

Welcome to the Brighton Ski Team

The Brighton Ski Team (BST) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing an opportunity for young skiers to develop competitive skills and short- and long-term athletic and competition goals; while having fun and developing positive attitudes towards competition and the necessary work that goes into becoming a serious athlete and competitor.

The team is run by our **Program Director**, Drew Southworth, our **Alpine Development Director**, Spencer Dirats, a **Board** made up of parent volunteers, and a team of **coaches** and **peer coaches**. Though we train at Brighton Resort and have an incredible working relationship with them, the BST is not formally affiliated with the resort.

The Brighton Ski Team supports long-term athlete development in an environment that cultivates the skills athletes need to be healthy and fierce competitors - including technical, tactical, physical, mental, and social-emotional skill development. We are proud to offer a warm and supportive team culture that fosters athlete confidence, joy, and a lifelong love of skiing. Our goal at BST is to cultivate strong skiers who love the sport and have excellent all-around skiing skills, honed by race training. There is no better foundation for skiing than racing. Participation in ski training and racing helps athletes to develop their technique, comfort, and confidence on the snow in a safe, friendly, and competitive environment... and it's a lot of fun!

Preparing for the Season

We offer some pre-season dryland training sessions, which provides a chance for athletes to spend time with coaches doing strength and training exercises that will prepare them for their time on the snow. See the Team Updates page of our [website](#) for more info.

We will also host **two mandatory parent info-sessions** in the fall - one during dryland, and one right before we get on-snow for the first time. Additional information about these sessions will come separately.

Ski Passes

BST athletes will need a [season pass to Brighton Resort](#) (not included with the team fees).

Athletes who will attend training at [Utah Olympic Park](#) (UOP) will need a season pass there. These will be available for purchase later in the fall, and we anticipate that they will cost \$475.

Some older athletes (primarily U14/U16s) may train at other resorts as well, therefore an [IKON pass](#) is highly recommended. Race-day lift tickets will also be required at resorts where the race is being held. These are typically discounted and the cost will be posted on each race announcement. Families are responsible for paying for these race-day lift tickets, and the

method of payment and ticket pick-up may vary from resort to resort. Instructions will be included in race informational emails from coaches.

Through *Ski Utah*, skiers in grades 4-6 may obtain a "[Passport](#)," which gives them 3 days at each of Utah's 15 ski resorts for only \$69! This pass can be used for race days at other resorts.

US Ski & Snowboard Registration

All athletes who train and/or race for the Brighton Ski Team **must** be current members of U.S. Ski and Snowboard (USSS).

New members should register (and returning members may renew membership) here:

<https://my.usskiandsnowboard.org>

Please take care to register your athlete for the appropriate membership. Athletes who will *not* compete in any races (including all FAST 5s) may obtain an "Alpine General Non-competitor" membership. All athletes who will participate in races *must* have the age-appropriate **competitor** membership.

Family members and friends who anticipate volunteering in a role that works directly with athletes are also required to hold an active USSS membership ("Alpine Volunteer"). They may also consider pursuing a coaching and/or alpine official certification to serve as a crucial volunteer at competitions. Please contact Coach Drew or Coach Spencer for more info!

Please refer to the following USSS resources for more information about membership:

- [Alpine Memberships & Benefits](#)
 - [Alpine Membership Requirements](#)
 - [Alpine Membership Descriptions](#)
 - [USSS Membership homepage](#)
-

Gear / Ski Swaps

Your athlete will typically need the following ski / protective gear:

- **Skis:**
 - FAST 5's & YSL athletes may opt for a **general race ski** (appropriate for both GS & SL)
 - South Series athletes may opt to have a pair of slalom skis and a pair of GS skis
 - U14/U16 athletes may also want a pair of SG skis (please consult your athlete's coach, as we often have longer skis available to borrow)
 - **Please consult a coach or a ski technician with race expertise regarding the appropriate length of ski and binding settings for your athlete.**
- **Boots:** front-buckle (3 buckles), **fit should be assessed by a professional near the start of the on-snow season**

