



## USSA Alpine Competition Update and Precisions January 2012

USSA Alpine Coaches and Alpine Officials,

Congratulations and thank you for your efforts in keeping your certifications current by attending annual clinics and thank you for providing the leadership at alpine events insuring a secure and fair environment for our USSA alpine athletes. A special thanks to the key volunteers that prepare the materials and conduct the clinics.

This newsletter provides important information and links for your review, including:

- USSA rules precisions and clarifications
- Updated concussion management information
- New website details
- USSA Alpine Director's statement on FIS alpine equipment rules
- Foreign athlete entry authorization procedures (travel letters)
- USSA electronic event scheduling procedures
- USSA staff update
- 2012-13 USSA alpine age classification realignment plan (revised in November 2011)

On behalf of the USSA staff and USSA Alpine Sport Committee - have a great season.

Walt Evans, Sport Development

Jeff Weinman, Competition Services

Patrick Riml, Alpine Department

## Important Rules Precisions for season 2011-12:

1. Children's course setting rules (see updated matrix next page that replaces page 128 of the USSA Alpine Competition Guide and supersedes the distances listed in the 1250 section). These course setting rules are specific to USSA non-scored events. Minimum gate distances have been added.
  - a. Note when multiple age groups or classes are competing i.e. in a J3-J5 event, the rules applicable to the next to youngest class should be applied – in this case the J4 rules.
  - b. Stubbies and children's poles may be used for non-scored children's competition.
2. USSA Membership
  - 203.2 To be eligible for participation in USSA events, all participants (Jury members, Start Referee, Finish Referee, Chief of Course, Chief of Timing, Course Setters, Competitors, Forerunners, Coaches) must have a valid USSA membership. The validity of a membership can be limited to participation in one or more specific events.

For USSA-sanctioned FIS events, when a foreign FIS Federation lists a coach on their entry form, that Federation is certifying that the coach has the knowledge and ability to fulfill the duties of a Team Captain: e.g. serve as a Jury member or set a course.
3. Course Setter Certification
  - U603.1.1 Course setters at USSA Scored and Non-Scored events must be a current USSA Coach of Official member and must have a current referee certification.
4. The 904 section regarding single gate giant slalom was mistakenly omitted from the ACR.
  - 904 Single Gate Giant Slalom

All rules of the ACR are valid, except as follows:

    - 904.1 Single gate GS is permitted.
    - 904.2 A single gate GS has no outside gate, except for the first and the last gate and delay gates.
    - 904.3 Where there is no outside gate, both feet and ski tips must have passed the turning pole of the turning gate on the same side, following the natural race line of the GS. If a competitor loses a ski, without committing a fault, e.g. not by straddling a pole, then the tip of the remaining ski and both feet must have passed the natural gate line. If the racer has not correctly passed the imaginary line from turning pole to turning pole and does not follow the natural race line, then he has to climb back up and pass around the missed turning gate. Where there is an outside gate (first and last gate, delayed gate) art. 661.4.1. is valid (U629.4 applies).
    - 904.4 All rules and regulations dealing with the width of the course should be considered, as if there is an imaginary outside gate.
5. Limitations in the Second Run
  - 806.2 Limitations in the Second Run

Only in USSA collegiate events may the Jury has the right to reduce the number of competitors in the second run to half, provided that notice was given in the invitation or on the official notice board before the race started, and at the team captains' meeting before the draw.


Course Setting Specifications for Non-Scored Events - updated 19 December 2011  
 This chart replaces page 128 of the competition guide and supersedes the information in U1254 and U1255












