



## VARA Skill Assessment Protocol

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### Council Skills Assessment Event Day

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#### ***Eastern Skill Assessment Tests (4):***

Pole Plants

One Ski Skiing-Left

One Ski Skiing-Right

Apex Drill Skiing

#### ***Event Planning:***

- The Skills Assessment Day should have a regular registration time, event sheet, start times, etc, which should all be posted on VARA.org. Bibs are to be used for all competitors and a different ‘bib’ (gate keepers Bibs) of some sort is to be used for each of the judges to identify them as official judges.
- The Skills Assessment Day must be sanctioned by USSA and have a codex.
- The Skills Assessment Day must have a fully certified jury to oversee the organization and safety of the event.
- The hill to be used for the skills should be of moderate pitch. Ideally, the hill should be wide enough so the men and women can be assessed side by side at the same time. 20m width for each gender. If not, two separate slopes should be used. The hill should be long enough to have two skills/run. An upper skills assessment section and a lower skills assessment section.
- The Skills Assessment Day must take place similar to a regular ‘race day’. A registration period, an inspection period, a morning ‘run’, lunch, an afternoon ‘run’, awards.
- The Skills Assessment Score sheet must be prepared prior to the day of the event. Names, club, and number should all be included on the score sheet. This is time consuming and should not be done while scoring the actual assessment.

#### ***The day:***

CAPTAINS MEETING: 8:30am

Attendance, safety, jury, details, etc.

JUDGES MEETING: 8:45am

Review judge on-hill placement, hand out scorecards, pencils, summary of the day, etc. Judges should write their name on the top of each scorecard.

MORNING ASSESSMENT: 9:30am start time

In the morning, the upper half of the trail will have side-by-side APEX DRILL sets. There will be one for the women and one for the men. The lower half of the trail will have two side-by-side brush corridors (20m width) set for the POLE PLANT assessment. There will be one for the women and one for the men. There must be a defined start and finish for each ‘course’ and a defined width using brushes. The athlete can only be judged when inside the defined ‘course’.

The women and men will be assessed congruently, with judges for each gender at each skill area. Each assessment station (4) will have a starter and two judges (8 judges total). The starter does not need a headset or a radio, but does need visual contact with the judges.

The athletes will make two (2) laps in the morning at each SKILL assessment station for their gender in bib order. They will start in bib order at the APEX DRILL assessment. Once through that assessment station, they will go to lower

assessment station for the POLE PLANT assessment. They will return to the top for their second lap through each station in bib order. Each athlete will be assessed twice at each skill in the morning. This should take 1:45min hours maximum.

Once the assessment session is complete and the course is closed, judges will ski to the finish of the lower skill assessment arena and hand their cards to the Head Gate Keeper. The cards will be brought directly to the timing team to input into the scoring spreadsheet. The morning scores should be inputted into the scoring sheet at lunch.

LUNCH: 11:30am-12:30pm

AFTERNOON ASSESSMENT: 12:30pm start time

The afternoon assessment will just be focused on 1-SKI skiing. There will be two 20m side-by-side brush corridors set on the upper portion of the trail (where the APEX was set) and two 20m side-by-side brush corridors set on the lower part of the trail where the pole plant section was in the morning. There must be a defined start and finish for each ‘course’. The athlete can only be judged when inside the defined ‘course’.

The upper trail 1-SKI skiing assessment will be on the left foot, while lower section will be on the right foot. They will switch skis in the middle of the trail between the two stations. The athletes will do two laps of the assessments. They will end up with two trials on the left foot and two trials on the right foot.

Once the assessment session is complete and the course is closed, judges will ski to the finish of the lower skill assessment arena and hand their cards to the Head Gate Keeper. The cards will be brought directly to the timing team to input into the scoring spreadsheet.

AWARDS: 30min after last athlete

**Judging/Scoring:**

The judges must be pre-determined prior to the event. An even distribution of club representation is desired, but judge experience outweighs the need for club distribution. Select an experienced judge first and foremost. Clubs will send the event promoter their selected judges name 10 days prior to the event. The Judges will be given the assessment descriptions one (1) week in advance of the event so they have time to become familiar with the skills they will be assessing at the event. Each judge will assess a morning skill and an afternoon skill (2 skills each).

