

Welcome to the Brighton Ski Team!

The **Brighton Ski Team (“BST”)** is a **non-profit organization** dedicated to providing an **opportunity for young skiers to develop competitive skills** and set and work to achieve short and long-term athletic and competitive goals **while having fun and developing positive attitudes** towards competition and the necessary work that goes into **becoming a serious athlete and competitor**.

The team is run by our **Program Director**, Drew Southworth, our **Development Director**, Spencer Dirats, a **Board** made up of parent volunteers, and a team of **Coaches** and **Peer coaches**. Though we train at **Brighton Resort** and have an incredible working relationship with them, the BST is not formally affiliated with the resort.

The BST supports **long-term athlete development** in an environment that cultivates the skills athletes need to be **healthy and fierce competitors** - including **technical, tactical, physical, mental, and social-emotional skill development**. We are proud to offer a **warm and supportive team culture** that fosters athlete **confidence, joy, and a lifelong love of skiing**. Our goal at BST is to **cultivate strong skiers who love the sport** and have excellent all-around skiing skills, honed by race training. We believe there is no better foundation for skiing than ski racing. **Participation in ski training and racing helps athletes develop their technique, comfort level, and confidence on the snow in a safe, friendly, and competitive environment... and it’s a lot of fun!**

Preparing for the Season

We offer pre-season dryland training sessions in the fall, which provide a chance for athletes to spend time with coaches doing ski-focused training exercises that will help prepare them for their time on the snow. It is highly recommended that all athletes attend these dryland training sessions. See the Team Updates page of our [website](#) for more info.

We will host **two (2) mandatory parent info-sessions** in the fall - one during the dryland training period and one right before we get on-snow for the first time. Additional information about these sessions will be provided separately.

Ski Passes

BST athletes will need a [season pass to Brighton Resort](#) (not included in BST team fees).

Athletes who will attend training at [Utah Olympic Park](#) (“UOP”) will need a season pass specific to UOP. These will be available for purchase later in the fall, and we anticipate that they will cost around \$500.

Race-day lift tickets will also be required at resorts where races are held. These tickets are typically discounted and the cost for the tickets will be posted as part of each Race Announcement. **Families are responsible for paying for these race-day lift tickets**, and the method of payment and ticket pick-up may vary from resort to resort. Instructions will be included in informational race emails from coaches. If an athlete will use an alternate pass (like an Ikon pass or a Passport, both described below), it is important to let coaches know well in advance of the race.

Through *Ski Utah*, skiers in grades 4-6 may obtain a "[Passport](#)," which gives them 3 days at each of Utah's 15 ski resorts for only \$69! The price will increase 12/01/2024, so don't delay your purchase! **BST recommends the Passport for all athletes in those grades as the Passport will be less costly than purchasing individual race-day lift tickets!**

Our team also attends races at resorts that take Ikon passes, and we occasionally get the opportunity to train at Ikon pass resorts through collaboration with other race teams in the greater Salt Lake area. This upcoming season, we anticipate racing at the following resorts:

- **YSL:** Brighton, Utah Olympic Park, Snowbasin*
- **South Series:** Snowbird*, Utah Olympic Park, Sundance, Snowbasin*
- **Possible training destinations:** Snowbird*, Snowbasin*, Solitude*

**indicates resort on the Ikon pass*

US Ski & Snowboard Registration

All athletes who train and/or race for the BST **must** be current members of U.S. Ski and Snowboard ("USSS").

New members should register (and returning members may renew membership) here:

<https://my.us skiandsnowboard.org>

Please take care to register your athlete for the appropriate membership. Athletes who will *not* compete in any races (DEVO) may obtain an "Alpine General Non-competitor" membership. All athletes who will participate in races *must* have the age-appropriate **Competitor** membership.

Family members and friends who anticipate volunteering in a role that works directly with athletes are also required to hold an active USSS membership ("Alpine Volunteer"). They may also consider pursuing a coaching and/or alpine official certification to serve as a crucial volunteer at competitions, which would be greatly welcomed. Please contact Coach Drew or Coach Spencer for more info!

