



VARA U14 Guidance

The U14 age level provides non-scored competition for 12 and 13-year-olds.

Vermont State and National Governing Body Guidance (NGB): VARA competitions will operate under the guidance of US Ski and Snowboard, and VARA, participants, parents, and coaches are responsible for being familiar with these guidelines. All vara members must adhere to VARA, USSS, and host site/venue guidance and code of conduct.

USSS code of conduct. [Link](#)

USSS Parent Code of Conduct [Link](#)

Eastern Region Handbook - [Link](#)

USS Safesport Resources - [Link](#)

For sanctioned race info, please see the [USSS COMPETITION GUIDELINES](#).

Children's Development Committee- the CDC oversees rules and policies of U14 and younger racing in VT. This group works with the VARA Executive Director to create schedules, policies, qualifications, rules, and state guidelines for the U14 and younger age groups. Committee members include; [Diann Roffe](#) (Chair), 3 Council chairs ([Peter Stokloza](#)/SVC, [Naga Kusumi](#)/NVC, [Lori McClallen](#)/MVC, [Dave Sklar](#), SVC, [Ryan Sheredy](#)/NVC, and [Justin Lillie](#)/MVC.

Children's Development Sub-Committee

The Children's Development Sub Committee consists of the 3 Council Chairs from each of the three Councils and the CDC Chair – Diann Roffe/Chair, (North-Naga Kusumi, Mid-Lori McClallen, and South-Peter Stokloza). The committee will work with the Executive Director regarding VARA U14 through U10 issues that arise at state championships and state-governed events.

U14 General Guidelines

1. VARA is the governing body of U14 racing in Vermont.
2. **VARA** will delegate to the three state councils (North, Mid, and South) the authority to administer their respective guidelines except for race starts, scoring, and gate recommendations. Or any other USS Comp Guide requirements.

RACE STARTS: The VARA Children's Committee race recommendation is 2 SL, 2 GS, and a SG event, 5 races max per council. Councils **MUST** hold a SG "event" (can be controlled training, camp, or race) Competitors must participate in their council SG event to race in the State SG. The council event must be completed by Feb 20th.

Council Seeding Recommendation: It is recommended by the VARA Children's Committee that the seeding at the council events be in random order for the first run and Flip Field for the second run.

ALL RACES MUST FOLLOW US Ski and Snowboard Competition Guidance (see link above)

SCORING: Scoring methods can be found on the specific council rules. [MVC](#), [SVC](#), [NVC](#) (hyperlinks)
These will be used to determine council seeding from councils to the U14 State Championships.

Each council will need to have the race secretary for their first council race hand enter the rosters into their timing system, so the correct info will be loaded for the scoring spreadsheet (US Ski & Snowboard number, CORRECT spelling (same name used for USS registration), YOB.) Councils will use that info for their scoring spreadsheets. This will make lists for states easier to submit to VARA. Council lists for states require the following info, Eastern U.S. Ski and Snowboard #, Last Name, First Name, Club, YOB to be provided by the council chair to VARA. Lists without the proper info will not be accepted. When race organizers upload results to US Ski & Snowboard, with incorrect spelling or US Ski & Snowboard # the race will get rejected when the name or U.S. Ski and Snowboard number does not match.

No scoring is used to qualify for the VARA State Championships. This is an open event. Scoring is used for seeding only. Participants must have competed in one less than ½ of their council events, round down, to participate in states.

