MEMBERS

The following guide gives new and existing members time to consider and source necessary suitable equipment for this season based on their child's age group.

Part of new direction will see Slalom skis and training of Slalom becoming an integral part of all our athlete's everyday training along with the already trained GS discipline. This season we will make further steps in fully integrating the use of slalom skis and training slalom into the programs.

INTRODUCTION OF ALPINE DISCIPLINES

There are four major types of skis in Alpine ski racing across the world; Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super G and Downhill.

In Australia we typically focus on using Slalom and Giant Slalom skis at a race club level and Giant Slalom skis at the inter schools level.

Our mountains don't have long and safe enough runs to allow regular training on much longer Super G and Downhill skis, in courses which are faster and have terrain features like rollers and jumps.

Slalom - The Next Steps

This season we will be requiring all U12 - U16 weekend and full time athletes to have a slalom ski as well as a GS ski.

In general, all athletes in **U12** groups will have a focus on skiing slalom brushes. As experience dictates and progression allows the athletes will move to skiing stubbies where they may need shin guards. In both of these instances the athletes will only require a pair of slalom skis and second hand skis will be more than adequate. We discourage athletes having a race and training pair at **U12** level. There will be no need for another type of specialist slalom helmet with face guard or specialist slalom poles and hand guards to ski slalom brushes or stubbies. I realise that some athletes have these items already and for those then they will use them as is required and directed.

In general, all athletes in **U14** groups will have a focus on skiing slalom brushes and stubbies. In both of these instances the athletes will only require a pair of slalom skis and shin guards and second hand skis and shin guards will be more than adequate.

We do not recommend/require athletes having a race and training pair at **U14** level.

A helmet that supports the fixing of a slalom face guard may be necessary and specialist slalom poles and hand guards will be required as experience dictates and progression allows when/if the athletes move to skiing full gates. I realise that some athletes have these items already and have trained full gates but in all instances, all athletes will start the season with brushes and progress to stubbies then some full gates as required.

In general, all athletes in **U16** groups will have a focus on skiing slalom brushes and stubbies. In both of these instances the athletes will only require a pair of slalom skis and shin guards and second hand skis and shin guards will be more than adequate.

We do not insist athletes having a race and training pair of slalom skis at **U16** level.

A helmet that supports the fixing of a slalom face guard is recommended and may be necessary along with specialist slalom poles and hand guards as experience dictates and progression allows when/if the athletes move to skiing full gates.

I realise that some athletes have these items already and have trained full gates but in all instances, all athletes will start the season with brushes and progress to stubbies then full gates as progression allows.

As a general guide, all athletes with no experience with slalom skis or training slalom will spend the season training brushes and stubbies and will require only shin guards and slalom skis.

A guide to ski length, both male and female.

U12 130cm

U14 135-145

U16 145-155

FIS 150-165

The longer length skis suggested within this guide are recommended based on height and experience within the age group (Generally a slalom ski would be equal in length to the athlete's height of chin to eye level)

If your child is considered to be very tall within any of the age groups it is advisable to contact myself for questions around this as longer slalom skis are stiffer and difficult to manage for inexperienced users.

I know there are exceptions to this, there always is.

Giant Slalom - Everyone's favourite

This season we will be continuing the training philosophy around Giant Slalom. It is an Interschools event and SX is usually skied on a GS ski.

A guide to ski length

U12 140 - 150cm

U14 150 - 165cm

U16 165 - 183cm

The longer length skis within this guide are recommended based on height and experience within the age group (Generally a GS ski would be equal in length to the athlete's height of eye to just above head level)

If your child is considered to be very tall within any of the age groups it is advisable to contact myself for questions around this as longer GS skis are stiffer and difficult to manage for inexperienced users.

As experience and particularly the volume of skiing dictates (if your child is full time) then a second pair of GS skis could be considered.

I know there are exceptions to this, there always is.

Free Skis

It is recommended that an off piste pair of skis (rock skis) or twin tips are recommended. There are not only useful for when the snow is not good off piste, but also for performing jumps and thricks in the park. Not essential by hand to have in the quiver.

BOOTS

Boots should be 4 buckle with a power strap and a race boot which are generally simple and easy to modify by fitting to individuals feet. They have more plastic and are designed to be modified.

Rarely an athlete will just slide into a boot and require no modifications. Boots can be handed down but must fit correctly. Please do not buy boots for three years of use.

A foot bed is recommended and off the shelf foot beds are fine and only in extreme cases would you consider an orthotic footbed.

Custom made foot beds can be considered from U14 onwards but only from a trained fitter. No hand me downs.

Boot flex guide:

U12 50-60 flex

U14 70-90 flex

U16 90-110 flex

Always choose a softer boot over a stiffer one. If you can flex them in a shop they are not too soft. More flex is better and remember a shop is warm so softens the plastic and flexing becomes easy. A good boot fitter will consider this and will even put them in a fridge/freezer.

Please note that some smaller boots have smaller toe and heel pieces that fit a child's binding as opposed to an adult's binding. Make sure you ask about this as it affects the operation of the binding.

BACK PROTECTORS

All athletes must have a back protector at all training (this means whenever an athlete has skis on) and is in line with MBRC policy on back protectors.

It is my recommendation that back protectors fit well and do not worry what brand they are or what it looks like as they are all different and fit differently. So if it fits and goes under the race suit comfortably then that is the most important thing and no one sees it anyway so looks don't count.

Look out for protectors that rise up, rub or annoy your child in any way as this can be a major distraction when skiing or racing. Take the race suit and have your child wear it when trying on a back protector.

Second hand protectors are totally ok to buy but inspect for obvious signs of damage.

HELMETS

In general all athletes must have a helmet that has a full hard cover over the ears. No soft eared freestyle/freeride helmets except specialist FIS approved slalom helmets.

Do not buy a second hand helmet or have a hand me down from another family member. They pack out and may not be the right fit/shape for another sibling.

All helmets must be FIS approved and have the stamp stating FIS approval. (Slightly smaller than a postage stamp in size)

Do not buy a helmet totally on brand as they all fit differently and have different shapes. Take your goggles with you to ensure that they match as often they do not or buy goggles that match the helmet. It is not uncommon that the same helmet/goggle manufacturer have helmet/goggles that do not fit correctly. The correct fit should ensure the goggle sits firm on the face and there isn't a gap between the top of goggle and helmet. This could be a distraction and safety issue that is worth considering when making a purchase.

Technically no stickers are allowed on helmets.

POLES

It is highly recommended that all poles have a simple adjustable strap and not a click in type with a separate strap affixed to a glove.

Poles should be straight for all U12 athletes.

Poles can be a curved GS pole for U14 and older for GS only.

Straight poles for slalom across all age groups.

All poles must have a basket attached at the bottom as per the way the manufacturer made them with no modifications.

GENERAL

NAME ALL EQUIPMENT

Place name and phone number on all equipment, this includes shorts, gloves, goggles etc.