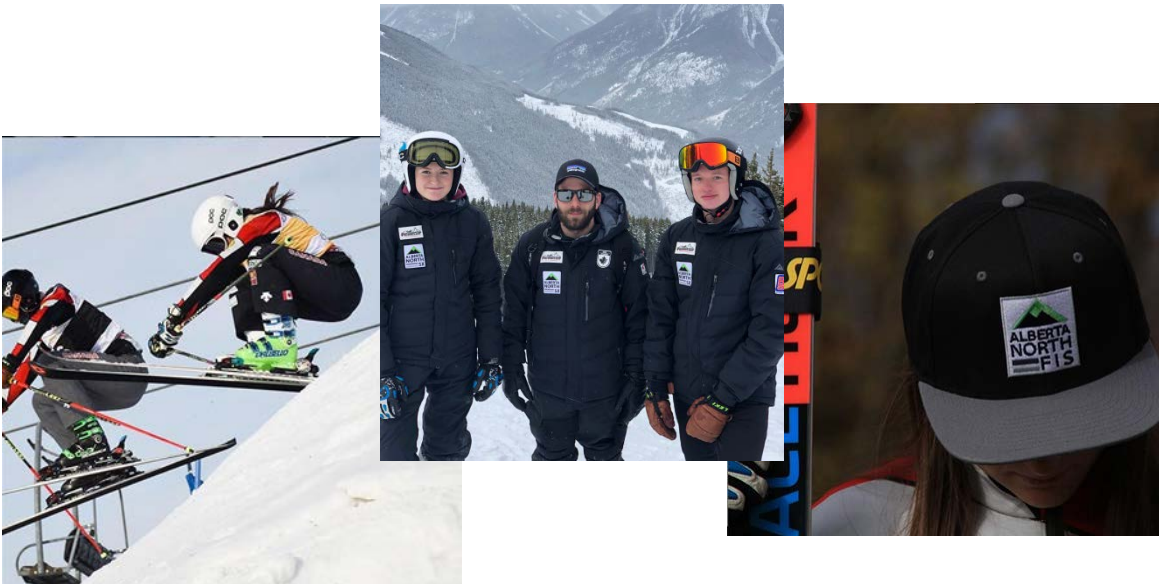




ALBERTA NORTH SX

2024 Season



Program Guide 2024

Welcome to the Program Guide for the Alberta North FIS SX Program. We are pleased to announce that the program will return in 2023-24 for its SIXTH season! New and exciting for next season will be the addition of a full-time dedicated ski cross track at Nakiska to go along with the full-time local venues at Sunridge. Our FIS SX race calendar in WestCan looks to have FIS races monthly in December (Nakiska), January (Sunridge), Feb (Table), March (Big White), and April (Nakiska). We are keen to grow the ranks of FIS carded SX athletes in the North Zone!

We all hope the ski world will be back to normal next season and this guide is presented on that presumption. Give us a call to chat about it! Chris McEwen (Program Director) 780-264-0826, or Meshale Offermann (Coach) 780-921-4354.

1) What is Ski Cross:

- a) Ski Cross is Alpine ski racing's 5th major discipline; in the speed continuum, it falls between the Technical events of Slalom and Giant Slalom and the Speed events of SuperG and Downhill. It combines elements of Speed and Tech in addition to unique race tactics and maneuvers over terrain... not to mention the added excitement of being on track with 3 other racers. Given these dynamics, our athletes continue to race and train Tech and Speed in this program.

2) Program Purpose:

- a) To provide a North Zone based competitive environment for athletes with a keen interest in continuing their racing career with a focus on the Ski Cross discipline of Alpine racing.

The partial specialization in SX will offer something new and exciting for athletes choosing not to pursue a traditional FIS Technical program but wanting to continue their race career at a Junior level (YOB 2007 and older) in something more intensive than traditional North Zone Regional Programs offered under Club flags. The Program is designed for a Junior Aged U21 target athlete.

3) Program Goals:

- a) **Retention:** This program will challenge the athletes competitively, and in training, but its primary goal is to keep athletes in the sport in a program that will give them a base of ability for them and their families to then decide if they wish to push further in the sport at an older age. In order to accomplish our retention goals, this is a less "intensive" program than Technical FIS programs currently running in Alberta. Intensity is abstractly measured in time/travel commitment and overall cost of the Program. We manage these elements thusly:

- i) **Cost:** Our target is for an athlete to have "all-in" costs below \$13,000 per athlete for the season.