	<b>J5 and younger</b>			<b>J4</b>			<b>J3</b>		
<b>Train to Race Ratio</b> <b>(strongly recommended minimum)</b>	6:1 (days)			6:1 (days)			5:1 (days)		
<b>Race Days</b> <b>(maximum allowed)</b>	Max. 12 Division/State organized, all events			Max. 14 Division/State organized, all events			Max. 18 Division/State organized, all events		
<b>Downhill (DH)</b> U1253	<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>					
	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Direction changes								
<b>Slalom (SL)</b> U1254	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Additional requirements			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Additional requirements			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Additional requirements		
	Combination 4-5 m, Open 5-9 m, Delay max. 15 m Max. 100 m 2-3 hairpins, 1 vertical combination and 1 delay gate			Combination 4-6 m, Open 6-9 m, Delay max. 15 m Max. 120 m 2-3 hairpins, 1 vertical combination and 1 delay gate			Combination 4-6 m, Open 6-10 m, Delay max. 18 m Max. 140 m 3-5 hairpins, 1-2 vertical combinations and at least 1 delay		
<b>Giant Slalom (GS)</b> U1255	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Additional requirements			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Additional requirements			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Additional requirements		
	Open 15-22 m, Delay max. 30 m Max. 200 m Min. of 1 delay Variety of terrain suggested			Open 15-22 m, Delay max. 30 m Max. 250 m Min. of 1 delay Variety of terrain suggested			Open 15-27 m, Delay max. 35 m Max. 300 m Min. of 1 delay Variety of terrain suggested		
<b>Super G (SG)</b> U1256	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Direction changes Additional requirements			<b>X</b>			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Vertical drop Direction changes Additional requirements		
				25-40 m Max. 300 m 8-12% of vertical drop <sup>2</sup> Variety of terrain suggested			25-40 m Max. 350 m 8-12% of vertical drop <sup>2</sup> Min. of 1 jump Variety of terrain suggested		
<b>Parallel</b>	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop		
	10-15 m 60 m			15-20 m 100 m			15-20 m 100 m		
<b>Kombi - SL/GS</b> U1259	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop		
	SL 6-10 m, GS 12-20 m 150 m			SL 6-10 m, GS 12-20 m 180 m (SL skis)			SL 6-10 m, GS 12-20 m 200 m (SL skis)		
<b>Kombi - GS/SG</b> U1259	Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop			<b>X</b>			Distance between gates <sup>1</sup> Maximum vertical drop		
				GS 12-20 m, SG 18-28 m 250 m (GS skis)			GS 12-20 m, SG 18-28 m 250 m (GS skis)		
<b>Other Events</b>				All of above plus SkillsQuest events 1 pair - Multi-event			All of above plus SkillsQuest events 2 pair - SL, GS		
<b>Ski Recommendation</b> <b>(strongly encouraged)</b>	Length - skill/size appropriate			Length - skill/size appropriate			Length - skill/size appropriate		

<sup>1</sup> Gate distances correspond to distance between turning gates, with the exception of SL combination distance, which refers to gate width.  
<sup>2</sup> Per USSA ACR U1256.2, based upon hill topography and field ability, the Jury may increase the gates to a maximum of 14% of vertical drop (counting only those requiring change of direction).  
 \* J5 and younger starts include a recommendation for competing in SkillsQuest events, parallel and kombi.  
 \*\* Crossover between age categories for SL, GS, Kombi and SkillsQuest events is encouraged. In races where multiple age classes are competing, course setting guidelines will be based on the guidelines for one class older than the youngest class (for example, race has J5, J4 and J3 racers, should use J4 guidelines). NOTE: This does not apply for speed events.

**New Website:** We are proud to rollout a new website that will provide USSA members a central hub or portal to manage USSA memberships. USSA, U.S. Ski Team, U.S. Freeskiing and U.S. Snowboarding are now one dynamic site.

We know that our sites are important sources of information for you; following is a roadmap to finding information.

Login to your existing USSA account [Sign In or Register](#) at the top of the page on the right to get to your myUSSA homepage/portal . If you haven't established an account yet, please [click here](#) to get started. Your new myUSSA portal page will provide the following tools and links.

- General membership information
  - Member type
  - USSA ID & FIS ID if applicable
  - Print member card - [Member Card](#) 
  - Update account information
  - Change password
  - Register a new USSA member
  - Link/Renew existing USSA member to your account – you can link additional members to track family members, team members, etc. You will need the member's last name, USSA ID, date of birth and zip code.
- Information under Member Tools
  - To view history of selected member, defaults to owner of the account - [Dashboard](#) 
  - Member lookup - [Member Lookup/History and Results](#) 
  - Athlete rankings, points and race history - [Member Lookup/History and Results](#) 
  - Member list - [Member Lists](#) 
  - Club directory - [Club Directory](#) 
  - Club roster - [Club Rosters](#) 
  - USSA event lookup (for race codes and results) - [Event Lookup](#) 
  - Rankings - [Rankings](#) 
  - Official certification viewers - [Official Cert Viewer](#) 
  - FIS event lookup - [FIS Event](#) 
- Member benefits - [http://media.ussa.org/forms/athletics/2011-2012/membership/MemberBenefits\\_FA.pdf](http://media.ussa.org/forms/athletics/2011-2012/membership/MemberBenefits_FA.pdf)
- Points list - <http://alpine.usskiteam.com/alpine/rankings>
- USSA and FIS applications - <http://ussa.org/global/ussa-fis-membership-applications>
- Background screening - <http://ussa.org/global/background-screening-introduction>
- USSA rules - <http://ussa.org/alpine/officials>
- USSA clubs - <http://alpine.usskiteam.com/global/club-programs>

