



Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club Jackrabbits Parent and Athlete Guide

Nordiq Canada and the Saskatoon Nordic Ski Club provide its member divisions and clubs with a progression of skill development programs for children. These programs conform to the Canadian Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model 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**).

Table of Contents

Bunnyrabbit Program	2
Bunnyrabbit Ski Equipment	2
Jackrabbit Program	2
Jackrabbit Ski Equipment	3
Track Attack Program	3
Track Attack Ski Equipment	4
Coaching	5
Guide to Skis	6
Award Program – Stickers!	8
Bunnyrabbit Program	8
Jackrabbit Program	8
Parent Code of Conduct	11
Coach Code of Conduct	12



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 four and five years of age). The corresponding National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) training for coaches involved at this level is called “Introduction to Community Coaching”. The topics being addressed and materials provided with this workshop (online) are specific to the needs of this age group. The objective is to introduce children to cross-country skiing and the healthy lifestyle associated with it, through organized activity and active play. In addition, it is designed to:

- Introduce “fundamental movement skills”.
- Help children develop a positive self-image.
- Be fun.

Bunnyrabbit Ski Equipment

- Our Bunnies should have proper waxless or waxable skis and bindings - typically the skis should be no longer than 100 to 130 cm. Poles are not needed for Bunnies and in fact we discourage their use as they interfere with learning proper balance.

Jackrabbit Program

The Jackrabbit Program, is directed at skiers in the "**FUNDamentals**" stage of athlete development (children six to nine years of age), and this is the second level of the SDP. The corresponding NCCP training for coaches involved at this level is called “Community Coaching”. The topics being addressed and materials provided with this workshop are specific to the needs of this age group (New booklet and sticker design!).

The Jackrabbit program is aiming to develop **Fundamental Movement Skills**. At this stage of development the basic motor skills are developed which establish a foundation for participation in sports or physical life-activities. Some general movements associated with “Fundamental Movement Skills” are running, jumping, catching, kicking, throwing, swinging and hitting, as basic sports building blocks. Learning these fundamental sport skills give children the skills to play a variety of sports with ease.

For Nordic skiing, these skills can be summarized as Agility, Balance, and Coordination (ABC's). Movement skills are essential to developing sport skills, for example without balance a skier cannot properly glide in classic or skating. This is a prime window of opportunity for developing movement skills.

Fundamental Sport Skills are the basic technique building skills that are often general to all sports. These include basic skills such as **Body Position** (athletic stance – ankle bend, hips central or forward), **Weight Shift** (body – hip – knee alignment and agility) and **Balance/Glide**.



Sport Specific Skills are the technique skills for a specific sport. For example, with diagonal stride technique; no poles, double pole and one-skate are a few of the technique (sport specific) skills. A good foundation in Movement and Basic sport skills is essential to being able to properly apply to skills specific to every sport.

For videos of expected technique standards by the end of the Fundamentals development stage, please visit Nordiq Canada's online Athlete Development Matrix.

Physical Literacy = FUNdamental Movement Skills + FUNdamental Sport Skills

One key objective of the Jackrabbit program is for children to learn fundamental movement skills and then apply and translate these skills to the specific sport of cross-country skiing (both classic and skating).

The Jackrabbit program materials include: 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. The Jackrabbits also receive a Swix brand ski toque designed by a Bunnyrabbit or Jackrabbit program participant of the previous season.

Jackrabbit Ski Equipment

- For Level 1 we recommend waxable skis with a contemporary binding (i.e. SNS or NNN – both are good – check to see that your boots match the bindings). The skis should still be shorter rather than longer and should reach just below the wrist of the skier's outstretched arm. Poles are not needed at this level either.
- For Level 2 we recommend waxable skis with a contemporary binding (i.e. SNS or NNN – both are good – check to see that your boots match the bindings). The skis should still be shorter rather than longer and should reach just below the wrist of the skier's outstretched arm. Poles must have adjustable straps. The classic poles should reach under the arm when the skier is standing on the floor. If poles are too long or too short, the skier will have difficulty mastering the technical skills.
- For Level 3 we again recommend waxable skis with a contemporary binding (i.e. SNS or NNN – both are good – check to see that your boots match the bindings). Skating technique is also introduced at these levels. The child can learn skating technique skills while using classic skis, but they now require both skating length poles and classic length poles.
- For Level 4 & 5 the athletes should have a set of skate skis and classic skis includes poles and boots for each discipline.

