



VARA Guidelines and Race Series Events for U16 and Older

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, USS, and host site/venue guidance and code of conduct.

USS code of conduct. [Link](#)

USS Parent Code of Conduct [Link](#)

USS Safesport Resources - [Link](#)

Eastern Region Handbook - [Link](#)

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

The VARA Development Committee

The VARA Development Committee shall oversee development and competition programs for athletes in the Senior (SR), U21, U18, and U16 age groups. Responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to:

- * Monitor national and regional athlete development initiatives and make recommendations to the VARA Board of Directors of ways in which VARA can enhance athlete development at U16 and above.
- * Report to the VARA BOD where national and regional development initiatives may vary from the goals, vision, and mission of VARA and make recommendations to the VARA BOD for policies and responses that are deemed to be in the best interest of VARA athlete development.
- * Review, revise, and develop rules, qualifications, policies and procedures for racing at the U16 level and above, which are consistent with the overall development plan.
- * Develop rules, qualifying criteria, and format for VT State Championships at the U16 level.
- * Provide a forum for investigation and resolution of any other issues that may arise at the U16 level and above.

The VARA Development Committee oversees the rules and policies of U16, U18/U21/SR racing in VT. This group works with the VARA Executive Director to create schedules, guidelines, qualifications, and state championship guidelines for the U16 and above age groups. Vara Development Committee members include Tim Curran (Chair), Thomas Erhard, Bobby Farrell, Topher Harlow, Matt McKenna, and Ben Blakley. There are two FIS advisors, Jill Barile, and Matt Prendergast

U16 - AGES 14-15

The U16 age level features scored competition for racers aged 14-15 with racing opportunities in the VARA Open Series, SYNC Vermont Cup Series, George Tormey Series, and U16 Vermont State Championships. All races are scored events. The races are open to all U16/U18/U21/SR VARA members, except for U16 State Championships, which will only be for U16 VARA members.

OVERVIEW of U16 RACING IN VT

U16's race in the SYNC Vermont Cup (SYNC VT CUP) Series begins in late December or early January, along with Sr/U18's. Using the final VT CUP standings, VARA will award:

- Awards will be given to the top 3 males and females at each series event. If U16's are not in the top 3, they will be recognized.
- The SYNC VT Cup Series standings will be used to determine automatics for the USS U16 Eastern Championships (2G and 2B). (*rules and criteria below*) In late February, U16's will contest U16 Vermont State Championships, which every VARA member U16 will have the option to attend. Athletes will have the opportunity to qualify for USS U16 Eastern Championships and USS U16 Eastern Finals based on results at the U16 VT State Championships. All VARA U16 athletes who do not qualify for USS U16 Eastern Regional events (Championships or Finals) will have the opportunity to race in the George Tormey Series and Open VARA Spring races until the end of the season.

Open Races - All Open Events in Dec and January will be seeded by points and flip 30, then bibbo for run 2.

SYNC VT Cup Series Events This series comprises U16s but attracts college athletes and U18 and older. Seeding for this series is [random order](#) for 1st run and flip field for 2nd run. Overall, Series standings will be kept, and the top 3 will be announced at the end of the series.

George Tormey Series Races will start Mid-February and run into March. Overall event winners will be determined at the end of the series. This series will be seeded in [random order](#) for 1st run and flip field for 2nd run.