- Helmet: properly-fitted helmet, hard ear coverings **required**. Method of attaching goggle strap to helmet (like a clip in the back) strongly recommended.
- Goggles: should fit to an athlete's face such that wind/snow doesn't impede their vision. Ideally, the goggles should fit to the helmet such that their forehead/temples don't get cold. Goggle strap elastic should be in good condition so they don't slip down.
- Good-quality gloves/mittens: warm and waterproof!
 - Consider acquiring an extra pair for your athlete to keep in their ski bag should their primary pair get wet during storm days. Many athletes also choose to use handwarmers if they run cold.
- Poles: all athletes are required to have at least one pair of appropriately-sized poles *with* baskets & a way to attach the pole to themselves (a wrist strap or glove clip like the Leki system). Some older athletes may choose to use separate poles for GS and SL events, and SL poles may have hand guards.
- Slalom shin guards & chin guard: older athletes who compete in slalom races for the South Series and IMD divisions should have a pair of shin guards and a removable face guard for their helmet. Please note that these guards are only necessary *if* the athlete's skiing ability brings them into close contact with slalom gates. Your athlete's coach may help you determine what is needed for them. Similarly, older athletes (typically U14+) may choose to use forearm guards for GS races, but they are not required.
- BST team coat: new and hand-me-down coats will be available for purchase **at the beginning of the season ONLY**. Once registered, watch email for details.
- Snow pants: warm and waterproof! Athletes who choose to wear a speed suit may want to consider "zip-off" pants for race days (so that snow pants can be removed without an athlete having to take their boots off at the start).
- Speed suit: (optional) some athletes will choose to wear a tight-fitting speed suit on race day.
- Lunch box & water bottle: athletes are required to bring these to each full-day on-snow training session (Saturdays and Sundays), and athletes will carry their own lunch & water up the chairlift to the team yurt
- Sun protection: sunscreen and/or face-covering *highly* recommended

General guidance: make sure everything fits and keeps your athlete warm and dry. We really try to minimize the amount of time spent indoors warming up, so we recommend packing extra layers in an athlete's ski bag.

If for *any reason at all* you are concerned about obtaining any of the gear items listed above, please reach out to us! There is *always* lots of hand-me-down activity, borrowing/sharing, buying second-hand, etc. in our sport.

Ski Swaps

Before the ski season starts, there are several ski swaps held in Utah. Visit this link for details:

[2023 Utah Ski Swaps](#)

Online [Sideline Swap](#) is also a good resource for lightly used speed suits and other gear.

Training and Age Divisions

BST athletes train and race within the following age groups:

FAST 5s: This is our program for 5-year-old skiers. They train at Brighton on Saturdays from 9 AM - 2 PM, learning the basics about skiing, riding lifts on their own, and learning the mountain. This is a pre-racing program, in that 5-year-olds are not eligible for sanctioned ski races, but are gaining experience to race starting at age 6. This is **not** a learn-to-ski program, and we expect that athletes in this group can already navigate most of the mountain unassisted. That being said, we do keep our coach-to-athlete ratio in this group very small (1:3) such that each chairlift ride can have an adult present - we know these racers are little humans who may need help hopping up onto the chair!

U8 (Under age 8): Athletes aged 6-7 will train at Brighton on Saturdays from 9 AM - 3 PM and have the opportunity to race in the U8 category. They will participate in YSL (Youth Ski League) races (see info on racing divisions below), which are typically held around 3 times per season, including a YSL Finals Race in mid-March.

U10 (Under age 10): These athletes, ages 8-9, will train at Brighton on Saturdays 9 AM - 3 PM and Tuesday evenings 5 PM - 8 PM. There may be an opportunity to also train at the Utah Olympic Park (UOP) in Park City on Thursday nights, 6-8 PM if invited by a coach. U10 athletes will participate in YSL races, and may have some opportunity to compete in South Series races.

U12: 10 and 11-year old athletes train on Saturdays 9 AM - 3 PM and Tuesday evenings 5-8 PM. Many U12 racers also train on an additional day or two, such as Thursday nights 6-8 PM at the Utah Olympic Park (UOP), and possibly also on Friday afternoons or Sundays if invited by a coach.