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. The corresponding NCCP training for coaches involved at this level is called "Competition Coaching- Introduction". The topics being addressed and materials provided with this workshop (online) are specific to the needs of this age group.



The objective is for the participants to become technically competent cross-country skiers and to reinforce and further develop the key **Fundamental Movement Skills** that were learned in the “Fundamentals stage” and for the children to utilize their skills to explore a wide range of **Sport Specific Skills** in cross-country ski activities; from back country excursions to Nordiq Canada sponsored Racing Rocks! events and Ski Playgrounds.

For videos of expected technique standards by the end of the Learning to Train development stage, please visit Nordiq Canada’s online Athlete Development Matrix.

Program materials include a Track Attack Nordiq Canada neck warmer made by Swix. Track attack participants can proudly display their accomplishments in their Track Attack Passport as they earn each of the 18 sticker awards of the program.

[Track Attack Ski Equipment](#)



Coaching

Coaching is one of the best things you as a adult can do to support your local ski club. Coaching programs are offered through the Coaching Association of Canada. There are number of different, low cost, online programs you can take to begin supporting your club. Want to do more to support your child? Consider taking two short and inexpensive e-learning courses:

- Coaching Initiation in Sport
- Introduction to Community Coaching

While these courses were designed for coaches, many parents have taken them to learn about equipment and to understand what and how their child is learning. After all, parents naturally become unofficial assistant coaches when they take their kids on a family ski.

To get started, go to the [Locker](#) and log in or create a free account. If you are creating an account, you will be prompted to create a NCCP number and a Locker account. Happy learning!



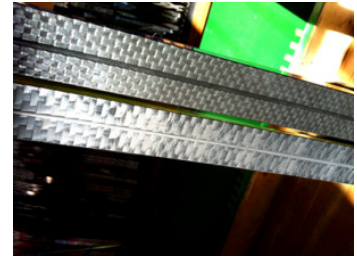
Guide to Skis

Classic skis: There are three different types of classic skis. Classic skis require a method to grip the snow in what is called the grip zone or kick zone. The different types of classic skis describe what method is used to grip the snow

- **Waxable Classic Skies:** use grip/kick wax on the bottom of the ski to grip the snow. You will need to put the grip/kick wax on the bottom of the ski the kick zone.



- **Waxless Classic Skies:** Waxless classic skis grip the snow using scales (sometimes called Fish scales). You do not need grip wax on these skis but glide wax can be put on the non-grip part of the skis.



- **Skin Classic Skies:** Skin classic skis grip the snow using what is effectively a carpet or skin on the ski. Skins are relatively new technology and are increasingly common. You do not need grip wax on these skis but glide wax can be put on the non-grip part of the skis.