VARA U16 General Rules

1. VARA is the governing body of U16 racing in Vermont. US Ski and Snowboard is the National Governing Body for Ski racing in the USA.
2. The VARA Development Committee will resolve issues involving U16 VARA Championship events along with the VARA Executive Director.
3. To compete in VARA races, two membership requirements must be met:
 - a. You must have a current US Ski and Snowboard Competitors Membership
 - b. To be considered in any VARA qualifying or selection process, you must be a **current member of VARA**. Qualifying points will not be retroactive for late VARA renewals. (ie if you race in a VT CUP race as a non-member, you will not receive VT CUP overall points until you become a member.
4. Coaches **must** be VARA and US SKI AND SNOWBOARD members to obtain race site hill privileges, course setting, and race official assignments.
5. **Sanctions:** All VARA U16 races and VT State Championships must be US SKI AND SNOWBOARD-sanctioned events. Sanctioned races must be held on homologated trails.
6. **Coaching Tickets:** If races are happening simultaneously on the same day, host sites must account for the need for more coach tickets. General recommendation but NOT less than the following: 4 kids = 2 coaches, > 8 Kids = 3, >12 Kids = 4, >16 Kids = 5, >20 kids
7. **Field Size:** Scored racing field sizes will be determined by the race site organizers and may be limited. It is recommended that mixed-gender scored racing will have no less than 175. Check the appropriate race announcement sheet for details under the "racing" tab "calendar" link on www.vara.org
8. All awards will be presented in the finish area unless otherwise designated, a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum 30 minutes after the final racer completes the course.

Out of State Competitors

For all VARA-scored races, current VARA Members have priority over out-of-state entries. Example: if hosting a Vermont Cup (VC) and the race is filling up before the deadline, the order of priority is as follows: VT racers then Out of state. Race sites have the option to expand the field.

All SYNC VC, GTS, state champs, open events, and non-scored event results should be posted to VARA please review the ASR handbook. [\(LINK\)](#)

State Quotas and Gender Splits

Vermont quotas for U16 (i.e., U16 Eastern Regional Championships, U16 Eastern Finals) are determined by USS Eastern and will be gender specific.

Parent/Spectator Clause

Any issues parents or spectators may have involving rules set by VARA, The Race Organizing Committee, Alpine Officials, the Jury, the race site, or US SKI AND SNOWBOARD while at a sanctioned event, VARA States or Shootout must be handled by the appropriate coach before being brought to the Race Organizer, Alpine Officials/Jury, registration volunteers or VARA. The athlete's coach must represent the competitor regarding the issue, not his/her parent.

Petitioning Athletes Skiing DOWN

Except for approved petitioning athletes, all racers will follow established US Ski & Snowboard age classes. 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 Chairperson and VARA Executive Director on or before December 15 for a CDC vote.

There are three guidelines for a ski-down athlete: Physical Maturation, Mental Maturity, and Physical Condition. For U16, the VARA CDC will review the request and respond to the council chair no later than Dec. 23.

If the council or CDC approves an athlete, they will follow council and VARA rules for that age class. Petitioning Athlete (PA) may qualify for states in the age class in which they are competing. 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 postseason event.
3. PA will be seeded at states according to their council placement.
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 will compete in only one VT state championship series. The field size for states will not exceed 5 athletes to accommodate council PA requests.
7. PA will not displace a U14 to VARA States.
8. PA "ski up" is NOT eligible for U14 Eastern Championships.

An athlete who is skiing down must register for VARA and USS as their proper age class. For example, a U14 skiing down as a U12 would still register for VARA and USS as a U14.

Athlete Discretionary Spots for U16's

1. It is recommended that any discretionary requests be made to the US Ski and Snowboard Eastern Regional Director.

VARA Head Tax (Race Organizers)

U16's - \$2/race start /racer. All U16 scored races, states, and open events are subject to Racer Admin Fee/Head Tax, which will be paid automatically to VARA via ASR at the end of the event.

TWIN STATE RALLY SERIES

Twin State Series is a scored series for U16s from VARA and NH

Jan 16 SL at Proctor

Jan 30th GS Stratton and Jan 31st SG at Stratton.

This series is only for U16s. The purpose is to provide head-to-head competition for Vara and NH athletes before U16 Easterns and Nationals. Registration is open for U16s from each state.

Each race site will reserve 25 spots for Men and Women for the other state in case fields fill before the deadline. The VT Twin State Rally races will be seeded by points.