3. VARA will schedule **open** races, state super-G events, Tri-Council Events, and the U14 State Championships. Host sites will run the events per USS Guidelines.
4. Councils must also follow all US Ski & Snowboard and VARA procedures for running a fair and legal race
5. VARA is the contact for the USS Eastern Region for selections and a liaison for USSS and the VT club programs.
6. Issues involving U14 VARA-sanctioned events will be resolved by the VARA CDC. And or USSS East or USSS National if necessary.
7. A \$40-45 (plus applicable online service fees) maximum entry fee for slalom (SL) and giant slalom (GS) events and \$65 (plus applicable online service fees) for Super-G (SG) is recommended for council races and camps.
8. To compete in VARA races, two membership requirements must be met:
 - a) You must have a current US Ski & Snowboard **Competitors** Membership (a general membership or youth is unacceptable).
 - b) To compete in any VARA/USS pipeline or selection process, you must be a current member of VARA. The parent and/or coach are responsible for ensuring competitors are current VARA members.
 - c) VARA membership can be verified from the [VARA website member look-up page](#). If desired, cards may be [printed](#) off the website. VARA Registration [Link](#)
9. Coaches **must** be VARA and US Ski & Snowboard members to have on-hill privileges.
10. U14 Council, Tri-Council, open races, and State Championships must be US Ski & Snowboard sanctioned events. Sanctioned races must be held on homologated trails.
11. The host club is required to present awards 5-30 minutes after the last competitor.

Out of Council Councils may accept out-of-council competitors into their council races per their specific council rules. Refer to the specific council for clarification. [MVC](#), [SVC](#), [NVC](#) (hyperlinks)

Out of Division /Region non-scored Racing:

Out-of-division racing is allowed if the event is open; otherwise, permission from VARA and the hosting division, as well as from USSS Eastern Region, is required for participants to race out of division in a non-open event. Council races are not considered open events. Out-of-region racing is not allowed per USSS. (See USSS handbook)

Independent Racer- Independent racers for council and non-scored events in VARA are discouraged. Each competitor should have a club affiliation. Councils may determine if an independent entry is accepted. There will be no independent competitors in Tri-Council events. Refer to the specific council for clarification. [MVC](#), [SVC](#), [NVC](#).

Parent/Spectator Clause - Any issues parents or spectators may have involving VARA Guidelines, The Race Organizing Committee (ROC), Alpine Officials, the Jury, the race site, or US Ski & Snowboard while at a sanctioned council event must be handled by the athlete's coach before being brought to the Race Organizer, Alpine Officials/Jury, registration volunteers, or VARA. The athlete's coach, not the parent, must represent the competitor regarding the issue.

Coaching Tickets: General recommendation, but NOT less than the following: 4 kids = 1 coach, > 8 Kids = 2, >12 Kids = 2, >18 Kids = 3, >20 kids = 4

Petitioning Athletes Skiing DOWN

All racers will follow established US Ski & Snowboard age classes except for approved petitioning athletes. U14 and under athletes may be approved within the council to ski down. (see council rules)

For a U16 athlete to be considered for skiing **down** an age class at the council level, the Program Director must submit a request to the Council Chair. If approved by their council, the Council Chair will submit the request to the VARA Children's Committee Chairperson and VARA Executive Director on or before Dec 15 for a CDC vote.

There are three guidelines for a ski-down athlete: Physical Maturation, Mental Maturity, and Physical Condition. For U16 athletes, the VARA CDC will review the request and respond to the council chair no later than January 1.

If an athlete is approved by the council or CDC, they will follow council and VARA rules for that age class. They must register for VARA and USS as their actual age group. Petitioned Athletes (PA) may qualify for states in the age class in which they compete. The following conditions apply:

1. PA will be considered and treated as any other participant in that age class.
2. PA may ski in the State Championships but will not advance to a US Ski & Snowboard post-season event.
3. PA will be seeded at states according to their council ranking.
4. PA will be presented with an award if so earned.
5. PA will be purged from results for selections to postseason US Ski & Snowboard Championship events.
6. PA must compete in the age class they were approved to compete for the season. Once VARA CDC approves, the athlete will race in the petitioned age class for the entire VARA Council Race season.

There will be NO returning to the original age class. They will only compete in the State Championship for which they have been approved.

7. An athlete skiing down or up must register for VARA and USSS **as their proper age class**. For example, U14 skiing down as a U12 would still register for VARA and USS as a U14.