Please refer to the following USSS resources for more information about membership:

- [Alpine Memberships & Benefits](#)

- [Alpine Membership Requirements](#)
 - [Alpine Membership Descriptions](#)
 - [USSS Membership homepage](#)
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Gear / Ski Swaps

Your athlete will typically need the following ski / protective gear:

- **Skis:**
 - Devo & YSL athletes may opt for a **general race ski** (appropriate for both Giant Slalom (“GS”) & Slalom (“SL”))
 - South Series athletes may opt to have a pair of slalom skis and a pair of GS skis
 - **Please consult a coach or a ski technician with race expertise regarding the appropriate length of ski and binding settings for your athlete.**
- **Boots:** front-buckle (3 or 4 buckle), **fit should be assessed by a professional near the start of the on-snow season.** We highly recommend *against* used boots and also *against* “sizing-up” in an attempt to get multiple seasons of use out of a single pair of boots. There are many opportunities to reduce costs and acquire used gear for your growing athlete, but boots is not an area we recommend doing so.
- **Helmet:** properly-fitted helmet, **hard ear coverings required (no exceptions).** Method of attaching goggle strap to helmet (like a clip in the back) strongly recommended.
- **Goggles:** should fit to an athlete’s face such that wind/snow doesn’t impede their vision. Ideally, the goggles should fit to the helmet such that their forehead/temples don’t get cold. Goggle strap elastic should be in good condition so they don’t slip down.
- **Good-quality gloves/mittens:** warm and waterproof!
 - Consider acquiring an extra pair for your athlete to keep in their ski bag should their primary pair get wet during storm days. Many athletes also choose to use hand warmers if they run cold. Cold hands (or feet) can make or break a training day for a young athlete.
- **Poles:** all athletes are required to have at least one pair of appropriately-sized poles *with* baskets & a way to attach the pole to themselves (a wrist strap or glove clip like the Leki system). Some older athletes may choose to use separate poles for GS and SL events, and SL poles may have hand guards.
- **Slalom shin guards & chin guard:** older athletes who compete in slalom races for the South Series should have a pair of shin guards and a removable face guard for their helmet. Please note that these guards are only necessary *if* the athlete’s skiing ability brings them into close contact with slalom gates. Your athlete’s coach may help you determine what is needed for them. Forearm guards are not required.
- **BST team coat:** new and hand-me-down coats may be available for purchase **at the beginning of the season ONLY.** Once registered, watch email for details.
- **Snow pants:** warm and waterproof! Athletes who choose to wear a speed suit may want to consider “zip-off” pants for race days (so that snow pants can be removed without an athlete having to take their boots off at the start).

- Speed suit: (optional) some athletes will choose to wear a tight-fitting speed suit on race day. This is *not* required for any level of racing attended by BST athletes, but it is a very popular choice. These can be expensive, and we recommend purchasing these used through ski swaps, including potentially the BST ski swap. It is important that these fit appropriately and are not “sized up” in an attempt to get multiple years of use out of them for your growing athlete.
- Lunch box & water bottle: athletes are required to bring these to each full-day on-snow training session, and athletes will carry their own lunch & water up the chairlift to the team yurt. Many athletes find it helpful to have their lunch in a backpack that they can take up the lift.
- Sun protection: sunscreen and/or a face-covering is *highly* recommended

General guidance: make sure everything fits and keeps your athlete warm and dry. We really try to minimize the amount of time spent indoors warming up, so we recommend packing extra layers in an athlete’s ski bag.

If for *any reason at all* you are concerned about obtaining any of the gear items listed above, please reach out to us! There is lots of hand-me-down activity, borrowing, sharing, buying second-hand, etc. in our sport.