VARA U16 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Field Size: All VARA Member U16 athletes are invited to participate in the U16 Vermont State Championships. The selection of the US Ski and Snowboard U16 Regional Championships and US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U16 Finals rosters will be determined from the VARA U16 State Championships. (See below)

[VARA Quota](#) (Quota Calc Link): U16 Easterns-69 (35W/34M) U16 Eastern Finals: 22

1. **Format:** The Vermont U16 State Championships will consist of one Slalom race, and one GS race, and 1 SG race, weather permitting. Events will be split by gender (except for the SG) and held at separate race venues and sites if necessary.

The State SG will be mixed gender, and if two races are run, the 1st SG will count as the state event and the second SG an open. Provided a two-day event can be scheduled. If a state event cannot run on the first day, the second day will become the State SG.

VT U16 State Championships will be a SCORED event. ***VARA will make every effort to schedule events on weekend days. Weekdays will be an option for some sites, and events may be scheduled for weekdays.***

2. **Start order/Seeding:** Seeding will be by current US SKI AND SNOWBOARD points. The top 15 will be a random draw; the second run will be flip 30.

3. It is recommended that first-run DNF's and DSQ's be allowed a second run. The final decision to allow DNF's and DSQ's a second run will be determined by the Jury and race organizer per US SKI AND SNOWBOARD rules.

4. **Scoring:** The Double Board method, as outlined in the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD Comp Guide ([LINK](#)) will be used to select the Vermont team from the VARA U16 States to the Ronnie Berlack U16 Eastern Championship Grand Prix Series. VARA will use the most recent valid US SKI AND SNOWBOARD points list for the left side of the board, and the right side of the board will use State Championship discipline place point rankings.

****In order to be eligible to qualify on the state quota for US SKI AND SNOWBOARD Regional Championship events, VT athletes must have participated in at least 1 VARA State Championship event.***

The Vermont Team selected to go to the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD Regional Championship will be posted within 24/48 hours after the date of the final event of the state championships. The qualified athlete list will be posted on the VARA announcements at [Vara.org](#).

VARA Double Board Example: Selection proceeds from left to right on each row, starting with USSA Valid Points list and ending with VARA State Championship event place point. When a racer who has already been picked is encountered in a column, the column is skipped, and the selection continues with the next column in the same row. When the last column in a row is reached, selection continues with the first column in the next row.

Side 1:

Valid Points List

GS	SL
A	F
D	C
H	G
L	M

Side 2:

VARA State Champs Rankings

SL	GS	SG
A	C	B
E	B	G
I	C	J
N	O	P

Sample selection: 7 Person Team from VARA criteria for double board method: A, F, C, B, D, E, G

a. Ties will be broken by best place, then second, third, and so on. If there is still a tie, then the best single run will be used, and next and so on. The top-ranking athletes will be named to the Vermont US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U16 Championship Team with the next athletes in order qualifying to the U16 Finals.

b. If awarded an extra spot from US SKI AND SNOWBOARD, the spot will be given to the next in line from the states standings and will not be used for a discretionary pick. c.

Event Champions: Will be State Champions for that event.

d. **Overall champions:** Will be determined by New World Cup scoring for all events contested. Ties will be broken by best place point, then next best etc.

e. It is understood that VT will send its strongest team to the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U16 Championships.

5. It is recommended by VARA that a training run be included at the VT State SG. However, the host site and race jury/TD will make the ultimate decision based on weather and snow conditions.

6. **Rabbits:** No Rabbits allowed at U16 States, U16 racers only, there will be NO racing up allowed at the U16 states.

7. **Guests:** No U16 guests from other states will be allowed to race in a VT U16 Vermont State Championships. NTG/USST athletes from out of region will need to request to race to VARA. The Development Committee will make the final decision.

8. **Automatics:** VARA automatics to the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U16 Eastern Championships will be selected from

a. SYNC VT Cup Series scoring for U16's for the top 2 U16 male and the top 2 U16 female.

b. Any VARA Member Competitor selected to an international children's or National USSA project that conflicts with the state championships will be an automatic to the USSA U16 Eastern Championships as an eastern quota spot.

Discretionary picks to the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U16 Eastern Championships will be determined by the Eastern Region Office.

9. **Entry procedure:** Entries will be received per standard VARA entry, race list, or online entries, to be determined by the host site.