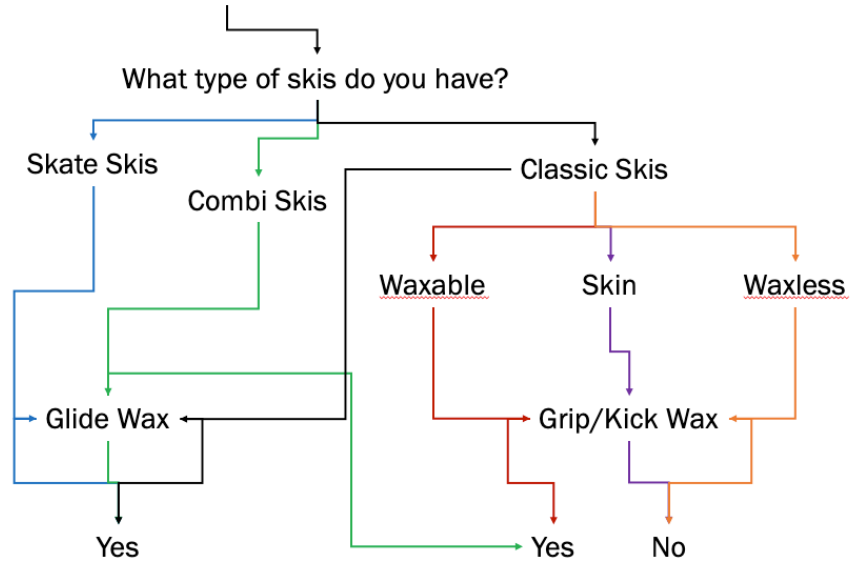
Skate skis: Designed for skiing on groomed surfaces. The entire bottom of each skate ski is a glide zone—prepared for maximum glide. No grip/kick wax necessary. Traction comes from the skier pushing away from the edge of the previous ski onto the next ski.

Combi skis: Combi skis are combination of skate and classic skis. They require glide wax and grip wax (when Classic skiing). Once you put on the grip/kick wax for Classic, you need to remove it before skate skiing.



All skis can benefit from glide wax. This wax helps the skis slide on the snow. We have created this flow chart to help guide decision making about whether and what type of wax you should use on your skis.

Do you need to wax your cross-country skis?





Award Program – Stickers!

To encourage participation and recognize progress, stickers are awarded to skiers who achieve a certain skill level or complete a specific task.

Bunnyrabbit Program

Program Award stickers. Skiers in the **Active Start** stage of athlete development (five years of age and younger) can earn a Program Award animal sticker for each skill they master on their way to achieving their Skill Award. Stickers should be placed over top of the shaded animal in 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”.

Jackrabbit Program

Technique Award Stickers (Levels 1-4). Skiers in the Jackrabbit Program (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 over top of the shaded circle that says “Technique Award #X” in the Jackrabbit booklet. The number on the sticker should correspond to the number in the shaded circle.

Program Award Stickers. Skiers in the Jackrabbit Program can also earn Program Award stickers for achievement in specific areas. Please also see the Nordiq Canada website for complete information on the Jackrabbit awards.

Skiing Often (five goals): Richard Webber award sticker

- The objective of this award is to encourage play-time on snow (including frequent use of a ski playground) 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 standards for each level: Skiers can earn one skill sticker per year, with the exception of the final year, in which case a bonus sticker can be earned. These Skiing Often goals are ski outings that are additional to their regular Jackrabbit club practices.
 - SKIING OFTEN level 1, skiers must ski 5 times
 - SKIING OFTEN level 2, skiers must ski 10 times
 - SKIING OFTEN level 3, skiers must ski 15 times
 - SKIING OFTEN level 4, skiers must ski 20 times
 - SKIING OFTEN level 5, skiers must ski 25 times.

Participants can check a box on the page for this award every time they complete a ski outing outside of club practices. At the end of the season the number of boxes checked will indicate which level of the award the skier has earned.



Sprints (five levels): Beckie Scott Award sticker

- The purpose of this award is to develop speed. The recommended sprint distance to measure skiers' speed is 50 meters.
- Award standards for each level:
 - Green = 30-60 sec
 - Blue = 25-29 sec
 - Purple = 20-24 sec
 - Red = 15-19 sec
 - Gold = 10-14 sec

Hat Tricks (5 levels): Pierre Harvey award sticker

- The objective of this award is to recognize the exceptional accomplishment of achieving a high standard for technique, speed and commitment.
- Award standards for each level: Combine a Technique Award with a Sprint and Skiing Often Award to collect an all-round achievement award – the Hat Trick Award:
 - Hat Trick #1: Technique Award #1, Sprint Award #1, Skiing Often #1.
 - Hat Trick #2: Technique Award #2, Sprint Award #2, Skiing Often #2.
 - Hat Trick #3: Technique Award #3, Sprint Award #3, Skiing Often #3.
 - Hat Trick #4: Technique Award #4, Sprint Award #4, Skiing Often #4.
 - Hat Trick #5: Technique Award #4, Sprint Award #5, Skiing Often #5.

