

Welcome to Forest Lake Nordic Team 2023-2024

FLNT²

Coaches:

- **Head Coach:** Jenna Parent jparent@flaschools.org
- **Assistant Coach:** Ryan Wright ryanwright651@gmail.com
- **Assistant Coach:** Dan Hushagen dghushagen@gmail.com

Captains:

- Johnny Rink
- Chloe Erickson
- Tyler Moberg
- Norah Hushagen

Captains will be in charge of apparel & setting up carpools

Communication Methods:

- **REMIND App/Text:** Used for daily communication or reminders.
 - **Nordic 2023/2024** - All Athletes, Coaches and Parents: Text @86k4kg to 81010
- **Email:** Used when longer instructions or details are needed
 - Athletes- check email frequently for info emails from coaches
 - An email will be sent out every Sunday from 'FLNT Boosterclub' with updates from Booster, training details for the week, as well as any info needed for race day for that particular week.
- **Contact Spreadsheet:** Please fill out your information on the contact sheet at the kickoff meeting or use the link on the website found under 'announcements'.
- **Facebook Page:** Open to the public, and used to post pictures.
(Forest Lake Nordic Ski Team (FLNT))
- **Team Website:** Used to share season and team information including meet schedules, results, photos, resources, FLNT garage sale, and more... Google FLNT2 to go directly to the Team Site
 - Or type this link into your browser:
<https://sites.google.com/view/flntteamsite/home>

Training:

- Dryland (no snow) training is Monday through Saturday at Forest Lake High School. Dryland will consist of running, roller skiing, plyos, drills, core, and soccer.
- On Snow training venues will vary depending on snow conditions- on snow training venues will be:
 - Battle Creek (typical race venue) - Booster will buy trail pass
 - Three Rivers: Elm Creek - Athletes buy trail pass*
 - Also includes Hyland
 - Jackson Meadows (No trail pass needed)
 - William O'Brien (park sticker needed - no trail pass needed)
- If snow cooperates this year we will alternate between Jackson Meadows and William O'Brien as well. Early season man made snow practices will alternate between Battle Creek & Elm Creek.
- Athletes will usually arrive back at the High School between 6-6:30pm on weeknights. Race nights will vary.
- Saturday training is on a weekly basis (TBD), but typically from 8-10am (+ travel time).

Transportation:

- How athletes are transported to training will depend on snow conditions:
 - In good snow conditions, we will bus to Jackson Meadows or William O'Brien State Park.
 - In less than ideal snow conditions (the norm), we will bus to Battle Creek or Elm Creek (Carpool when buses are not available)
 - **Captains** will organize carpools, and let parents know if they need drivers
 - Please let captains know if you are willing to drive a carpool and how many athletes would fit in your car (+skis)
 - The bus situation looks better this year than past, but we will try to let people know in advance when we will need to use carpools

- **NOTE:** The school district does not allow ski equipment to be brought on the school buses to and from school. Please arrange for your skis to be brought to school either by your parents or someone else on the team.
 - The High School has an equipment storage room where skis can be left during the day. The room is typically open by 7:30am. If the room is locked, leave your skis outside the door.

Apparel needed for training:

- **Running shoes**
- **Wind Jacket and Pants**
- **Polypropylene/wicking hat when temperature is under 50 degrees**
 - Always bring TWO! One for during practice, and one for afterwards
- **Wicking top and bottom (long underwear)**
- **Smartwool or wicking socks (over ankle). NO COTTON**
- **Ski Gloves - preferable “Lobster” gloves so your fingers stay warmer**
- **Helmet for Rollerskiing (Mandatory!!)**
- **Headlamp**
- **Watch**
- **Buff Neckwear**
- **Wind briefs for boys**
- **EXTRA shirt or sweatshirt for the trip home is *essential***

No one likes to sit in their wet, stinky workout clothes - so bring extra clothes to change into after practice is over. This also decreases chances of getting sick during the season.

