



Pacific Northwest Ski Association

A Division of USSA

PNSA Ability Class Racing

Draft v2

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The member clubs of the Pacific Northwest Ski Association (PNSA) host sanctioned USSA scored races within the PNSA division using an Ability Classification system to rank and classify athletes. All U14 and older athletes are eligible to compete in PNSA's Ability Class calendar of races.

Ability Class Race Calendar

All USSA scored Slalom, Giant Slalom & Super-G races on the PNSA calendar are included in the Ability Class system. (*Downhill is excluded, and Downhill results will not be used to rank athletes in the Ability Class system. Downhill events will be seeded by USSA points with start lists prepared using standard USSA rules.*)

Ability Classification

There are 5 ability classes in PNSA; **Category 1, Category 2, Category 3, Category 4 and Category 5**. The 5 classes are identified at the beginning of each season using the **5th USSA Point List** and defined as follows:

Cat. 1 – All competitors meeting a USSA Pt. cut-off in SL, GS or SG that closely represents the top 10% of PNSA competitors.

Cat. 2 – All competitors meeting a USSA Pt. cut-off in SL, GS or SG that closely represents the top 30% of PNSA competitors.

Cat. 3 – All competitors meeting a USSA Pt. cut-off in SL, GS or SG that closely represents the top 60% of PNSA competitors.

Cat. 4 – All ranked competitors who have less than 999.99 USSA Pts. in at least one event; SL, GS or SG.

Cat. 5 – All non-ranked competitors who have not yet scored a USSA result and have 999.99 USSA Pts. in SL, GS & SG.

The cut-off points for Cat. 1, 2 & 3 remain constant for the entire competition season, and may need to be adjusted by the ACC at the beginning of each new competition season.

Athlete Classification

Classification is determined by the athlete's best USSA Pts. in SL, GS or SG. The athlete is classified the same in all 3 events. For example, if the athlete's best USSA Pts. come from SL and rank the athlete in Cat. 2, the athlete will be ranked in Cat. 2 in all 3 events.

At the beginning of each season, new competitors to PNSA will be placed in the appropriate class according to their USSA Pts. Continuing competitors will begin the season in the class they finished the prior year. (See *Annual Transition* below.)

Race Seeding, Start Lists and Awards

Races will be seeded with Cat. 1 athletes starting first, followed by Cat. 2 athletes, then Cat. 3 athletes and so on. First run start order will comprise of a random draw of all athletes within each class. (See *the Start List Exception for Cat. 1 below.*) Second run start order will be organized by standard USSA rules, with a reverse 30 of the fastest 1st run athletes, regardless of class.

The awards at each race will be presented by ability class. Race organizers are encouraged to present awards to at least the top 5 finishers in each class, depending on class size.

PNSA Class Points

Competitors will also earn PNSA Class Pts. at each race. The points will be based on Old World Cup Pts. and will be assigned to the fastest 15 competitors in each class. (*See PNSA Class Pts. Schedule below.*) If fewer than 15 competitors in a class finish, the race Class Pts will still be assigned to the last eligible competitor.

PNSA Class Pts. are accumulated from all 3 events; SL, GS and SG. A racer's total is the sum of all Class Pts. earned, regardless of event.

Class Advancement

Competitors will advance up the classification system one of two ways; either by lowering their USSA points in SL, GS or SG below one of the established USSA point cut-offs, or by garnering a determined number of PNSA Class Pts. Either way, advancement will be announced by PNSA and effective only with the valid dates of the USSA Pts. list.

Advancement by USSA Pts.: When a competitor's USSA Pts go below one of the established point cut-offs then the competitor will advance to the appropriate class at the valid date of the next USSA Pts. list. A competitor advancing to a higher class will compete within that class for all events. For example: A Cat. 3 competitor earns Cat. 2 status via improved USSA Pts. in GS. The competitor will race Cat. 2 in all events; SL, GS & SG.

Advancement by PNSA Class Pts.: The accumulation of 100 Class Pts. will advance the competitor to the next class when the next USSA list becomes valid. The racer will compete in all events in the higher class. If a racer reaches 100 or more points before a new USSA list is valid the racer will continue to compete in the racer's current class until the new valid USSA list.

When a racer advances to a higher class, regardless of advancement via USSA Pts. or PNSA Class Pts., the racer begins again with zero PNSA Class Pts.

Start List Exception for Cat. 1

The competitors in Cat. 1 entered at any SL, GS or SG event will be ranked by PNSA Class Pts. (not USSA Pts.) The first 15 competitors will comprise the 1st seed and will be randomly drawn. The remaining Cat. 1 competitors will comprise the 2nd seed and will also be randomly drawn.

If there are fewer than 15 competitors with PNSA Class Pts., then the 1st seed will be reduced to only those with PNSA Class Pts. If no Cat. 1 competitors entered in the race have earned PNSA Class Pts. then the entire class will be randomly drawn as a single seed.

Annual Transition

All competitors will enter the next season in the same class in which they finished the prior season, regardless of new USSA Pt. cut-off established to identify the classes. However, any competitor who's USSA Pts. are not qualified for the class will begin the year on a probationary basis. Competitors are not allowed to have two consecutive probationary years in the same class. When this happens, the competitor's class will be adjusted to the appropriate class at the beginning of the 2nd year.

Competitors will also keep 50% (rounded up) of their earned PNSA Class Pts. to start the next season. However, Cat.1 competitors will drop their year-old PNSA Class Pts. from the prior year after the first NW Cup Series, and only keep current year PNSA Class Pts. earned up to that point.

PNSA Class Pts. Schedule

“Old” World Cup Points

1st place	25 points
2nd “	20 “
3rd “	15 “
4th “	12 “
5th “	11 “
6th “	10 “
7th “	9 “
8th “	8 “
9th “	7 “
10th “	6 “
11th “	5 “
12th “	4 “
13th “	3 “
14th “	2 “
15th “	1 point