- (1) How do we accomplish this?

- (a) The most significant factor is that we utilize "part-time" coaching – our coach does not rely on this program as their primary source of annual income.
- (b) Equipment; there is inherently less equipment required in a SX focused Program than traditional Technical FIS Programs. While we will race SL at the Rabbit Hill Open and there will be some SL training before XMas, there are no FIS SL starts scheduled.
- (c) We moderate the travel involved with the Program as explained below:

ii) **Reduced Travel/Time Commitment:** We want our athletes to feel confident that they can participate in this Program, finish high school strongly, and maintain a level of sport/life balance.

(1) How do we accomplish this? (Which also reduces cost for the athlete)

(a) We are scheduled exclusively in Western Canada.

(i) Additional race opportunities out of WestCan are available for those interested athletes.

1. ie. Eastern Block in January (Ontario/NE USA)

(b) We highly leverage Edmonton and Alberta training venues.

(i) While we certainly will have significant travel to Mountain venues, a tangible portion of our training program is at Rabbit Hill and Sunridge plus some day trips to Canyon Ski Area. Our local venues offer us effective multi-discipline training including Ski Cross, particularly from December through early March. We believe in the mantra that there is great training value in the river valleys.

b) **Development:** Notwithstanding the stated primary focus on retention, this program will still produce racers. Coaches' expectations of effort and focus will be high in physical conditioning and on snow as we are here to provide a developmental platform for those serious athletes with a focus on SX.

i) **Advancement:**

(1) For U19 high performers, this program will prepare you for Advancement to the Evolve Ski Cross Team at U21 including possible integration with University Programs.

(2) Or, continuation with ABNSX as there is no maximum age to participate in ABNSX, athletes may certainly continue on during post-secondary education.

(3) Nomination to represent Canada at the SX World Junior Championships becomes a realistic goal on the Women's side at age 17 on the Men's at 18-19.

4) **Program Structure:** For 2024, this Program is slated to be run under the Administrative Club structure under the terms of the Alberta North FIS Partnership Agreement with Athletes registering with their Home Club, if they wish. The 2024 Administrative Club will be Sunridge Ski Club.

a) **Program Go/No Go:** We strive annually to have 4-6 athletes in the Program but we are committed to offering this content for interested athletes regardless of whether we get that many athletes registered. If not, we will both run some U16s with the group on training camps and Western SX races to offset excess coaching costs and/or will more heavily coordinate with the Evolve club in the South at camps and FIS races to build the athlete cohort in season.

5) **Frequently Asked Questions/Comments:**

a) **I still want to make the Alberta Alpine Ski Team, is this program right for me?**

i) No, if your personal goals are to challenge yourself to be the best Slalom and Giant Slalom skier you can be and ultimately race in Continental Cups and/or pursue an NCAA Div 1 scholarship, traditional FIS technical programs are a better fit.

b) **I want to do more than Regional, but can't quite make a big-time FIS program work for me and my family, is this the Program for me?**

i) YES, absolutely! Don't Quit! You are exactly the type of racer we are looking for in this program. The primary goal of this program is retention of those athletes who are committed to racing and

want to get out on the road with their buddies, but are not interested or able to participate in higher intensity FIS-Tech programming.

c) I'm getting a little tired of bashing plastic...

- i) Give Ski Cross a try to rejuvenate your love of skiing and competition! And, we still run GS and SG elements too.

d) I don't know... I've never done Ski Cross...

- i) Doesn't matter! The competitive curve in FIS Ski Cross is pretty manageable... you already have most of the skills, you'll be right in there.

e) My old coach says it's dangerous and I shouldn't do it...