10. **Entry Fees:** VT U16 States will be \$65 per Slalom, \$70 per PSL, \$65 per GS and \$75 for SG. The fees will include the awards event for participants at the technical events, along with an event souvenir. Host Sites for VT State Championships must commit to making it a championship event. VT U16 States venue will not provide goodie bags they should provide one commemorative item for each participant. Additionally, the host site will provide a participant gathering before awards if scheduling permits.

11. **Course Setting:** The VARA Executive Director, VARA Development Committee Chair, and Chief of Race will choose course setters. The assigned TD will select referees. The States are a championship event, and courses will be set to challenge the participants.
12. **Forerunners:** The host site will select VT State U16 Championship forerunners.
13. **Awards:** The host ski club will provide awards/trophies for the top 3 Boys/Girls and medals for 4-10 boys and girls for each event. VARA will provide awards for the following:
 - a. Overall awards will be provided by VARA for the top three girls and boys. (See scoring). Event winners will receive a VARA sweatshirt.
 - b. Gold Medalists for the overall will be named to the VARA Team for the following season.
 - c. All awards will be presented in the finish area unless otherwise designated, a minimum of 5 minutes, maximum 30 minutes after the final racer completes the course.

NOTE: ALL VT CUP & GTS XML Race Files must be emailed to Admin Ski Racing alpineresults@adminsquiracing.com

Ronnie Berlack U16 Eastern Championship Grand Prix

(U16 Eastern Region Championships)

VT Quota - 69 (35W/34M)

Burke Mtn - March 11-15

USS EAST CALENDAR [LINK](#)

Qualification: The top athletes (gender split) from the VT U16 State Championships will be named to the VT state team for the Ronnie Berlack U16 Eastern Championship Grand Prix sponsored by Nordica. Top Ronnie Berlack U16 Eastern Championship Grand Prix finishers will represent the Eastern Region at the U16 National Project. See the Eastern Handbook for more Regional and National event information.

U16 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

April 1-6 - Vail

Selection and seeding procedures can be found in the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD [Eastern Handbook](#)

US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U16 EASTERN FINALS

March 17-20 - Gore Mtn

Vermont Quota: 22

Qualification: The VARA athletes from the VT U16 State Championships who do not qualify for the Ronnie Berlack U16 Eastern Championship Grand Prix sponsored by Nordica will be named (gender split) to the Vermont U16 Eastern Finals team. The Vermont Team will be seeded at the USS Eastern U16 Finals based on their ranking at the VT U16 State Championships. For more information on the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD Eastern U16 Finals, please refer to the [Eastern Handbook](#).

Whistler Cup

TBD USS International Event See USS East Handbook

U16 Regional Performance Series (RPS)

Schedule:

December 16-17 (Women) and 18-19 (Men) - Stratton - SL and GS, VT

January 20-21 - Proctor SL TR/R, NH - Men and Women
January 31- Feb 2 - Sugarloaf, ME, Men, Speed
February 5-7 TR, Race - 8/9 - Sugarloaf ME, Speed
February 13-14 - Sunapee NH - Women GS, Whiteface NY Men GS

Quotas: VARA 18M/18W

- Quotas are assigned to Divisions proportionally based on Ronnie Berlack GP quotas.
- Project size and selections vary project to project. See project announcements on [Eastern Region website](#) for details.
- Foreign athletes can be added via regional discretion.

Selections:

Selection methods vary for each project due to availability and quality of rankings. Please see "Selections" page of Eastern website for details on each project.

VARA Divisional Selections to RPS: 18M/18/W

YOB 10, 2008 M/W athletes and 8, 2009 M/W

- Use and U16 DB state championship ranking & Easterns U16 overall ranking scoring to select 2008's
- Use VARA States rankings and Easterns U14 overall ranking to select U14 to Easterns 2009s
- U14 NTSM will be in the States then Easterns order.

The January RPS will use the Dec. RPS list, moving down the lists to fill spots taken by NPS qualifiers. The remainder of the RPS selections are TBD. It is not decided what the selections from Eastern will be yet.