Dryland (5 levels): Devon Kershaw award sticker

- The objective of this award is to promote pre-season sessions engaging at least the following skills: good ski striding and running techniques, flexibility routines; balance and technique drills/skills' course.
- Award standards for each level:
 - Dryland Award/Goal #1: 4 dryland sessions including all minimum skills
 - Dryland Award/Goal #2: 8 dryland sessions including all minimum skills
 - Dryland Award/Goal #3: 12 dryland sessions including all minimum skills
 - Dryland Award/Goal #4: 16 dryland sessions including all minimum skills
 - Dryland Award/Goal #5: 20 dryland sessions including all minimum skills

Competition (5 levels): Alex Harvey award sticker

- The objective of this award is to promote an introduction to competition in local/regional sanctioned events (4-6 races/season).
- Award standards for each level:
 - Comp. Award/Goal #1: participation in at least 4 races during the season
 - Comp. Award/Goal #2: participation in at least 6 races during the season, a minimum of 2 skating and 2 classic races
 - Comp.Award/Goal #3: I have achieved goals #2 and achieved an average of 5:00min/km (races of 1km or more) in at least 2 races
 - Comp.Award/Goal #4: : I have achieved goals #2 and achieved an average of 4:30min/km (races of 1km or more) in at least 2 races



- Comp. Award/Goal #5: : I have achieved goals #2 and achieved an average of 4:00min/km (races of 1km or more) in at least 2 races

Super Attitude: Chandra Crawford award sticker

- This sticker will be awarded to a participant who exhibits a positive mindset, is supportive of others, shows perseverance and builds team spirit.

Adventure: Sara Renner award sticker

- This sticker will be awarded to a participant who is willing to explore off-track skiing, into the woods, and who has a determined spirit of discovery.



Parent Code of Conduct

- Keep in mind that children are involved in organizing for their enjoyment, not yours. Please don't force your kids to participate!
- 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.
- Cheers 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 encouragements 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 your child peace, quiet, dry and warm clothes and a drink. In addition to a pat on the back.
- 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!



Coach Code of Conduct

Coaches Responsibilities

Coaches have a responsibility to:

- Treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status.
- Direct comments or criticism at the performance rather than the athlete
- Consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of their sport and of coaching. For example, coaches should:
 - Refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches, especially when speaking to the media or recruiting athletes
 - Abstain from the use of tobacco products while in the presence of their athletes and discourage their use by athletes
 - Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages when working with athletes
 - Refrain from encouraging the use of alcohol in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at the playing site, and
 - Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of their duties
- 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.
- 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.
- Recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other coaches or sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over their own
- Regularly seek ways of increasing professional development and self-awareness
- 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.
- In the case of minors, communicate and cooperate with the athlete's parents or legal guardians, involving them in management decisions pertaining to their children's development, and
- 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.

Coaching Imperatives

Coaches must:

- Ensure the safety of the athletes with whom they work
- At no time become intimately and/or sexually involved with their athletes. This includes requests for sexual favours or threat of reprisal for the rejection of such requests
- Respect their athlete's dignity. Verbal or physical behaviours that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable (the Nordiq Canada definition of harassment, and the associated policy



for harassment prevention and for the investigation of alleged incidents can be found at document 1.8)

- **Never** advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances, and In fact coaches **MUST** steer their athletes away from these substances. Please see the WADA website for more information on anti-doping
 - <http://www.wada-ama.org/en/Anti-Doping-Community/Athletes/>
- Never provide under-age athletes with alcohol