Ski Equipment:

- One pair of classic skis
- One pair of skate skis
- One pair of classic poles**
 - Make sure that classic poles are cut to the appropriate length to meet MSHSL standards - info on FLNT website
- One pair of skate poles
- Ski boots. 2 options:
 - 1 pair of “Combi” boots to be used for both Classic and Skate (recommended for the first year)
A pair of Classic boots, and a pair of Skate boots
- Personal wax kit to have at practice: Cork, 3 colors of kick wax (Purple multigrade, blue extra, red)
 - Brands: Rode preferred, but Swix and Rex are good too. NEVER TOKO.

Where to buy:

- Pioneer Midwest (Osseo) - ski equipment, wax, clothing
 - Be sure to mention you are on a high school team for an additional discount
- Gear West (Wayzata/Long Lake) - ski equipment, wax, clothing
- Finn Sisu (Roseville) - ski equipment, wax, clothing

Weekly ski prep/wax options:

1. Do it yourself:
 - Wax clinics are available at the different ski shops.
 - Pioneer Midwest will throw wax clinics for ski teams that are interested
 - If many are interested in doing a wax clinic with Pioneer to learn more, please let booster club know.
2. Pay someone to wax and transport:
 - A typical rate for one skier is \$400: 2 pairs for the season, once a week.

- As of right now, a few people are open to waxing skis for those who are new to the sport to take some of the initial stress off of their first year.

Lettering Standards:

- Participation - Prerequisite of two years participation on the Nordic Team
Attendance - Do you show up every day? Do you communicate with the coaches when you will be absent?
- Any Nordic athlete in their rookie year that skis on the Varsity Team at Sections and/or State

Championship Teams:

- After SEC Conference championships, the coaches will come together and make a decision on the Sections teams for boys and girls.
- Decisions for which skiers will be on the team will be based on the following:
 - Race results - (sickness and other external factors set aside)
 - Evaluation of improvement on individual skiers from beginning of season up until that point
 - Mindsets & work ethic - who shows up with a positive attitude every day, and who brings the grit we would need if it will come down to a close score

Staying Healthy:

- Nutrition: For the body to be ready to perform, it needs to be fueled with the proper nutrients.
 - Balanced diet: 65% carbs, 15% protein, 20% fat.
 - Limit intake of sweets and pop
 - Snack on fruit, peanut butter sandwich, or granola bar
- Hydration: Proper hydration allows the body to efficiently cool itself and ensure maximum performance through sufficient blood flow.
 - An average person should drink 8-10 glasses of water a day (even more for endurance athletes)
 - Carry a water bottle to class
 - Drink water before, during, and after training - hydrating is an important part of RECOVERY
- Sleep: Minimum of 8-9 hours of sleep per night.
 - Do your best to read or do something calm & non-screen related about 30 minutes to an hour before bed

Forest Lake Nordic Team 2023-2024

Race Day

A Word about Racing. Nordic racing provides a chance to push yourself harder than you might otherwise in practice. It is natural for some kids to be a little nervous and to possibly attach too much importance to the outcome. What we hope to have happen, through competitive sports, are that our skiers learn to deal effectively with the challenges - both physical as well as mental - associated with competition. We grow as human beings when we take a few risks. So, if we understand that competition is simply a way for each of us to push ourselves past our own perceived limits, we can also see that there should not be any stigma of failure associated with how someone might finish a race. Each athlete is already successful simply because they gave the race a try. Plus, after the race there are always great shared experiences and stories. Additionally, we are more likely to have competitive success as a team if we focus on teaching work ethic, skiing skills, positive thinking, goal setting skills and the value of participation. Along the way we try to maintain a fun challenging team environment.

Many of these skiers have already developed some significant athletic aptitudes in other sports but are still learning the very basics in Nordic skiing. Your athlete will gain ski competency through regular attendance at practice. At this age especially, it is super important that kids understand the following concept. You need to be willing to work hard to see results. The coaches are interested in kids doing their best every day. Moreover, if a skier makes a best effort at practices and adopts a year-round approach to their fitness and tries to learn as much as possible about the sport they can't help but be successful in the long run.