- FIS - <http://www.fis-ski.com/>
- USSA membership - <http://my.ussa.org/myussa?destination=node/802>

**USSA concussion information:** USSA athletes, coaches and officials have been informed of the policy for concussion management for USSA athletes. It is important that all of us support and promote education of the USSA community relative to concussions. This page provides information and options for training: <http://ussa.org/global/concussion-information>

- **USSA concussion FAQs updated:** <http://ussa.org/global/concussion-frequently-asked-questions>
- **USSA membership (concussion) hold roster:** <http://ussa.org/global/concussion-information>, 4th Section under Forms, Reporting and Athletes on Membership Hold, at the top. If there are no athletes on the list, no list is posted.

### **FIS equipment rules – a brief overview from USSA Alpine Director, Patrick Riml:**

*Many of you have heard about the discussion and debate regarding the ski rules that are being considered for the future with alpine competition. New rules will be in place for FIS Alpine World Cup, Europa Cup and World Junior Championships beginning in season 2012-13 which starts in the southern hemisphere in July of 2012.*

*We, as an organization have worked hard to change the equipment specifications that are proposed by FIS.*

*The bottom line is that FIS has made the decision and this decision is completely supported by the manufactures. The new rules will help the manufacturers save money in the long run. In discussions with the key manufacturers Racing Directors from Europe the common argument is that currently the companies produce up to 15 different models of GS skis for the athletes. The side cuts change every meter so they believe that the new regulations will help them save money because they won't have to produce that many different model with different side cuts.*

*So there is no chance that the companies will say "no," they have agreed to this.*

*The other observation is that for Julia Mancuso used "almost" next year's skis at the WC GS in Aspen where she came third! The ski was 1 cm short in length of next year's specs, what I have been told, and believe me, you could not tell a difference!*

*This whole process was very frustrating for all of us but at this point we do have to except the change and have to make sure to prepare our athletes accordingly.*

*I will try my best to get as many new skis as possible to the US and to hand down new ski's from our World Cup athlete's which they will not use so our development and domestic athlete have the new skis as quickly as possible.*

*Please let me know if you have any further questions to this topic but I do believe it is time that everybody will focus on preparing our athlete's well and teach them the right things and not get caught up with things we cannot control anyway at this point.*

*Patrick Riml – [priml@ussa.org](mailto:priml@ussa.org)*

### **Electronic scheduling procedure – a reminder:**

This utility allows USSA Clubs to input race schedule information electronically which facilitates earlier calendar information for coaches, athletes and families for planning and streamlines the process for the Club Competition Administrator, the event organizer and the landowner.

**USSA FIS calendar changes:** USSA staff makes updates with FIS on Wednesday.

**USSA FIS inscriptions:** USSA staff will update FIS inscriptions on Wednesdays.

**Travel letters for foreign athletes entering USA FIS events:**

Only National Ski Associations are entitled to make entries for international competitions. If a National Ski Association issues an entry authorization (travel) letter, USSA allows non-USSA athletes training with USSA clubs or attending USA schools/colleges/universities to be entered by their coaches.

1. Beginning in season 2010-11, a copy of every non-USA athlete's authorization letter must be sent to Jeff Weinman ([jweinman@ussa.org](mailto:jweinman@ussa.org)).
2. Letters must be submitted directly by the respective National Ski Federation (NSF); they will not be accepted if forwarded by the coach or the athlete.
3. USSA will create a summary of these authorizations and will post that summary on the USSA website so Race Administrators and Technical Delegates can be confident of their validity.
4. Foreign entries that are not submitted by the actual NSF and for whom no authorization letter has been submitted to USSA for verification must not be accepted.
5. Authorization letters will only be recognized for FIS category and below. Entries for NorAm Cup and National Championships must be submitted directly by the respective NSF.
6. *Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA) does not issue authorization (travel) letters; all Canadian entries are sent from ACA*

Foreign athletes who are residing for academic or athletic opportunities in the USA may be entitled to enter and compete in FIS races in the USA.

