

XC Skiing Options in the Upper Valley for Ages 14+

Background

Historically, Bill Koch League (BKL) programs, including the Ford Sayre BKL program, have focused on skiers through 8th grade / age 13. At age 14, skiers become "J2's" (the NENSA/USSA title for the 14 & 15 year old age group) – regardless of their school grade level.

When a skier enters 9th grade, s/he has access to two worlds of xc ski racing: high school-based racing, and NENSA/USSA racing.

This leaves a transition year for kids who are 14 years old in 8th grade. The Ford Sayre coaches and programs have always helped skiers navigate this year on an individual basis. NENSA's recent inclusion of J2 8th graders in the BKL Festival increases the options for the transition year between formal BKL skiing and high school skiing.

The Programs

FORD SAYRE BILL KOCH LEAGUE

- open to skiers with racing interest/intention through 8th grade (regardless of age)
- most BKL races now include categories for 14 year olds and/or allow them to race with J3's; a few races do not, and 14 year old skiers will race with other J2's – usually a distance of 5k
- BKL Festival includes a category for J2's who are in 8th grade

HANOVER/LEBANON HIGH SCHOOLS

- open to all HHS/LHS students (no try-outs) – middle school students may not join the HHS/LHS teams
- 35+ skiers of all ability, interest, and experience levels
- 5 days/week from mid/late November through mid-February
- HHS races are typically held weekday afternoons at high schools in NH
- coaches: Tom Masterson (HHS) / Les Lawrence (LHS)

FORD SAYRE JUNIOR TRAINING PROGRAM

- open to skiers age 14 and older who enjoy racing and take it seriously, and want to make an extra commitment to training and improving
- maximum enrollment of 15; *coaches' permission required to enroll*
- supplement to local high school-based teams: provides weekend (NENSA) race transportation and support, focused coaching, individualized training planning
- 2-3 days/week from early November through mid/late March (FS JTP skiers are excused from HHS/LHS practices on FS JTP practice days)
- skiers are training 6 days/week total between FS JTP program and their HS team
- winter race schedule includes NENSA Eastern Cup series, several other NENSA events, high school races, and championship events
- training events or races most weekends during winter
- summer training group meets 3 days/week from mid-June through August for rollerskiing, strength, and foot-based training sessions
- coaches: Scottie Eliassen, Jay Davis and Dennis Donahue
- program head: Greg DeFrancis

The Options

14 years old, in 9th grade

- HHS/LHS team; join Ford Sayre JTP as a supplement if desired

14 years old, in 8th grade

- Ford Sayre BKL – may include some NENSA J2 races if desired
- Ford Sayre JTP for skiers who are dedicated to training and racing and ready to commit the extra time and energy required – *coaches' permission required*
- the coaches will work with each skier to find the right balance!