



THEME FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY
ENDURANCE

from

VARA Youth Coordinator Alex Krebs



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CAMP THIS WINTER!**

January 9th–11th

February 6th–8th

March 13th–15th

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ENDURANCE



It is February and we are headed in to the second month of youth ski racing. A time when athletes experience fatigue, frustration levels are high, stress levels rise due to qualifying for different teams and the regular race season coming to an end. It may seem like there isn't a "light at the end of the tunnel". At this time of year it is important to keep the focus and make appropriate choices such as training time, rest and nutrition so you have the ENDURANCE to go the distance to get through the season finale! It is difficult for a child, teenager, and young adult to not look only from one competition to the next so therefore important to talk with athletes about LTAD (Long Term Athlete Development) a part of the USSA Training Systems.

USSA states that "LTAD" is the managed developmental progression for an athlete that will both maximize their long-term potential and enjoyment in their sport. It identifies optimal training, competition and recovery programming with relation to biological development and maturation (Balyi). This allows the athlete, coach and parents to focus on long-term gains rather than immediate, short-term competition successes.

Without realizing the hazards of a short-term approach, many athletes find that success early in sport does not translate to future performance because they neglected key developmental areas, or failed to maximize their opportunities at the right times in their development."

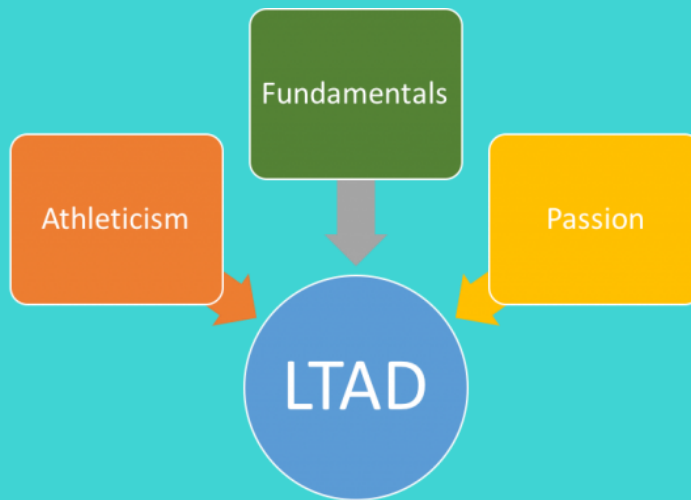
"The USSA Training Systems are a vital tool to help parents, coaches, and athletes focus on the right things at the right time to maximize their improvement, long-term potential and enjoyment in skiing.

The USSA training systems detail athlete development in all phases and domains. Before anything else, the following 3 concepts are the foundation for everything we do as clubs, coaches, athletes, and parents. Increased capacity in these areas, necessary for performance at the highest levels, builds over a long period of time.

Fundamentals: a focus on building basic skills in all areas of the sport that will lead to high performance of more specialized skills over time.

Athleticism: the application of fundamental skills through a multitude of environments and sports focusing on building higher capacity in all elements of physical fitness and health.

Passion: the fuel drives athletes to pursue the sport with joy, grit, and perseverance sustaining a lifetime of constant improvement and enjoyment."



Quite often athletes, parents and coaches want to do more racing and less work on the elements that go in to LTAD. It is easy to set a course, it is more difficult to work on skills and free-skiing with our young athletes. Quite often it is the early mature athlete that has early success and doesn't work on their skills that will be passed by the later mature that perseveres and works on good skiing.

Our sport of skiing should be a life-long sport. By focusing on LTAD children will have more fun, greater self-confidence, better development and ultimately better success. I encourage everyone that hasn't read Edi Thy's article "[The Long Road](#)" to do so, she eloquently explains about ups and downs in ski racing but sticking out has had numerous life lessons.

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Please visit the [VARA Youth Coordinator Page](#) on the [VARA](#) site.