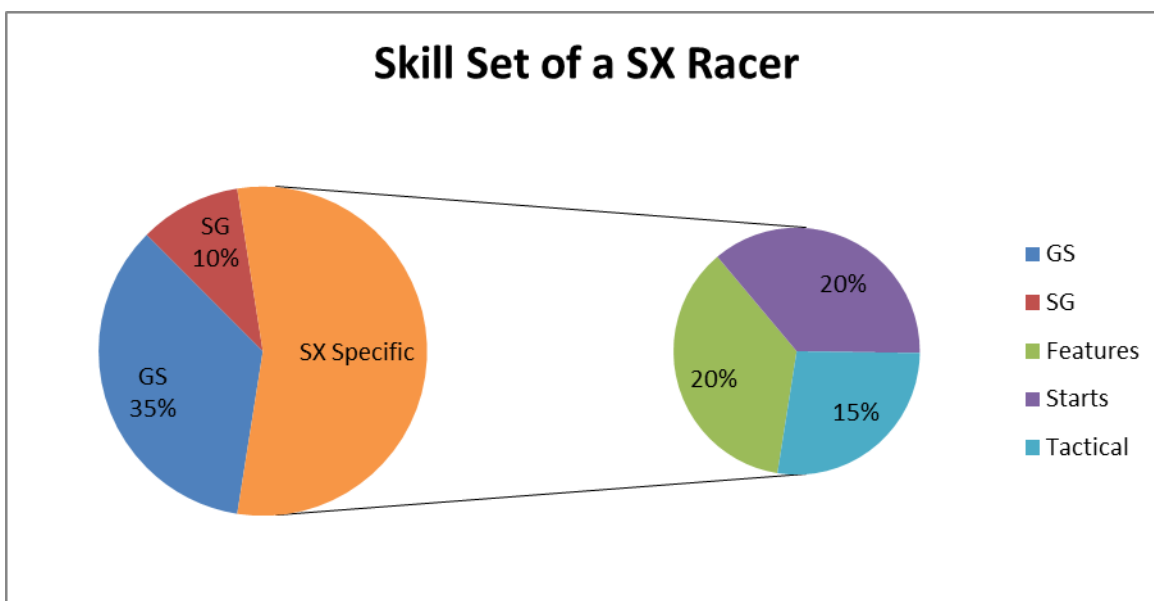
- i) Don't worry, the environments we are in at this level don't look anything like the Olympics. We run appropriate tracks and features while building your skills.

6) What Makes a Ski Cross Racer:

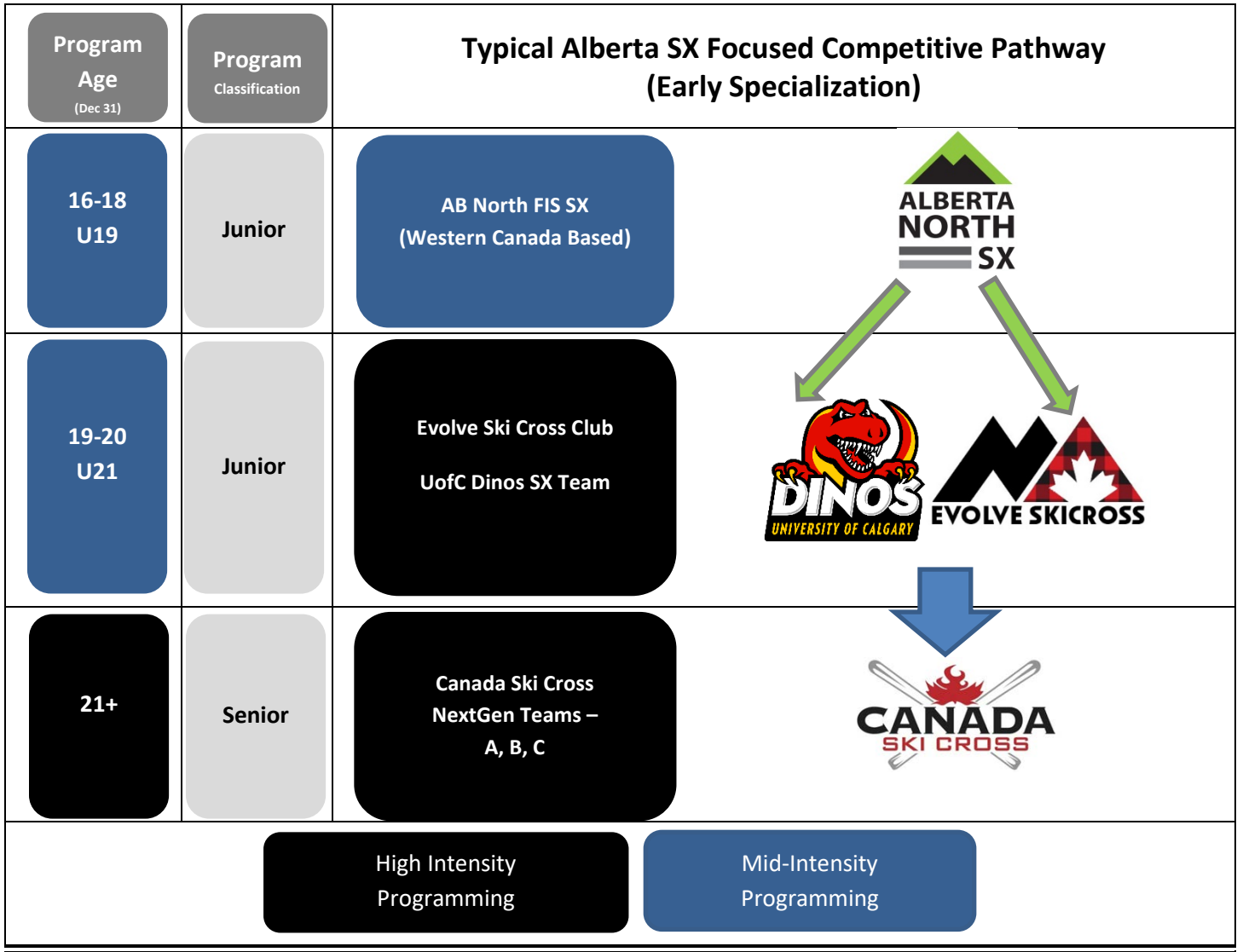
- a) Generally speaking, for a racer to reach a competitive NorAm level in SX, they must have a technique base in the disciplines of GS and SG. The ability to perform/carve a GS turn similarly in ability to a competitive FIS racer at least at an Alberta Cup level is one of the developmental goals.