A note about temps. The legal minimum limit for temperatures for racing is -4F as established by the USSA. This assumes no significant wind chill factor. If the temp is too low at the time of race start or there is a high wind creating a dangerous wind chill, a race may be delayed in order to allow for additional warming or even canceled if the conditions remain unsafe. The coaching staff is very aware of these concerns and directs our team's activities accordingly. That said, we do also recognize that Nordic skiing is an outdoor winter sport and wintry weather part of the deal. We try to be safe but also not just fair weather skiers.

Race day. Many parents ask how they "the parent" should interact with their child on race day AND what exactly happens at a Nordic ski race anyway. Here are some suggestions you should incorporate. If your child is going to race on a given day, they will need to get a good meal rich in complex carbs the night before. Eating some sort of healthy meat the evening before a race is also encouraged. It is very important to get a full night sleep as well. Skiers should set out all their clothes, boots, gloves, etc the night before to minimize the need for last minute frantic searches.

*****Coaches Note:*** On race days, we ask that parents not crowd around the waxing/team tent area in order to give space for coaches and athletes to prep and focus for the race as needed.**

Athletes should have a snack of a granola bar, half a banana, or small sport nutrition bar about 1 hour before the event. Fluid intake should be water - stay away from diuretics. We typically arrive at the race site a minimum 1 ½ hours before the start - 2 hours if it is a Classic race.

Our team has a set pre-race warm up routine that all the skiers go through (directed by the coaches). The team will ski the course one time before the race so that they know what to expect. We then do additional waxing, if needed, and final warm-up of some faster skiing in the final 15 minutes before the race starts. Some events are interval starts where the kids go off in 15 or 30 second intervals and other races are mass start races (all go at once). The coaches generally set up a team wax bench and staging area somewhere near the start where we can help skiers with the equipment, coach them with suggestions about how to ski the course and also counsel them with issues like pre-race nervousness. We would like to suggest to parents that they give us some space to work with their children before and immediately after the race. We suggest that parents give their child an open show of support sometimes before this pre-race team routine begins that is general in nature like “have a good race” or “good luck”. Try to avoid suggestions of outcome like “go out there and win”. They already know it is a competition. One of our jobs as the coach is to gently but nevertheless firmly help the skier work through those pre-race jitters. If the skier can readily scamper back to mom and dad seeking refuge, then we miss an opportunity for them to learn how to take a risk and build self-confidence.

Once the race starts, there are some guidance about how spectators and coaches can interact with competitors while the race is in progress. Choose a place alongside the trail where you can clearly see the skiers coming and always stay out of the line of travel that the skiers are taking. Many folks like to watch at uphill on the course as the skiers are moving by a little slower and this gives you more cheering time. Also, when you find a place to stand, be sure that you are not standing in front of a course directional sign that the competitors need to see. If you are on skis, please do not skate around the race course if it is a Classic race - you may wreck the tracks. Also, it is important for participants, coaches and spectators to refrain entirely from ever skiing into the stadium. This only confuses the race officials and timers. You might notice that a coach will run with a skier for a moment giving timing splits or offering encouragement during the race. When we do so, we are specifically limited to no more than 20 meters of running alongside and no one is ever allowed to ski alongside a racing competitor. All spectators and competitors are also required to ski only in the direction of specific travel on a race course. No backwards skiing on the race course as this can lead to a very unfortunate collision. Finally, no one is allowed to render any aid to a competitor. We cannot help them up if they fall, push them up and over a hill, or wax their skis during a race.

Once the race is finished, some of the skiers may want some quiet time away from everyone. Skiers are required to turn in their race bib at the finish. If for some reason a skier was given their race bib but they then did not race, they need to be sure to turn in that bib to the finish official as the bib is part of a complete set. Once the race is over, skiers will put on their warm ups and ski a warm down of the course, often with a teammate. As coaches, we do not offer any coaching until after this post race warm down of 15-20 minutes has happened.

Results are usually posted on a bulletin board in the stadium or found on the timing app. Sometimes it takes the timers a little while to get out the first draft of the unofficial results. It is considered very bad form for parents, coaches, or skiers to go into the timing hut and disturb the race officials asking about results. This only slows down the process. We also suggest that everyone be a little careful about the comments they make while looking at the results. The crowd around the results board usually is a mix of skiers, coaches, and parents.