Ski Swaps

Before the ski season starts, there are several ski swaps held in Utah. Visit this link for details:
[2024 Utah Ski Swaps](#)

Online [Sideline Swap](#) is also a good resource for lightly used speed suits and other gear.

Programs Offered

BST athletes train and race within the following teams:

Devo Team: 5-7 years old (no competition/races)

Devo Team is our introduction-to-racing program meant for skiers with no prior competitive experience. This is *not* a learn-to-ski program, and previous skiing experience is required as these little racers need to be able to run the entire mountain. Devo athletes should already be able to ski unassisted from top-to-bottom on Green & Blue trails and should be close to progressing from wedge (“pizza”) turns to parallel (“french fry”) turns. We understand some of these athletes may still be small enough to need assistance loading/unloading the chairlift, so the coach:athlete ratio in this group is very small at 1:3.

The Devo team trains once a week on Saturdays at Brighton from early December to mid-March.

The Devo program will focus on the skills of skiing and technical fundamentals, including balance and stance through directed free skiing. These athletes will learn basic race fundamentals along with skiing safety and proper mountain etiquette. The program includes all-mountain skiing and an introduction to gate training and ski racing. While the Devo athletes *will not race* in Intermountain Division events, they can forerun our home race if we feel conditions are appropriate. They will also be permitted to participate in the ski school races (Feb and March), as well as at our Family Fun Ski Day races at the conclusion of the season. The Devo Team is for strong 5-7 year old skiers that need more support than ski school to advance their skills and get them ready for racing and more fun on the mountain.

Youth Ski League (“YSL”) Team: 6-11 years old

The YSL Team is open to 6-11 year old athletes in the U8-U12 competition age groups. These athletes will race exclusively in the YSL race series. Athletes on this team must be able to ski all on-piste terrain at Brighton Resort unassisted, load & unload a chairlift unassisted, and should be able to make parallel (“french fry”) turns most of the time.

The YSL program offers once or twice a week training: all YSL athletes train a full-day training (9a-3p) on Saturdays, and two-day YSL athletes also train on Tuesday evenings (5p-8p), both at Brighton Resort.

The YSL program will focus on the skills of skiing and ski racing, while continuing to build the technical fundamental skills needed to succeed. The coaches will use U.S. Ski & Snowboard’s SkillsQuest program to measure and encourage athletes to continue to work on balance, stance, edge pressure, etc.

Bridge Team: 8-11 years old

The Bridge Team applies to those U10 & U12 athletes who are racing in both the YSL and South Series race series. This option is only available to athletes with prior race experience. Athletes on this team must be able to ski all on-piste terrain at Brighton Resort unassisted and should be able to make parallel (“french fry”) turns all of the time on groomed terrain.

The Bridge Team has the option to train two or three times a week: full-day training (9a-3p) on Saturdays at Brighton and either one or two evening training sessions (6:30p-8p) on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Utah Olympic Park.

In terms of training goals, the Bridge Team is a blend of the YSL and South Series experiences and provides extensive opportunity to participate in races throughout the season.

South Series (SS) Team: 9-15 years old

The South Series Team is open to athletes who will race exclusively in the South Series race series. This option is only available to athletes with 2+ years of prior race experience. Athletes on this team must be able to ski all on and off-piste terrain at Brighton Resort unassisted and should be able to make strong parallel (“french fry”) turns all of the time on all open terrain, groomed or ungroomed.

The South Series Team trains between two and four days a week: full-day training (9a-3p) on Saturdays, and the options of a short day (9a-1p, may vary) on Sundays and/or one or two evening training session (6:30p-8p) on Tuesdays at the Utah Olympic Park.

U10s may only join the South Series teams by invitation from the Program Director. This team has the most training time to prepare for the longer, more technical courses of the South Series race calendar. Races are two-day events, and there are six qualifiers throughout the season for the Intermountain Division (“IMD”) Championships for the U10 and U12 age group. Racers who do not qualify for IMD Championships may participate in IMD Finals instead.

