

## U16 AVSC Alpine Info Sheet 2025-26

This year's U16 program will have a distinctly different feel thanks to a significant change in schedule. Athletes will now train in the morning on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, taking advantage of improved snow and visibility. In addition to morning training, we will be watering the surface on a more regular basis to increase density, enabling athletes to perform more runs with less surface degradation. Injected snow is an implicit teacher, demanding athletes ski with conviction on the outside leg. Not having enough access to injected snow is most often associated with athletes underperforming when they graduate to the next level of this sport. Therefore, anticipate more training on a watered surface throughout the season.

Dryland training becomes commensurately more demanding at this age, requiring athletes to commit to multiple sessions a week, occasionally twice a day, during the summer to ensure they have the necessary strength to succeed at this level and beyond.

Equipment is the conduit between an athlete's talent and the snow, more emphasis is placed on ensuring athletes have the right gear to succeed. Starting in May with ski testing and evolving into a more comprehensive assessment of an athlete's ski preparation can make a significant difference in an athlete's success at this level.

In collaboration with the coaching staff, individual competition calendars are developed for each athlete.

Mental training is part of a holistic athlete development program, nurturing resilience, persistence and consistency. Coaches embed these values into every on-snow session, workout, training day and video session. In addition, goal setting and regular check ins with athletes is encouraged through the season.

Last season we piloted a mentor day, pairing older athletes with younger skiers, it was well received by both sides, we will expand the program for the 2025-26 season. The benefits of mentorship are immense for both the mentor and mentee. Individual sports can feel lonely at times and having an older more experienced athlete show the path forward can have a dramatic effect on athlete retention in the sport. Thank you for your commitment to this important initiative.

<b>Team</b>	<b>U16 (Age 14, 15)</b>
<b>Start Date</b>	November 15, 2025
<b>End Date</b>	May 17, 2026
<b>Weekly Schedule</b>	Tuesday, Thursday & Friday (9:00-12:00), Saturday and

	Sunday (9:00-3:00)
<b>Training Volume (days)</b>	115
<b>Training Volume (hours)</b>	486
<b>Coached Freeskiing</b>	15%
<b>Coached Drills</b>	10%
<b>Coached Gate Training</b>	55%
<b>Alpine Disciplines Skied</b>	SL, Paneled SL, GS, SG
<b>SL Gate</b>	69" 27mm SL
<b>Competition</b>	20%
<b>Unstructured Freeskiing</b>	As much as they find enjoyable
<b>Dryland</b>	5x a week throughout the off-season

**Equipment:**

Team	General Fit	U16 (Age 14)	U16 (Age 15)
<b>Objective</b>	Brand and fit will vary depending on athlete size and strength but in general equipment should promote skill and confidence. Freeing athletes to find movement solutions unencumbered by equipment constraints.		
<b>Skis</b>	In general, I prefer a narrower waisted ski to help athletes feel the edge beneath the big toe. An overly wide ski increases torsion on the knee joint leveraging against the articulating ski and delaying the acquisition of carving mechanics. I would always err on the side of a narrower width ski to promote outside ski balance and edge control. I prefer sandwich construction over cap skis from all brands.	Best to connect with the coach and talk about options for SL and GS, we do have a fleet of speed skis that we can lend athletes for the season.	Athletes in second year U16 might be encouraged to use FIS homologated skis (longer and straighter) to prepare them for the demands of next season. Consult with your coach for more details.
<b>Boots</b>	A good place to start with boot fitting is to remove the liner and have the athlete stand in the shell with their toe pressed lightly against the front of the shell. Between 1-2 finger widths of space between the heel and shell is a good place to start. If you're recycling boots to ensure the soles are not overly worn, plates can be replaced,	Athletes at this stage should be getting their boots looked at for alignment. It is important to address any limiting factors including boots that are actively working	

	shells once worn out can make the binding interface unsafe. Especially in youth boots, liners don't always resemble the shape of the shell, therefore, experiment with upsizing liners before shells. Unnecessarily large shells won't align with an athlete's ankle joint inhibiting boot flexion. NB - kids boots, especially smaller sizes are notoriously out of stock, consider buying earlier than later.	against an athlete's anatomical alignment. Custom footbeds <b>aren't</b> required.	
<b>Bindings</b>	Bindings and plates work as a system to connect and transfer energy from the skier to the snow. Heavier bindings offer a greater sense of stability and balance when skiing. The right binding should have your prescribed DIN setting comfortably in the middle of the range, it's where they work best.	Consult with your coaches to ensure you're on a binding that meets your demands.	
<b>Protection</b>	Back brace, although not necessary, can offer warmth and security in the event of a back first collision. Spines are worth protecting! Shin guards, although not necessary for stubbie gate training, can become useful when full gates are introduced.	Back brace, shin guards, arm guards.	
<b>Helmet</b>	A closed ear helmet is not only warmer but safer than an open ear style, SL face guards can't always be mounted to open ear helmets. Choose a helmet brand with a secure mounting SL face guard that's easy to remove and doesn't have loose parts that could get lost. A good closed ear helmet includes a fit kit that is customizable and will 'grow' with the athlete. Many helmets are manufactured in China, with trade uncertainties buying this item sooner than later is advised.	Closed ear helmet, SL face guard recommended	
<b>Poles</b>	Forearm parallel to the ground when holding the pole upside down, hand below the basket. Poles need straps or Leki style attachment.	1x SL poles with guards 1x GS poles.	
<b>Speed Suit</b>	At the highest levels of this sport, speed suits make a significant difference in time, however, at this age the emphasis should be on comfort, confidence and warmth. A used suit will suffice!		