

# **Rochester Nordic Ski Team**

## **Ski Meet Information**

Ski meets are a great opportunity to

- challenge yourself to ski harder than you normally would (and without stopping!)
- enjoy the camaraderie of other high school nordic ski enthusiasts
- ski on different trail systems

High school meets in Minnesota utilize both skating and classical techniques. Races include distance events (about 5K), sprint events (1 - 2 K), relays, and the pursuit (ski a race in one technique followed by another race in the other technique).

Since our club team only practices the skate technique, all of our races will be in the skate technique. We will participate in distance races of approximately 5K in length. Skiers will typically take between 15 and 40 minutes to complete the race. We may also schedule a sprint relays meet which is a lot of fun.

### **Race Format**

To reduce congestion on the ski trails, an interval start is often used in high school ski meets. Two to four skiers will start every 15 - 30 seconds. The start order is typically:

Varsity Boys  
Varsity Girls  
Junior Varsity Boys  
Junior Varsity Girls

The varsity girls will sometimes start before the varsity boys. The varsity team consists of 7 - 10 individuals with the remaining skiers on the junior varsity team. The coaches will split the skiers attending the meet into varsity and junior varsity squads and determine a starting order within these groups. Generally the faster skiers start first to reduce the amount of passing on the ski trails. Creating the start lists is not an exact science. Everyone skis the same race so please don't be too concerned about the start order or whether you're on varsity or junior varsity.

Some races may utilize the mass start where a large number of racers begin at the same time. An advantage of the mass start is that skiers know their position during the race – first person across the finish line is the winner. A disadvantage is that the ski trail is more congested making passing more difficult.

### **Schedule for Away Ski Meets**

Bus Load: 15 minutes before departure  
Bus Departure: between 1:00 and 1:30 PM  
Meet Start: around 3:30 PM  
Bus Return: arrive back in Rochester between 6:00 and 6:30 PM

Specific details for a ski meet will be provided about a week before the meet.

## **Bus Departure Locations**

### **Ski Meets at Winona**

Bus departs from the northeast corner of the parking lot just south of the Rochester Regional Stadium Bubble (north of the intersection of Highway 14 and East Circle Drive).

### **Ski Meets at Northfield and Red Wing**

Bus departs from the Walmart North parking lot near the Gander Mountain store (Highway 52 and 55th Street Northwest)

## **School Absence**

Skiers participating in the ski meet will miss an afternoon of classes. It is the student's responsibility to inform their school administration that they will be leaving early to participate in the cross country ski meet. The student must follow the absence notification policy at their particular school.

## **What Happens at the Meet?**

Skiers are issued numbered bibs to wear during the race. These bibs are used to record start and finish times for the skiers. The bibs will be distributed to the skiers on the bus while driving to the meet. The bibs should be worn outside the race clothing. After the meet, the bibs can be placed in a container that will be near the finish line. Bibs will also be collected on the bus. Please do not drop the bibs onto the bus' dirty floor. The white bibs pick up stains very easily.

Changing facilities (other than the bus) are often not available, so it's best to be dressed with your race clothes when you get on the bus. There are usually bathroom facilities at the meet though they may just be outdoor porta-potties.

Skiers should warm up on the course before the race. You don't have to do the whole course, but it's helpful to ski a part of the course. Ask skiers who've previously skied at the meet about the course and recommended places to do a warm-up ski.

Announcements will be made as to when the various squads (varsity/junior varsity, boys/girls) should line up. Typically each team at the meet will form a line at the start. When your squad is called to the start line, you should line up with the other Rochester skiers in increasing numerical bib number order.

Often racers are instructed that only double poling is allowed for the first 20 – 40 meters of the race. If skating was allowed right away, racers may accidentally interfere with each other during the initial frenzy of the start. This can lead to skiers falling down and/or poles breaking.