This program will provide that training base and have a training mix and race discipline start ratio similar to the "Skill Set" chart below representing an amalgamated skill set of a typical high performance Ski Cross athlete.

- b) The "Features" skill set refers to absorption, air, pumping, and rodeo type maneuvers used to maintain and gain speed on course, "Tactical" refers to selection of line, drafting, passing, and managing traffic on a SX course, "Starts" refers to developing a strong start technique gaining a speed advantage in the start section. In GS and SG, we want to also glean skills in gliding, tuck turns, air, strength/G-forces, angulation, acceleration, and overall technique.



Overall Program Age Flowchart – Where does AB North SX Fit in the Pathway?



7) Coaching

- a) 2024 Coach of the AB North SX Team will be Meshale Offermann, (Devo Level/SX Trained) in his 6th season coaching AB North FIS SX.



b) After his racing career, Meshale (“Mesh” [MEEesh]) has coached with Sunridge Alpine Ski Team for over 13 years with various age groups and in the past six seasons, Mesh has taken a lead in coaching SX gaining experience in training and at many race events with SUNRI, and the past 5 seasons with AB North FIS SX. Mesh is excited with the opportunity to again coach a FIS SX group under the AB North flag.

8) Program Director/Coordinator

a) Chris McEwen, Director of ANSRS – ABNorth.SX@gmail.com - will act as Program Director/Coordinator for the group on a volunteer basis.

9) Schedule Composition

a) Race Selection: Races will be selected from Open (SL), AB Cup FIS (GS), Western FIS SX (SX), AB Cup FIS (GS), and NorAm (SX)

b) Additional Non –Calendared Race Opportunities
i) SX World Juniors (Europe)

10) Costing

a) Dryland

i) Hybrid Strength Program:

(1) We partner with FirstLine Training (Bryan Fountain) in Sherwood Park to develop our off-season training programs and deliver our program.

(a) Athletes attend FirstLine Training on a bi-weekly basis and conduct most of their workouts on their own time and schedule. And sometimes together if athletes can organize.