They judges should receive scoring sheets on the morning of the event at the judges meeting in case they did not bring printed copies. The bib numbers only (no names) will be indicated on the sheets and athletes must wear bibs. The judges will score the athletes based on the Eastern Skills Assessment scoring method (1-7 scale). The scores are then put into the scoring spreadsheet to determine the finish order. Awards will be given to the top-10 overall.

For each assessment skill test there will be two evaluators (judges) placed at the finish on opposite sides of the brush corridor to determine an assessment on a 1-7 scale with 1 being ‘entry level’ and 7 ‘mastery’. Athletes will have two trials for each skill assessment test; two runs of pole plant testing, two runs on each leg (four runs total) for 1-ski skiing, and two runs of the Apex Drill. The BEST score from each individual judge for each trial is used. The athletes will receive 2 scores for each skill assessed (1/judge). Ties are broken by using the best individual skill average. If ‘Scott’ has a 6 average in APEX and ‘Tom’ has a 5.5 average in Pole plant, ‘Scott’ wins the tie.

*Example:*

	<u>Apex</u>	<u>Judge1</u>	<u>Judge 2</u>	<u>Pplants</u>	<u>J1</u>	<u>J2</u>	<u>1-Ski-L</u>	<u>J1</u>	<u>J2</u>	<u>1-Ski-R</u>	<u>J1</u>	<u>J2</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>AVE (total/4)</u>
<b>Sammy</b>		5	5		6	6		4	4		5	5	= 40	<b>10</b>

The athletes place is based on the average of the scores of the four skills assessed.

The judges will determine when to send each athlete onto the assessment ‘course’. The starter will wait to send the next numbered athlete until they receive a signal from the judges. When a judge is ready, they will put their arm straight up into the air. Once both judges have raised their arm, the starter is free to send the athlete. Radios are not needed for the starter-judge communication.

It is the judges responsibility to know the number of the athlete they are scoring and must read the number as they pass through the finish area. Judges may not communicate during the event, except when bib number clarification is needed. Score discussions are strictly forbidden.

***Important Notes:***

To ensure that the awards are done in a timely manner, the morning skills results should be entered into the scoring spreadsheet at lunch and the afternoon scores should be entered immediately following the completion of the afternoon session. The timing team should be ready and have a solid understanding of the spreadsheet. If done correctly, it should take 20-30 minutes to input a morning or afternoon session.

Three (3) people should be a part of the timing team: One data entry person, one card reader, and one card reader assistant/backup (to ensure accuracy). If a score is illegible, the judges other score for that athlete will be used. If both of a judges scores are illegible for an athlete, the scoring team must use the second judges score for both judges.

When inputting, SAVE often. You DON'T want to have to start over!

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**SKILL ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTIONS**

**Pole Plant**

Mastery of pole plant execution will be based on poles planted angled forward, arms forward with economy of movement utilizing the hands and wrists, quiet upper body with minimal unnecessary movement, and proper timing where the pole plant triggers the release of edge angle.

The test will be through two trials of ten to sixteen consecutive medium radius turns with the best score of the two utilized for the assessment. For mastery, the first trial must be judged as proficiency with either single or double pole plant then the second trial would demonstrate the other.

***Scoring***

Level One

Lack of pole plant.

Level Two

Can ski the first half with some pole plant fundamentals, then inconsistent.

Level Three

Pole plants with improvement needed with the timing of the pole plant, economy of movement with upper body and arms forward, precision in planting the poles angled forward and/or consistency of pole plant.

Level Four

Consistent pole plants with proper timing, quiet upper body with arms forward using the hands and wrists to execute the planting of the poles. Needs more consistent planting with the pole tips angled forward on both turns.

Level Five

Consistent pole plants, disciplined upper body. One turn properly angled forward, the other planted but not angled forward.

Level Six

Precision as summarized above with either a single or double pole plant.

Level Seven

Precision as summarized above with one run each of single and double pole plants.

***Judges:***

Judges must read, learn, and know the information in advance. The head judge/gatekeeper will not review the judge protocol on the day of the assessment. The above information must be given in advance to the coaches that will be judging the skills.