While waiting for your squad to start racing, stay warm by skiing around the start area and wearing sufficient warm clothing. The buses might also be available to warm up in. Staying warm is especially important if you're not going to start for 15 minutes or so (as is typical for the junior varsity girls).

After the race you'll be pretty warm but don't wait too long to put on additional clothing so you don't get cold. If your top layers are wet, you should change into dry clothing. After you've recovered, make sure to get out on the course and cheer on your teammates!

Race results will be posted in the Meet Results section of the RNST web site.

## Items to Bring

Skis and poles - put your name on the skis and poles

Ski boots

Race clothing (tighter fitting jacket and pants are more comfortable while racing)

Additional warm clothing to wear while warming up and standing around before and after the race

Dry clothes to change into after the race (an extra shirt is probably most useful)

Snacks and drink (sport drinks, energy bars)

## Skis and Poles

It is very helpful to have a ski bag for your skis and poles. It will be a lot easier to keep track of your skis and poles. There is a much less chance of damaging your skis and poles if they are in a bag. If you don't have a ski bag, please tie your skis and poles together. Remember to put your names on the skis and poles since many of the skis and poles are the same or very similar.

It would be a good idea to apply a new coat of wax on your skis for the race. Either a paste wax or hydrocarbon wax will work fine.

## Race Clothing

Skiers don't have to wear as much clothing while racing. You may be cold initially but you will usually warm up quickly. One layer under a jacket plus one bottom layer will often be fine. As temps get colder, two top layers plus a jacket and possibly another bottom layer will be necessary.

It's usually more comfortable to race with a tighter fitting jacket and pants. For example, warm running tights will probably be more comfortable than loose nylon wind pants. Many of the skiers from the other teams at the meets will be wearing their high school nordic ski racing outfits. Our club does not have any ski racing outfits, but wearing the RNST jacket at the meets will show our team spirit. It's not necessary for you to wear any particular RNST clothing item during the ski race.

Hands and toes often are the first to get cold. Skiers will vary on whether they'll need gloves, split-finger gloves, or mittens to stay warm while racing. A good pair of socks is essential to having warm feet. Be careful if you are using two pairs of socks. If your foot is too tight in the ski boot, your feet may get colder due to reduced circulation. Using a balaclava and applying dermatone or Vaseline to your face is very helpful in colder temperatures.

Every person handles the cold differently. The key is to know what your body needs to stay warm and be prepared with the proper clothing.

## Additional Warm Clothing

Make sure you bring additional outer top and bottom clothing layers. During the race you'll warm up quite nicely, but before and after you'll get cold quickly when you're standing around. Wear enough clothing to stay warm while you are warming up before the race or waiting to start the race. This is especially important if you're in a group that starts later. If you are waiting for your group to line up at the start, you can usually ski around near the race start to stay warm. You can wear a coat while waiting in the start line and toss the coat aside just before you leave.

The club will provide hand and toe warmers if the temperatures are cold enough. Warm buses will be available during most of the meet, though often the bus drivers will leave for a short time (coffee break) after the ski team is dropped off.

## **Food and Drink**

Make sure you bring some food and drink for before and after the race. Having sufficient liquids before the race is important. A small snack before the race is helpful, especially if you had an early lunch. No stops will be made on the way home so bring food if you want to eat anything after the race.

## **Passing While Racing**

It's inevitable during the race that skiers will be passing other skiers. If you would like to pass a skier, you should warn the skier by saying "passing on the left" and then execute the pass quickly with a burst of speed when they move to the right. If you are being passed, you don't have to stop but you should move over to the right. It helps if you become narrow (skis not as wide apart) for a short period of time.

Take advantage of wider areas in the course to pass. If you're approaching narrow sections of the course, pass before you reach that section. If you want to pass on a narrow section of trail, wait until a flat or downhill section is reached so that you can double pole past a skier. When passing a skier on an uphill, it's not appropriate to expect that person to stop and step aside for you. If there is not enough room to pass the person, you'll have to wait until the top of the hill and then quickly double-pole past the skier.