VARA SR/U21/U18/16 Race Series and Guidelines

VARA Open Races, SYNC VT Cup Series & George Tormey Series

For athletes in the following groups, complimentary entries are available to a maximum of 5 athletes.

- *Athletes with less than 55 points contact RA directly to enter race (skip the line, no online registration required). If more than 5 in this group, first-come first-entered.*
- *Athletes with 55.00 to 74.99 points register and pay in advance in accordance with ROC policies. If none under 55, promptly after the race the ROC will refund entries to the best 5 point holders to actually start the race. All Vermont Racers regardless of point profile are encouraged to race.*

VARA Entry Fees For Scored Racing:

- SL \$65 - PSL/70
- GS \$65
- SG \$75
- 2 Super G (\$95 is a suggestion)
- DH will be a daily rate - Site Specific

Awards: It is recommended that the host sites present awards within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the race.

VARA Open (VO)

The VARA Open Series consists of races scheduled throughout the state throughout the season and do not include standings.

1. Out-of-state entry procedures and rulings can be referred to under the entry procedure section.
2. This series is for building point profiles. This is not a qualifying series with no overall standings.
3. Open VARA-scored races will seeded by points and flip 30 for the 2nd run.

Scheduling

1. Weekday VARA races will be scheduled, but VARA will make every effort to schedule and reschedule events on weekends.
2. **VT Cup or GTS reschedules** must have a minimum of one week's notice. If, for some reason, there is a last-minute race added to the calendar or there is a reschedule that was originally a VT Cup or GTS made in less than a week, the rescheduled event must be a VARA open race.

SYNC Vermont Cup Series (VT CUP / VC)

1. The SYNC VT Cup Series may begin in Dec. and continues through early February. It is the determining series for the Overall U18 and under Vermont Cup Series Champion.
- *2. **SCORING:** The SYNC VT Cup Series is scored using the New World Cup point scoring system for the top 30 men/women in each race. If there are two races in one day at one site only the first race will count for scoring for the VC series, unless notified otherwise. Ties are broken by the next best etc., if still a tie, then time differential will be used.
 - a. U16 and U18 plus will be scored together for the overall standings in the SYNC SYNC VT Cup Series. (*Note: please see also U16 VARA Racing Rules)

Out-of-state competitors who are non-VARA members will receive a trophy for earned results, if applicable. An out-of-state competitor and the non-VARA member will not be included in the scoring and selections for FIS series events on VARA quota. Foreign VARA member athletes and non-members will not be included in any FIS quota selections. U16's will be pulled from selection to any FIS events for the VT quota lists. U16's are ineligible for FIS racing.

3. **SELECTION:** **The VT Cup standings will be used for selection for U18 and older for the Vermont Quota to Open Fis and Regional Development/NJR Series if requested by USS.**

** For U16's, the SYNC VT Cup Series will be used to determine the automatics to the **Ronnie Berlack U16 Eastern Championship Grand Prix**, taking the top 2 (1st & 2nd place) male and top 2 female U16 competitors in the standings.

4. **AWARDS:** Host race sites will award trophies and prizes, 1st through 3rd places men/women. If no U16s are in the top 3, sites will award the top 3 U16s. (1.22)
Unless otherwise designated, all awards will be presented in the finish area, a minimum of 5 minutes a maximum 30 minutes after the final racer completes the course.
5. **OVERALL:** Top 3 overall winners will be awarded, and if no U16s are in the top 3, they will be recognized. U16 overall winners of the SYNC VT Cup Series will receive awards supplied by VARA. Scored SYNC VT Cup Series winners must be VARA members. Ties are broken by next best etc.
6. The 1st place overall series winner will be named to the VARA Team. The overall winners must be VARA members.
7. **The out-of-state entry** criteria apply to this series. Entry priority before race deadline is reserved for VARA members. Out-of-state athletes will be pulled first if the race fills up before the deadline.
8. **The VT CUP field size** is limited and will be determined by host sites, but will be posted as no smaller than 150 mixed gender and the suggested limit be set at 175.
9. **Seeding:** **This series is seeded by [TRS, random order](#) for 1St run, and flip field for 2nd run. ** (see TRS explanation below.)