(b) All athletes receive the program, those available to attend the in-person sessions incur a season charge.

ii) Circuit/Cross Training: All athletes have access and can attend any Sunridge Ski Club coached/administered other dryland programs for no additional cost.

b) Base Fee – On-Snow

i) **\$5500 due to Sunridge Ski Club**

(1) This amount is the gross amount charged to the athlete’s Home Club

(a) Home Club may charge less and/or apply Fundraising type credits

(2) Includes Coaching and **ALL Coaching expenses** for calendared events for the season

(3) Includes basic dryland (fall, in-season, and spring) administered/coached by SUNRI/ABNSX

c) Items Charged to Racer Account

- i) Travel (Team Travel available for all or most away events)
 - (1) Athlete Hotel Share, Van Fees
 - (2) Men/Ladies charged equal group hotel shares
- ii) Any Third Party dryland coaching and facility costs
- iii) Race Entries
- iv) Any lifts not covered by CanWest (Pre-season and when resorts are closed to public)
- v) Lane Space Share
- vi) Group Meals
- vii) Banquets
- viii) Annual Racer Account Estimate \$6000**

d) Other Fees (2020-21 costs)

- i) FIS Dual Card: \$950 (Domestic) \$1300 (International)
- ii) CanWest Pass: Approx \$700 plus \$157.50 May-Spring Extension
- iii) Any other fees charged by Home Clubs

e) Important Dates

- i) **Approx Aug 11, 2023:** CanWest Pass Application Deadline
 - (1) CanWest Pass is not mandatory but will significantly reduce costs of the program

11) Equipment Requirements

a) Jackets

- i) AB North FIS Team Jacket is a black Sync jacket sourced from Pacesetter with AB North and Home Club badging. Individual Athlete Sponsor badges can also be applied to the coat. Athlete will be expected to purchase or rent a jacket. **Approx ~\$600 New, \$200 rental for season.**

b) Skis:

- i) GS* FIS Spec Required
 - (1) Ski Length (Minimum)
 - (a) Ladies: 188 (-5cm tolerance for FIS)
 - (b) Men: 193 (-10cm tolerance for U18 First Year at FIS)
 - (2) Standing Height: Maximum height (distance between the bottom of the running surface of the ski and the ski boot sole) for all categories is 50 mm.
 - (3) Radius (Minimum)
 - (a) 30m for all categories
- ii) Speed Camp
 - (1) SUNRI has DH/SG Skis available for athletes to borrow as may your Home Club.
- iii) SG
 - (1) IF FOR FIS RACE * FIS Spec Require (May be able to borrow.)
 - (a) Ski Length (Minimum)
 - (i) Ladies: 205 (-5cm tolerance for FIS)
 - (ii) Men: 210 (-10cm tolerance for U18 First Year at FIS)
 - (b) Standing Height: Maximum height (distance between the bottom of the running surface of the ski and the ski boot sole) for all categories is 50 mm.

(c) Radius (Minimum)

(i) Ladies: 40m

(ii) Men: 45m

(2) IF FOR U16 SG RACE

(a) FIS GS ski will generally suffice.

iv) SX

(1) There are no FIS ICR restrictions on dimensions of skis (length, radius etc.)

(a) For cost efficiency, our recommendation is to run on your GS skis.

(b) For those interested, SX designed skis are available from some manufacturers (Stokli-Elan) and are generally a shorter radius ~22m. Contact us if interested.

c) Suits

(a) **FIS Rules now allow regular speed suits (or bulkier race suit). Note that if you have a GS suit with un-removable pads, that requires a Jury decision to allow in a race.**

d) Helmets

i) For Ski Cross, the helmet shall fulfil the following requirements:

(1) Helmet model to fulfil and to be certified under both ASTM 2040 and EN 1077 (class A – hard sided)

(2) Helmet model must also pass an additional specific test under EN 1077 test procedure but at higher test speed of 6.8m/s

(3) FIS RH 2013 standard meets this requirement.

e) Poles

i) “Straight/SL” poles are generally used but preferably with a downhill “cone” basket. (No Guards)

(1) GS Poles are also sometimes used.

12) Registration and Next Steps

a) Interested Athletes/Program Directors should contact:

i) Chris McEwen

ABNorth.SX@gmail.com

780-264-0826

For expressions of interest. We will begin collecting deposits in July.

(1) Per AB North current structure, funds will be collected through Home Clubs.