Pole Plants: Morning Assessment

Judge 1

Judge 2

Women:

Men:

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## **One Ski**

Mastery in skiing on one ski demonstrates both fore/aft and lateral balance. Elements of mastery using one ski include: Upper and lower body separation, pole planting, forward ankle/knee flexion, and carving the initiation through completion in both directions. Consistent turn shape/radius is also an important element, as well as speed control. Mastery would incorporate these technical elements skiing on one ski without poles.

A corridor of brushes should be set to define the radius of the turns, which should be approximately 15-18 meter vertical distance with consistent turn shape an element of mastery. The test will be for ten to fourteen consecutive turns with two trials on each leg. **Proficiency using poles on the first trial is required** prior to electing to demonstrate mastery (level 7) on the second by skiing without poles.

### ***Scoring***

Level One

Learning to ski on one ski. Unable to complete a turn in either direction

Level Two

Can ski on one ski with improvement needed in consistency of turn radius and maintaining balance for twelve consecutive turns.

Level Three

Consistent turn radius with inconsistent balance, carving turns from fall-line to completion in one direction, inconsistent carving in other direction.

Level Four

Displays execution of skiing on one ski as outlined with the ability to carve the fall-line through completion phases but needs to improve in carving the initiation of the turn in both directions and planting of the poles.

Level Five

Ability to ski with consistent turn radius and in balance. Can carve from initiation through completion in one direction and fall line through completion on the other with skidding of initiation.

Level Six

Precision as outlined above with the ability to carve turns from the initiation through completion in both directions with good pole plants, whether using a single or double pole plant.

Level Seven

Mastery will include the technical elements described above without the use of poles. This can only be accomplished on the second trial.

### ***Judges:***

Judges must read, learn, and know the information in advance. The head judge/gatekeeper will not review the judge protocol on the day of the assessment. The above information must be given in advance to the coaches that will be judging the skills.

1-Ski Skiing: Afternoon Assessment

	Left Foot		Right Foot	
	<u>Judge 1</u>	<u>Judge 2</u>	<u>Judge 1</u>	<u>Judge 2</u>
Women:				
Men:				

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## Apex Drill

The Apex Drill is utilized as an exercise for developing proper turn shape and carving. Mastery executing the Apex Drill includes carving the initiation, apex, and completion of the turn as well as demonstrating the technical elements of athletic stance, parallel position, and lower body movements. Proper turn shape is a critical part of mastery and includes entering the top brush with the skis carving and pointed out close to the top brush so the greatest depth to the outside is between the two vertical brushes with the ski direction in the falline – this is the apex of the turn, the skis continue carving and pass the second brush close to the brush with good ski direction.

The Apex Drill will be set with brushes, 6 meters distance between the two vertical brushes, 9 meters distance between the bottom brush of one vertical to the top brush of the next vertical. Terrain utilized should be easy to moderate. There needs to be a good amount of offset in the turn shape to allow for proper execution of this drill. There will be two trials of ten to twelve turns with the best score of the two utilized for the assessment. Straddling a brush **will not** cause any deduction as the execution is the emphasis.

### *Scoring*

Level One	Learning to complete the Apex Drill. Unable to complete the course.
Level Two	Completes the drill course but has difficulty carving turns with proper turn shape in executing the drill.
Level Three	Completes the Apex Drill with good turn shape and carving from fall line through completion in one direction with difficulty on the other.
Level Four	Completes the Apex Drill with good turn shape and carving the turns well from the falline through the completion..
Level Five	Displays proficiency in the execution of completing the Apex Drill with both proper turn shape and carving the falline through completion but can improve in areas of carving the initiation of the turn into the top brush with the skis pointed out, consistency on both turns, and movement from athletic stance to parallel.
Level Six	As outlined above with carving from initiation through completion in one direction, fall line through completion on the other side.
Level Seven	As outlined above with the ability to carve from the initiation through completion in both directions with good turn shape, in the proper location, on both turns. And demonstrates a well executed pole plant.

### *Judges:*

Judges must read, learn, and know the information in advance. The head judge/gatekeeper will not review the judge protocol on the day of the assessment. The above information must be given in advance to the coaches that will be judging the skills.

Apex Drill: Morning Assessment

	<u>Judge 1</u>	<u>Judge 2</u>
Women:		
Men:		