Leagues & Race Formats

BST athletes compete in two leagues within Intermountain Division:

Youth Ski League (YSL) racing is a gender-based, single-run race with awards given to the ten fastest racers in each age and gender group. These races are open to U8, U10, and U12. The course consists of a start and back and forth gates into a finish area. Races are either a GS, Slalom, or a Kombie course. YSL racing is a great introduction into ski racing in a supportive and fun environment.

South-Series (SS) racing is a gender-based, two-run race with a course reset between races. Races are either a GS or Slalom, and awards are given to the five fastest racers in each age and gender group. The courses for this division are more technical and include back-and-forth gates, flushes, delays, and hairpins. Based on cumulative results, racers have the opportunity to qualify for the IMD Championships. These races are open to U10, U12, and U14 athletes, based on coach assessment of readiness.

Your child’s coach will advise on which races and race levels are ideal for your athlete. During the season you will be asked to confirm if your athlete will be participating in certain races, and if they need a ski pass to the resort where the race will be held. Upon our confirmation, the coaches will register your athlete for the race and provide the link to any necessary waivers, etc. You can find the full race schedule on the [IMD website](#) (see “Racing” > “Schedule”) and also on the Team Updates page of the [BST website](#).

Pre-Race Communication & Details

Our Program Director Drew Southworth or Development Director Spencer Dirats will circulate a Race Announcement about a week prior to each race, with important information such as how to sign a waiver, when to arrive, when/how to obtain a lift ticket, what type of skis to bring, weather conditions, etc. They will register your athlete for the races, and race entry fees *are included* in your BST team fee. (Again - lift tickets are *not* included and families are responsible for those additional costs.)

Race Day Flow

On race day, athletes will meet their coach and receive a bib with a number on it, to be worn over their speed suit or ski jacket. The number designates their place in the start list. At a previously designated time before the race begins, coaches will lead athletes slowly down the course (called “slipping” or inspecting the course) to review the course and gates, pointing out any special features and helping the athletes generally get comfortable with the course before they race it.

When the race begins, there is typically an announcer who will call out which skiers are on course and in the gate, ready to start. BST coaches in the start area will also announce athletes over the radio so that spectators in the team tent know when they need to look up. The start list and current place in the start list can be accessed on the [live-timing](#) website, and/or the team will have a start list printed, so you'll know when your athlete is coming down the course. Parents can watch the race from designated areas along the side of the course, or from the finish area; cowbells are encouraged!

At most races, the BST will have a team tent with food and drinks for athletes and parent spectators. Board members facilitate the organization of this incredibly fun tailgating experience. In our humble opinion, the BST always has THE BEST race cheering section and tailgate scene of all of the ski teams! Stay tuned for details about helping out with our team tent. This will be a key opportunity for parents to volunteer, which is greatly appreciated.

Volunteer Expectations

The Brighton Ski Team is a predominantly volunteer-led and run team. A critical component of this are the parents that make this possible for our athletes, which, among other things, helps keep our tuition lower than other race programs. Helping out with the Team is a lot of fun and a great way to meet other BST families and is critical to our success as a Team.

Our biggest areas of need for volunteers include:

- The **YSL race we are hosting in January** (we will need a LOT of help for this and expect ALL families to lend a hand in one way or another)
- Tailgate events at all races (mostly consists of bringing food to share and help with setup/teardown)
- Shoveling out and maintaining the team Yurt each week
- Ski School races in February and March, which are a critical component of growing our Program
- Substitute assistant coaches in case of coach absences (please reach out to Drew or Spencer if you are interested in this)
- Serve as a Gate Judge at competition events (no training required)
- Serve as an Alpine Official at competition events (fall 2024 training required)

A \$250 Volunteer Deposit is added to each registration fee. This Deposit is refundable upon request *provided that* a family has contributed at least 6 in-person volunteer hours per individual athlete registration. If there is no refund requested by April 1st, 2025, the Deposit will be treated as a donation and will help further advance the Program.