Ski Up Process

For an athlete to be considered for skiing up an age class at the council level, the Program Director must submit the petition to the Council Chairperson. The petition must first be approved by the Council Chairperson. If approved at the council level, the request will be submitted to the Chair of the VARA Children's Committee and the VARA Executive Director. If the VARA Children's Committee approves, the VARA Executive Director will submit the request to the US Ski & Snowboard Eastern Regional Director, who will then submit the request to the US Ski & Snowboard National Office.

Once approved by US Ski & Snowboard National, the athlete will then race in the petitioned age class for the entire VARA Council Race season. There will be NO returning to the original age class.

The following conditions apply... [Ski Up Form](#) (hyperlink)

1. PA will be considered and treated as any other participant in that age class.
2. PA will be presented with an award if so earned.

U14 Projects

TERRAIN: VARA recommends that U14s experience a terrain element day. Athletes will use GS skis or longer and work on terrain, longer radius turn shape, gliding, and jumping. Councils should have a plan to incorporate a terrain day into their U14 council schedule.

VARA U14 GS/TERRAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

OKEMO MT. – Feb 2 M/W 2024

Selection: Open Registration

This is a terrain-focused development project introducing a variety of elements to enhance adaptability, skills, and tactics. Participants will work in groups and with different VARA coaches. This project is geared toward second-year U14s.

Registration is open and will allow second years a 1st come, first served 24-hour window for registration. After this window, registration will open up to the first-year U14s.

2024 U14 RACING

U14s will compete in 2SI/2GS/SG council events and can race in open events. There will be 3 open Tri-Council Events (SL, GS, and SG) scheduled and the VARA U14 State Championships.

U14 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sugarbush, VT - SG March 1

Stratton Mtn – MGS March 8 - M/WSL March 9 - WGS March 10 (subject to change)

The U14 VARA State Championships are open to VARA council participants and split gender, with the exception of the SG. *The event may be run with both genders at the same site.* To participate in the VARA State Championships, competitors must have raced in 1 less than half of council events (round down) and must be a VARA member.

U14 States host sites will not provide Goodie bags. The host site will provide:

- Only one commemorative item
- A pizza party, banquet, or another type of gathering before final awards, if possible per USSS guidelines.
- **Awards** for top 10 Boys and Girls per event.* (see below for more info)
- **Weather** - Every attempt will be made to host events. However, in the case of weather issues, the decision of the jury and TD will be respected
- **Gate Requirements: 60” height off the snow will be utilized for slalom.**

SG - The VARA State Championship SG will be held at Sugarbush and hosted by GMVS.

Prerequisite for VARA State SG: Athletes MUST race/participate in their council SG event (can be controlled training, camp, or race) this event will be completed before the council intents for states are completed.

Councils will submit intents for the SG to VARA prior to the registration opening. Intents will come from council chairs 24 hours after the completion of the SG event and will verify participation in a council SG event as well as seeding.*

**Councils may also do intents for their Council SG Event to verify training has occurred at club level. This supports athlete development and skill-building.*

March 1st - SG train and Race day backup date is March 4

SG Field Size - Max 120 for each gender (40/council) If a council does not field 40 athletes, the race host may fill in rank order equally from the remaining council intents up to the max of 120 athletes.

Registration Process for VARA State Championships:

Registration will open after councils submit their **intents/council list order** to the host site race administrator. Lists/Intents are due within 24 hours of the last council race.

1. Mandatory Team Captain’s Meeting (TCM) the night before the first race. This meeting may be held virtually and/or in person.
2. **Format:** There will be two traditional runs of GS, SL, and one SG (the SG will have a training run).
3. **Seeding** - Seeding will be based on Council rankings. The start lists will be based on a Council rotation will be determined by a random draw by VARA and remain the same for the tech series. SG will have a separate council order draw. The top 15 (top 5 from each council) will be a random electronic draw done by the host Race Administrator for each race. Places 16 and higher will remain consistent in council-ranked rotation for all races. The second run start order will be bibbo (flip top 30) the DSQ and DNF’s will run at the end in bib order.
4. **Qualification:** The states are open to Vara members. Competitors must have raced in 1 less than half of council events (round down).
5. **Entry fees:** U14 States combined entry fee is recommended not higher than \$195. The fees will include the awards event for participants at the technical events and an event souvenir. Host sites for States must commit to making the states a championship event. \$ 65 per event.
6. **Awards*:** The host site will award the top 10 boys and girls in each event. There is NO overall champion awarded at this level. The award ceremony is at the discretion of the host site and must follow USS Competition Guidelines.