U14 and U16 athletes typically train 4-5 days per week for the more competitive qualifier races throughout the season.

Leagues & Race Formats

BST athletes compete in three leagues within Intermountain Division:

Youth Ski League (YSL) racing is a gender-based, single-run race with awards given to the ten fastest racers in each age and gender group. All of our U8, U10 and U12 athletes will be invited and encouraged to race YSL. The course consists of a start and back and forth gates into a finish area. Races are either a GS, Slalom, or a Kombie course. YSL racing is a great introduction into ski racing in a supportive and fun environment.

South-Series (SS) racing is a gender-based, two-run race with a course reset between races. Races are either a GS or Slalom, and awards are given to the five fastest racers in each age and gender group. The courses for this division are more technical and include back-and-forth gates, flushes, delays, and hairpins. Based on cumulative results, racers have the opportunity to qualify for the Intermountain Division (IMD) Championships. These races are open to U10, U12, and U14 athletes, based on coach assessment of readiness.

Intermountain Division (IMD) Races are two- to four-day events, including slalom, giant slalom and super G race courses. There are six qualifiers throughout the season for the Tri-Divisional Championships, which includes race teams from Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming.

U14 - U16 Qualifiers are longer races (3-4 days) with longer and more technical courses.

Your child's coach will advise on which races and race levels are ideal for your athlete. During the season you may be asked to confirm if your athlete will be participating in certain races, and if they need a ski pass to the resort where the race will be held. Upon our confirmation, the coaches will register your athlete for the race and provide the link to any necessary waivers, etc. You can find the full race schedule [here](#) on the IMD website and also on the Team Updates page of the [BST website](#).

Pre-Race Communication & Details

Our Program Director Drew Southworth or Alpine Development Director Spencer Dirats will send a race announcement about a week prior to each race, with important information such as how to sign a waiver, when to arrive, when/how to obtain a lift ticket, what type of skis to bring, weather conditions, etc. They will register your athlete for the races, and race entry fees are included in your BST team fee. Again - lift tickets are *not* included and families are responsible for those additional costs.

Race Day Flow

On race day, athletes will meet their coach and receive a bib with a number on it, to be worn over their speed suit or ski jacket. The number designates their place in the start list. At a previously designated time before the race begins, coaches will lead athletes slowly down the course (called slipping or inspecting the course) to review the course and gates, pointing out any special features.

When the race begins, there is typically an announcer who will call out which skiers are on course and in the gate, ready to start. BST coaches in the start area will also announce athletes over the radio so that spectators in the team tent know when they need to look up. The start list and current place in the start list can be accessed on the [live-timing](#) website, and/or the team will have a start list printed, so you'll know when your athlete is coming down the course. Parents can watch the race from designated areas along the side of the course, or from the finish area; cowbells are encouraged!

At most races, the BST will have a team tent with food and drinks for athletes and parent spectators. Board members facilitate the organization of this incredibly fun tailgating experience. The Brighton Ski Team has always had THE BEST race cheering section and tailgate scene of all of the ski teams! Stay tuned for details about helping out with our team tent. This will be an opportunity for parents to volunteer.

Volunteer Opportunities

Other than our coaches, Brighton Ski Team is a volunteer-led and run team. It's the group of parents that make this possible for our athletes, and keeps our tuition lower than other race programs. Helping out with the ski team is a lot of fun and a great way to meet other BST families.

Our biggest areas of need for volunteers include:

- The **YSL race we are hosting in January** (we will need a LOT of help for this and expect ALL families to lend a hand in one way or another)
- Tailgate events at all races (mostly consists of bringing food to share and help with setup/teardown)
- Shoveling out the team Yurt after *every* storm
- Ski School races in February and March
- Substitute assistant coaches in case of coach absences (please reach out to Drew or Spencer if you are interested in this)
- Serve as a Gate Judge at competition events (no training required)
- Serve as an Alpine Official at competition events (training required)