Later in the day, it will also be important for the skier to continue with regular fluid intake and also eat another well-rounded complete meal. This is especially important if we have another race the next day.

Forest Lake Nordic Racing 2022-2023

FAQs

What are the dates of the season?

November 13, 2023 to TBD. Athletes can only begin training when fees are paid and their clearance card is in the coach's hands.

Where do athletes train and how many days a week?

Dryland training is at Forest Lake High School, or William O'Brien State Park. We train 5-6 days a week. Early season on-snow training will be at Elm Creek or Battle Creek. When the snow allows, we train at Jackson Meadows or William O'Brien.

How will we know what the weekly training plan is? Does it vary by technique?

Each Sunday, an email will be sent out with the training plan for the week. Any last minute schedule or technique changes will be communicated via a REMIND text. We encourage BOTH parents and athletes to sign up for the REMIND texts. Info on how to sign can be found under the "communication" portion of this packet.

Will there be practice on Saturdays, and is transportation provided?

The team always trains on Saturdays, **via carpools**. The Captains will organize carpools and let adults know if they need drivers. It is the athlete's responsibility to communicate with the captains and let them know if they do/do not need a ride on Saturdays.

What if my athlete has to miss training?

Junior high athletes can have up to 4 excused absences, and Senior High athletes up to 3 excused. After that, the athlete may have to miss a race. Excused absences means the coach has a note from the parent prior to training.

When do athletes get back from practice?

Typically between 6-6:30pm. If you are someone who has to come and pick up your skier, it may be a good idea to have your skier let you know when they are departing from the practice venue for the day.

Is it okay to miss a practice because of homework?

Only in cases of absolute necessity. The Coaching staff expects athletes to have the discipline to handle the workload. Time management is everything!

Is practice ever canceled?

Next to never. If ambient air temperature hits 20 below zero....yes, it will be canceled. If it hits 10 below zero....no.

Will my child have to miss church on Wednesday?

No. However, it will be up to the parent to provide transportation to training for the athlete if they need to leave practice early in order to attend church.

How will my athlete transport his/her ski equipment to school, practice, and races?

Those that can drive are able to bring equipment home. Younger athletes must rely on their parents or fellow teammates. The school does not allow skis to be brought on the bus in the morning to school.

Where can equipment be stored during the day?

The High School has an equipment storage room where skis can be left during the day. The room is typically open by 7:30am. If the room is locked, leave your skis outside the door.

What type of equipment do we need to buy, and how much will it cost?

We use both skate and classic equipment. Skis, bindings, boots and poles are required. Prices vary for different brands and types of skis. For first year skiers, a Combi boot can be used for both techniques and is more economical. Ask coaches for help with equipment selection.

How do I purchase equipment?

There are several good ski shops in the Twin Cities for ski fit and purchase - Pioneer Midwest (Matt Liebsch), Gear West (Brian Knutson), and Finn Sisu (Greg Weir). Proper ski fit is critical, and we can be there to help - just ask.

Do I have to purchase all the equipment at once, or can I spread it out over 2-3 months?

Your athlete will be racing by the end of November/Early December, so equipment will need to be purchased by then.

Is there any way to buy used equipment, or is there equipment to borrow?

There are a few different ski swaps throughout the Twin Cities, but it may be helpful to you to ask a coach or a veteran skier parent questions to ensure you purchase the correct equipment.

What is ski wax and do I need it? What if as parents we do not know how or have never waxed skis before?

Yes, you will need ski wax. Each skier will need to have their own personal wax kit for practice every day (cork, plus 3 different colors--(Purple multigrade, blue extra, red). For overall weekly ski waxing, talk to coaches about your options (DIY or Pay coaches).

Where do the races take place and what time do they start?

Races take place all over MN, but most of our High School races will be at Battle Creek Park, Lake Elmo, or Elm Creek. Races usually start in the afternoon for weekday races, and start times vary for the weekend races.

What is the coldest weather athletes are allowed to race in?

Negative 4 ambient air temperatures, and ski races are canceled. However, training is not canceled.

Is it okay to talk to coaches on race day?