7. **Course setters:** Course setters and officials will be selected prior to the U14 States by the VARA Executive Director and with input from the VARA AO and council chairs. Refs will be selected by the TD.

8. **Entry Procedure:** Councils MUST send racer rosters (in start order and with council-based gender split) on a Google spreadsheet, which shall include:

- U.S. Ski & Snowboard Number
- Last Name, First Name
- YOB
- Club
- Attending coaches list to the host site 1 week prior to the U14 States. There will be no additions/substitutions to rosters **48 hours prior to the first run of the first race.**
- Participants will register on ASR
- **Scoring/Selection:** (Quota to the U14 Eastern Championships is 57 this quota includes council automatics. (2024 quota is 29 boys and 28 girls, determined by USS East)
 - Selection to the U14 Eastern Championships is determined by scoring the best single result from individual runs and combined places in the VT State Championship events. Ties: are broken externally by taking the next best results for ranking and selection of the team.

Automatics: Each Council will have 2 Automatics (1G/1B) to U14 Eastern Championships.

Automatic seeding: Council automatics will receive seeding in at least the second seed for U14 Eastern Championships.

Race Requirements: To attend the Eastern U14 Championships athletes are required to compete in the majority (½ or > than ½) of races at the VARA U14 States unless injured.

9. **Forerunners: State Championships forerunners will be selected by the host site.**

10. **VARA Head Tax:** Head Tax is due for U14 State Championships; the fee is \$2 per racer per start to be collected automatically on Admin Ski Racing.

If there are no States contested, then the State Eastern U14 Championship Team will be selected based on a council allocation where each council's percentage of the total is based on its population percentages of all active VARA U14 athletes determined after the second weekend of February.

Council Injury- If an athlete, due to injury, is not able to complete the required council races to compete in states. They can seek approval from the council chair to race in the VARA State events. Once the council chair receives a request, that request will be reviewed by the VARA CDC, if approved, the athlete will be inserted at the end of council seeding.

Athlete Injury Clause for U14 Eastern Championships - Injured Athletes unable to attend the VARA State Championships petitioning for a discretionary spot to the U14 Eastern Championships must submit a request for a discretionary spot through the US Ski & Snowboard Eastern Office. The VARA CDC Chair, the VARA Executive Director, must be copied and notified of the request.

Tri-Council Racing

January 19 SL M/W Pico - February 9 M/W Burke Mtn GS - Feb 26 SG Mt Mansfield

Tri-Council races will include 1 SL 1 GS, and 1 SG per gender, providing an opportunity for all councils to compete together, allowing for U14 head-to-head competition within the state. The field size maximum is

150.

Registration Process: Tri-Council open races will allow the second year U14's a 24 - hour window to register before opening up to all U14's. It was felt it is important to provide a chance for second years to have access to an open year-end event where all the councils can compete together. Participants must have competed in at least 1 VARA council series race to be eligible to register for the Tri-Council event.

- The Jan 19 events will open registration on January 5 at 5:30 pm for YOB 2010. 24 hours later on January 6 at 5:30 pm the event will open for first-year U14s.
- The February 9 events will open registration for the 2010 Year of Birth on January 26 at 5:30 pm. 24 hours later on January 27 at 5:30 pm the event will open for first-year U14s.
- The February 26 event will open February 12 for YOB 2010, and 24 hours later, on February 13 at 5:30 pm the event will open for first-year U14s.
- The race fee is a maximum of **\$65** per event.
- Seeding – Random draw first run. The second run is Flip Field. SG is random, with the same order for training and race runs.
- Medals will be given for the top 10 per gender.