NOTE: ALL VT CUP & GTS Race Files must be emailed to Admin Ski Racing at alpineresults@adminsquiracing.com

The George Tormey Series (GTS)

1. The VARA George Tormey Series consists of a race series following the completion of the SYNC VT Cup Series.
2. The George Tormey Series is a short, intense set of races designed to bring together the top U16-SR racers in Vermont to build a point profile.
3. **Scoring:** for the VARA George Tormey Series will be done using the Old World Cup Point System for the top 15 SR-U16 men/women. The participant must have raced in a minimum of two GTS events to be scored in the overall. Out-of-state competitors and non-VARA members will receive a trophy for earned results but are not counted in the standings. Foreign Athletes who are VARA members will be included in the WC Scoring method for the overall. Non Vara members will be pulled from overall standings. Ties are broken by best single place and then next best etc., if still a tie, then time differential will be used.
4. **Awards:** Trophies and prizes will be awarded by the host race site, Sr-U16 1st through 3rd places, men/women, regardless of age class. All awards will be presented in the finish area unless otherwise designated, a minimum of 5 minutes, maximum 30 minutes after the final racer completes the course
5. **Overall:** Top 3 SR-U16 Overall VARA member winners of the GTS series will receive awards supplied by VARA and recognition as George Tormey Spring Series Winners.
6. The 1st Place overall Sr-U16 GTS series winner M/W will be named to the VARA team. The overall winner must be a VARA member.
7. The GTS Field size is limited and determined by the host site, but it is recommended no smaller than 150 mixed genders, and the suggested limit be set at 175.
8. **Seeding:** **This series is seeded by TRS, random order for 1st run, and flip field for 2nd run. (see TRS explanation below.)

Foreign Athlete Status for SR, U21 & U18 Age Groups

1. Any foreign athlete participating in a Vermont program MUST be a current member of VARA and MUST meet all licensing requirements for US SKI AND SNOWBOARD.
2. Foreign athletes (x US Ski and Snowboard #'s) will not be included in State quotas for FIS events.
3. Foreign athletes may enter FIS events per FIS rules concerning foreign entries. Consult the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD Competition Guide for details.
4. Foreign athletes will be recognized and receive any appropriate awards for their results in any VARA Events.

Foreign Athlete Status for U16:

Foreign Athlete U16's must compete with a US SKI AND SNOWBOARD and VARA Membership and will be considered for VT and US SKI AND SNOWBOARD quotas unless otherwise stated by US SKI AND SNOWBOARD.

US SKI AND SNOWBOARD EVENTS/FIS EVENTS

USS EAST CALENDAR [LINK](#)

Eastern Regional Events for U18 and Older

Information regarding Eastern Regional Championship Series may be referred to in the US SKI AND SNOWBOARD [Alpine Competition Guide](#), under the Eastern Division Section. All VT club and academy FIS racers Must be members of VARA.

US SKI AND SNOWBOARD U18+ Eastern events include FIS events-Eastern Cup (EC), Devo FIS, FIS Open and USS Eastern Finals (non FIS)

Eastern U18 US Ski and Snowboard Finals

Attitash NH

March 22-25

Divisional Quotas (Combined both genders - U18, U21, SRs eligible)

Vermont quota 12 (6M, 6W)

1. The Eastern US Ski and Snowboard Finals VARA quota will be filled by using coach nominations for interested and confirmed athletes.
2. Coaches must send an athlete list with Name, Club, YOB, and US Ski and Snowboard # to the VARA office 1 week in advance of the event.
4. If selections are necessary SYNC VT CUP standings will be used to choose athletes, if this method is not applicable then an NTSM will be used.

**** Eastern High School Championship Quota -** The top 5 girls and the top 5 boys from the Eastern High School Championships will be automatics to the Eastern US SKI AND SNOWBOARD Finals event.