Race days get intense, as coaches are focused on ski prep, so please give them space. We are still **always** grateful for help in set up and take down for race days from those who wish to help or provide essential equipment for race days.

Can I take my athlete home after the races?

Yes, you may. The athlete must cool down properly for 25 minutes after each and every race. **Please check with the head coach** before you leave, and turn in your permission slip. (found on: rangers.flaschools.org - scroll way to the bottom of the page and look for "Transportation Release Form")

Conflict Resolution Protocol

If a parent/guardian or student voices a concern within an athletic or activity program at Forest Lake, the following steps should be followed. The goal is to resolve conflict at the lowest intervention level possible, but to do so all parties need to do their part. If necessary, do not hesitate to follow the entire process. Coaches/moderators should keep the Activities Director up to speed with any conflicts that arise in their program and how they are being handled, no matter what level the conflict is at.

Steps for Conflict Resolution Protocol:

Step 1: Student and Coach(es)/Moderator(s) Meeting

The student and coach(es)/moderator(s) should schedule a time to discuss concerns. The goal of this meeting is to hear the concern and work to bring closure to the concern. This meeting should occur within five school days of the incident that caused the concern or is in relation to the concern. After the meeting, both parties need to be prepared to give some time for the closure and results of the meeting to go into effect. The coach(es)/moderator(s) will submit a summary of the meeting to the Activities Director.

Step 2: Student and Parent/Guardian with Coach(es)/Moderator(s)

The student and parent/guardian should schedule a time to meet with the coach(es)/moderator(s) to discuss concerns. The meeting time should be convenient for all parties. The meeting agenda should be limited to the initial concern. Administrative presence can be requested, but this meeting should be run by the coach(es)/moderator(s). The coach(es)/moderator(s) will submit a summary of the meeting to the Activities Director.

Step 3: Student, Parent/Guardian, and Coach(s)/Moderator(s) meet with AD

At this time if no resolution has come after Step 1 or Step 2, a meeting to discuss resolution moving forward can be set up with the Activities Director.

- All parties must be present at this meeting.
- Before the meeting can take place the Activities Director must have a summary of Step 1 and Step 2 submitted by the coach(es)/moderator(s);

Once all necessary forms are turned in, the Activities Director will set up a meeting (at the AD's discretion) with all parties. At this time a ruling will be made on the conflict, details will be discussed with the student, parent/guardian, and

coach(es)/moderator(s), and a conflict resolution plan will be shared with all parties. The building principal will also get a copy of all documentation at this point of the protocol.

Step 4: Student and Parent/Guardian Meeting with Principal

If the established conflict resolution plan is still not successful or unsatisfactory, the family may choose to set up a meeting with the Principal. The principal may ask the Activities Director and coach(es)/moderator(s) to be present, at his/her discretion.

Other Guidelines:

- It is not acceptable to approach a coach or moderator about a conflict or concern at an event, practice, or race day.
- Playing time and team selection will not be discussed at the AD or Principal level. These types of decisions are the responsibility of the coaching staff. This is what they were hired to do and discussions on these topics should be between the coach(es)/moderator(s) and the student. If a parent/guardian wants to join this meeting they may request to do so, however, the student must be present. We highly advise that students advocate for themselves and first try to set up the conversation with the coach(es)/moderator(s) on their own.
- Coach(es)/moderator(s) may have an assistant coach present when meeting with students and parents/guardians.
- Conversations regarding conflict should not be via text or email, a meeting should be set up to discuss face to face.
- Other students will not be discussed during this process, data privacy must be maintained.
- If the parent/guardian refuses to include the student in the conflict resolution protocol process, the process has been compromised and will not continue. ● If this protocol is not followed in regards to a conflict or concern, this can affect the resolution process and ruling on the conflict/concern.
- Conversations are to be respectful in nature for all parties, the moment the conversation turns confrontational, the meetings will be rescheduled. ● Retaliation against students for bringing up a concern is not tolerated or practiced at Forest Lake. Please understand if you wish that your name or student remain anonymous when bringing up a concern, you are simply providing us with feedback and are not looking for a solution.