US Ski and Snowboard Events

EASTERN U14 CHAMPIONSHIPS **Sugarbush, VT MARCH 16-19, 2024** **VARA Quota - 29 Men and 28 Women**

From the USSS Eastern Region Handbook can be found on the Eastern Region website: [Eastern Site](#)
Please refer to the Eastern Handbook for more information.

Details:

This non-scored event will consist of a GS, SL, SG, and SkillsQuest.

Divisional Quotas and Entries:

Divisional Quotas will be determined by the Eastern Children's Committee by Dec. 1 and published on the Eastern Website. Quotas represent one divisional team to the U14 Eastern Championships.

Up to 5 spots per gender can be reserved by the Eastern Region Youth Coach and Development Director for a development quota. These spots are for unique situations (i.e. injury); the intent is to capture the top-performing athletes in the region. The discretionary selections will be seeded in a block after the 1st seed. These athletes would be eligible for selection to Can-Ams, providing event requirements are met. These selections will be announced before the first Team Captains Meeting. The development quota will be in their own seed after the first seed.

Seeding at Easterns:

- The seeding at Easterns is RANDOM Draw for first run and FLIP FIELD for the second run of race one, then "butterfly 1" and "butterfly 2" for the subsequent tech events in the series.
- The SG at easterns is random seed regardless of its order in the series. The tech events will follow the random, flip, butterfly 1 and butterfly 2.

**** It is recommended by the VARA CDC that the councils start order for the season be organized by random draw for Run 1 and then full flip of the field for Run 2. No "butterfly" seeding for the council's series.**

The Vermont U14 Championship Team will be determined as follows: (This quota of 57 includes council automatics) Selection to the U14 Eastern Championships is determined by scoring the **best single result from the runs and combined places** of the VT State Championship events.

- Ties: are broken externally by taking the next best results/run for ranking and selection of the team.
- Automatics: Each Council will have 2 Automatics (1G/1B) to U14 Eastern Championships.
- Automatic seeding: Council automatics will receive seeding in at least the second seed for U14 Junior Eastern Championships.
- Race Requirements: To attend the Eastern U14 Junior Championships, athletes are required to compete in the majority (> than ½) of races at VARA U14 States unless injured.

U14 US Ski and Snowboard Finals

March 22-24, 2024 - Catamount, Ma

The U14 Eastern Finals is an Open event for all eligible U14 athletes who are not competing in the U14 Eastern Championships. A U14 athlete may not compete in both the U14 Eastern Championships and the U14 Eastern Finals. For more information, see the US Ski and Snowboard Eastern Handbook [Eastern Site](#)

U14 Can Am's

Sugarloaf - March 28 - 31, 2024 (Unofficial)

U14 Can-Ams

Thirty Eastern athletes per gender will qualify to represent the Eastern Region at the U14 Can-Am Races.
Selections:

30 Eastern athletes per gender will qualify to the Can-Am from U14 Eastern Championships

- Winners of individual events contested at the U14 Eastern Championships (SG, GS, SL) or whatever events are able to be contested, followed by rankings based on each athlete's best 2 single runs and/or overall results from the series. First place(s) will receive 1 point; second place(s) will receive 2 points, etc. The results of out-of-region athletes who are given entrance to the U14 Championships under the discretionary quota of the Eastern office are purged. Ties will be decided by the next best place (third result/place). Athletes must choose U16 Nationals or U14 Can-Am and must notify the Regional Director within 48 hours of completion of U14 Eastern Championships.

Seeding

Seeding at the Can-Am will be done separately for each event, and will be based on the same place points system from the U14 Eastern Championships used to qualify for the Can-Am. This means that the seeds will likely vary for each discipline.

Scoring and other Special Can-Am Rules

Scoring information and other special rules specific to the Can-Am (such as course setting regulations) can be found on the [Governance page of the Eastern Region website](#).

Included in USSS Eastern Events are a number of U14 development projects. Please refer to the USS Eastern Handbook. (Linked above)

****There is a \$2 VARA Head Tax per racer per race for non score u14 races except for council races.**