

## 2 - PNSA / USSA CROSS-COUNTRY PROGRAM

### Competitors

Most races in PNSA are open to skiers of all abilities. If you have never raced and want to give it a try, choose a race, sign up, and go for it! That's how most of us got started. It's a great way to challenge yourself, have fun, and meet new friends. You can find information about races and how to enter them on the PNSA race calendar (<http://www.pnsa.org/calendar/x-country>), from the host club, or perhaps from your own ski club.

A USSA membership is required to enter any USSA race. See the next chapter of this manual for information about memberships. During the 2016-17 season there are three USSA meets in the PNSA area:

the Sunnyside Challenge at Mount Bachelor, OR, January 7-8;

the Race of the Methow in Winthrop, WA, February 4-5; and

the Mount Spokane Nordic Cup at Mount Spokane, WA, February 18-19.

Other than the four meets listed above, you do not need to be a member of PNSA or USSA to enter most cross country races in the PNSA area. These races are the responsibility of the host club, which determines entry requirements and fees.

Even if you do not need a PNSA and USSA membership to enter the races in which you plan to compete, please consider joining these organizations: your membership and your dues will support racing in PNSA (especially junior development) and in the entire USA.

If your aspirations are to become the best racer you can be, and even to 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

. In USSA races junior competitors are grouped by their age on December 31 of the current season. Non-USSA races are free to use any categories that they prefer, but they often use the USSA brackets as well. USSA uses the "U-" system with 2-year brackets. For example, U16 in the 2016-17 season means that the racer was born in 2002 or 2001 and is 14 or 15 years old on December 31, 2016.

The following table summarizes the brackets for each birth year for the next four seasons:

Category	Age (as of 12/31)				
		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Seniors	20 and older	1996	1997	1998	1999
U20	19	1997	1998	1999	2000
	18	1998	1999	2000	2001
U18	17	1999	2000	2001	2002
	16	2000	2001	2002	2003
U16	15	2001	2002	2003	2004
	14	2002	2003	2004	2005
U14	13	2003	2004	2005	2006
	12	2004	2005	2006	2007
U12	11	2005	2006	2007	2008
	10	2006	2007	2008	2009
U10	9	2007	2008	2009	2010
	8	2008	2009	2010	2011
U8	7 and younger	2009	2010	2011	2012

## **Coaches, Officials, and Volunteers**

In addition to racing memberships, USSA offers special memberships and resources for cross-country coaches, race officials, and volunteers. USSA offers training and certification for coaches and officials, as well as insurance and other benefits for all three categories. For details see the USSA cross-country page at <http://nordic.uskiteam.com/cross-country-programs> as well as the membership page at <http://my.ussa.org/membership/start>.

If you enjoy cross-country skiing and racing, please consider getting involved as a coach, an official, or a volunteer at a PNSA race. Coaches will benefit from getting a USSA Level 100 Coach Certification. Race organizers will benefit from becoming a Level 1 Technical Delegate. (The Technical Delegate is USSA's representative to a USSA race, but Technical Delegate training also provides lots of information for race organizers on how to put on a successful event). All will benefit from helping put on events that bring out the best in all of us.