VARA requires a two-day minimum coach confirmation from any VT quota list for US SKI AND SNOWBOARD to regional events. The athlete will be considered non-eligible for that event and the next athlete will be chosen and notified. VARA WILL NOT CALL FOR CONFIRMATION IT IS THE ATHLETE'S COACH'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTACT VARA.

For USS U18 Nationals Information, see the USS [Eastern Regional Handbook](#).

FIS

U18 and Older eligible athletes with a valid VARA, USSS Competitor, and FIS Membership
[FIS Website](#)

EASTERN CUP: This is a FIS series- the US Ski and Snowboard Eastern Region determines quotas.

Information regarding EC Selections may be found in the [Eastern Regional Handbook/Site](#). There is NO state/divisional quota for these events. All VT club and academy FIS competitors must be members of VARA.

Open FIS has a quota of 3 state/divisional spots per gender.

DEVO/NJR FIS events have a quota of 2 per gender FIS divisional quotas are **TBD**

*All VT program athletes racing FIS must be VARA members

EASTERN REGIONAL CALENDAR CAN BE FOUND ON THE EASTERN REGION SITE -
[LINK](#) Please check this link for any USSS Regional event information, quotas, etc.

**** Random Seeding (TRS)**

Seeding at all VARA SYNC VC and GTS races will be random for the 2023/24 season. This seeding method was passed through a proposal this fall at the National Alpine Sport Committee. While athletes will be seeded randomly, VARA SYNC VC and GTS races will be scored for USSS points. The first run will be randomly drawn; all age categories of athletes will be mixed together. The second run will be a flip (reverse) of the first run start order. First-run results will have no bearing on second-run start position, including if the skier has a DNF or DSQ. In the case of two or more races in a series, the third run (start of the second race) will be a butterfly of the first run

(split the field in half and run the last half first followed by the second half), and fourth run will be a reverse of the third run. A fifth run or third race will be a completely new random draw.

The VARA SYNC VC and GTS races generally attract the U16 age category. At the U16 age, athletes mature and acquire skills at widely differing rates. Eliminating rankings and providing equal opportunity to all is the priority for this age. Alpine nations such as Austria, France, and Norway, among others, use random seeding in these ages. A well-planned head-to-head system, with randomized seeding, will provide benefits exceeding the current USSS system.

The main reasons to use the random seeding method are to Enhance Development and Encourage Participation.

1. Enhances Development
 - a. At an age where development can be rapid, randomized start positions provide equal opportunity for all racers rather than ranking athletes based on past performance.
 - b. The fastest athletes will be required to perform in deteriorating conditions (from any start position), better preparing them for FIS racing and learning to advance from high start positions.
 - c. A greater number of racers will be competitive.
 - d. Reducing pressure to score points will allow more time for training and improving skills.
2. Encourages Participation
 - a. Random start positions will provide opportunity to all racers and keep times closer.
 - b. Racers and other spectators will remain engaged after the first 30 competitors have finished.
 - c. Promotes a competitive mentality as athletes recognize their start number is not fixed based on previous results.

VARA and its clubs continue to lead the rest of the nation by highlighting skill development in its race calendaring, event siting, and project planning. This focus has helped VARA athletes to the top level in the country by broadening their skill level. The randomized seeding method will further enhance this skill development focus. Athletes will be better prepared to perform at later start numbers. Athletes will continue to focus on their skill development after the U14 years. This method supports long term athlete development (LTAD)

As athletes develop a [growth mindset](#) (with coach support) by competing at various start positions throughout the season, they will become better prepared for the higher level of competition they will experience when they move up to the FIS level.

VARA is proud to be at the forefront of development in the country. While TR seeding method will be questioned by some it will strengthen the abilities of our athletes over the long term.

The Eastern Regional U16 Championship will be seeded by USSS points with special seeding if needed. As explained in the Eastern Handbook.

U16 National Championships seeding will have three seeds of 15 with each region providing 5 athletes per seed.

Golden Rule athletes will be inserted at 16 after the random seeding has been done for all runs.