

2 - PNSA / USSA ALPINE PROGRAM

How To Become A Competitor

Anyone who is interested in ski racing can join USSA. Once you have made this decision, you can join online at <http://my.ussa.org/> You can print a copy of the Alpine Competition Guide at <http://alpine.usskiteam.com/alpine-programs/officials/rules> and a copy of your license through the [myUSSA](#) link found on the USSA website. This license allows you to compete in sanctioned PNSA / USSA competitions. A schedule of events is available on the PNSA website at <http://www.pnsa.org/calendar>.

It is also advisable that you join a local ski club or training program that prepares racers for USSA competition. Such programs exist at most ski areas around the Pacific Northwest, and offer assistance in scheduling, on-snow training, physical conditioning, travel arrangements and many other benefits. The PNSA office will have information on programs in your area, and they are available on the PNSA website at <http://www.pnsa.org/clubs>.

If you are 11 years of age or younger, you will be joining a Youth Ski League program (also known as Buddy Werner / Mitey Mite programs). These are "learn-to-ski-race" programs that teach the basics in ski competition and technique. Racers 12 -20 years old join the Junior level of racing. This is the "classification" level that ranks racers in the United States. Also, any racer 21 years and older may join the PNSA Masters racing program.

If your aspirations are to become the best racer you can be, even compete at international and Olympic races, then you should join USSA / PNSA. USSA / PNSA racers are the only racers recognized by the United States Ski Team, the International Ski Federation and the US Olympic Committee.

Competitor Classification

There are three types of *competition classifications* in PNSA/USSA racing: Age, Ability and Masters. Age classification (U8 - Senior) races are based on age classes/groups of athletes, whereas Ability classification races are based on rankings in the USSA Points System (U14 – Senior). Masters classification races are for the 21 and older athlete who seeks recreational competition without scoring to the USSA Points System. The three types of competitions are further defined below.

Age Classification / Age Class Racing

Age Classification is based on your age as of December 31st of each season. Competitions in this category are open to all athletes who meet the age-class criteria for the event.

Category	Age (as of 12/31)				
		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Seniors	21 and older	1995	1996	1997	1998
U21 (Jr.)	20	1996	1997	1998	1999
	19	1997	1998	1999	2000
U19 (Jr.)	18	1998	1999	2000	2001
	17	1999	2000	2001	2002
	16	2000	2001	2002	2003
U16 (Jr.)	15	2001	2002	2003	2004
	14	2002	2003	2004	2005
U14 (Buddy Werner -YSL)	13	2003	2004	2005	2006
	12	2004	2005	2006	2007
U12 (YSL)	11	2005	2006	2007	2008
	10	2006	2007	2008	2009
U10 (YSL)	9	2007	2008	2009	2010
	8	2008	2009	2010	2011
U8 (YSL)	7 and younger	2009	2010	2011	2012

Youth Ski League – Mitey Mite

These competitions are for the youngest athletes – ages 5 to 13 (U8-U14). They offer a fun introduction to ski competition for the beginning racer.

Evergreen Cup

This is the development level of PNSA racing and is open to all U14-Senior competitors. Athletes are introduced to the USSA Points System to handicap and rank them among other racers in the United States

Ability Classification / Ability Racing

The PNSA/USSA Junior Program also classifies racers by ability. This is accomplished by using the USSA Competitor Classification Points to handicap racers and rank them among other racers in the United States. As a racer's ranking, or handicap, improves, the racer becomes eligible for higher levels of competition. Competitions in this category are open to all athletes who meet the ability/ranking criteria for the event.

Northwest Cup/U16 Series

This is PNSA's premier level of USSA divisional racing and is open to U16 and older. The Northwest Cup series serves as the divisional trophy series, crowning the division's overall champions as well as team champions in the U16 and U19/21 age classes. The Northwest Cup is the elite level in the PNSA, from which racers qualify to regional, national, and foreign FIS competitions by improving their ranking in the USSA Competitor Classification Points system.

USSA / PNSA Competition Ladder

Below is a brief outline of the various FIS/USSA/PNSA competition levels:

Ability Class

FIS International: Olympic Games, World Championships, World Cup, Continental Cup

USSA National: NorAm Series, U.S. Senior and U16 & U19 Nationals - Collegiate (NCAA and USCSA)

USSA Regional: Regional FIS & Regional Championships (U21, U19 & U16)

PNSA: Northwest Cup (U21, U19 & U16)

Age Class

PNSA: Youth Ski League/Mitey Mite (U14 and younger) Buddy Werner (U14 only), Evergreen Cup (U14 and older), U16 Series, NW Cup Series

PNSA / Masters Racing - Recreational

There are 12 Classes of Master Racers with each Class based on age as of December 31st of each year:

Class 1 →	21-29	Class 5 →	45-49	Class 9 →	65-69
Class 2 →	30-34	Class 6 →	50-54	Class 10 →	70-74
Class 3 →	35-39	Class 7 →	55-59	Class 11 →	75-79
Class 4 →	40-44	Class 8 →	60-64	Class 12 →	80 and over