These competitors may participate in FIS races in the USA to the degree permitted by their license (different licenses allow for different access), subject to FIS rules on quotas, pint cutoffs, and entry procedures, and subject to written notification by their own federation. Foreign racers entering FIS events in the USA must make arrangement with their own national federation for proper entry into such events as the US Alpine Championships, NorAm's and Junior Championships. Suitable documents must be on file with USSA in the national office authorizing entry into other USA FIS races if managed by the team coach or other designated person.

- **USSA foreign athlete approved roster:** <http://alpine.usskiteam.com/alpine/rankings>, 2<sup>nd</sup> section under Foreign Athlete Authorizations.

**USSA Club EXCELLENCE Conference and USSA Congress 2012:** The USSA Congress 2012 is scheduled to take place at the Park City Marriott and the USSA Center of Excellence in Park City, UT May 8-12, 2012.

**USSA Marriott Junior Championships:** Find the schedule here, watch for more information as the sites launch their own websites: <http://ussa.org/events/ussa-marriott-junior-championships>

**Staff update:**

- J.J. Ehlers has joined the staff and is overseeing Competition Service Ranking and Scheduling. She is assisted by Michelle Demschar who is managing FIS inscriptions, FIS calendar and International Licensing.
- Welcome to Patti Nichol in the Eastern Region. Patti is supporting the Eastern Competition staff.

**2012-13 USSA Alpine Age Classification Realignment Plan:**

Current (season 2011-12)		AGE	New (season 2012-13)	
Competitor or Student Membership	SR	22 + 21 ← 20	SR	Competitor or Student Membership
	J1 (FIS J2)	19 18 ← 17	U21	
	J2 National Championship First year FIS eligible (FIS J1)	J2 16 ← 15	U18 U18 National Championship First year FIS eligible	
	J3 Regional Championship First year USSA points (FIS K2)	J3 14 ← 13	U16 U16 Regional Championship	
	J4 Regional Championship (FIS K1)	J4 12 ← 11	U14 U14 Regional Championship First year USSA points	
Youth Membership	J5	10 9 ← 8	U12 U12 Divisional Championship	Youth Membership
	J6	7 6 -	U10 U8	
Only Competitor memberships are eligible for USSA points.				
Student and Youth memberships are not eligible for points.				

Only athletes who have a valid USSA Alpine Competitor membership are eligible to score USSA points. Alpine Youth and Student members are not eligible for USSA points.

## Concussion Frequently Asked Questions

**The USSA Concussion Policy refers to minors, what about seniors?** The policy applies to all USSA participant members and requires **review and signature by all members**. While the policy refers to all members and **requires that minor athletes be benched** in the case of suspected concussion, under the authority of the USSA Head Coach or Technical Delegate, **any athlete may be benched** in competition or training regardless of age due to suspected concussion. Only minors are required to be placed on membership hold pending clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in concussion management.

### What does a TD or Head Coach, do to react to a suspected concussion?

1. Bench the athlete.
2. Notify athlete's coach.
3. Coach must notify parents.
4. TD or Coach completes [American Specialties First Report of Accident](#) and [emails it to USSA](#)
5. Coach presents athlete and/or parent and/or coach with [the Concussion Medical Evaluation Form and parent's letter](#) that must be completed prior to return to sport.

**An athlete is suspected of a concussion injury during Friday's training, how do they compete in Saturday or Sunday competition?** The Competition Organizer along with the jury will accept a signed Medical Evaluation Form authorizing return to competition if the form is properly completed and signed by a licensed health care provider and signed and presented by the parent or the legal guardian (not the coach) of the athlete to the Organizers and Jury. This release must be presented and accepted prior to the team captains meeting and the draw. The parent or legal guardian must follow-up immediately by emailing the release to USSA in order to remove the athlete from the membership hold roster. The document must also be attached to the official USSA results that are submitted by the organizing committee. This could also apply to athletes being cleared during a period when the USSA office was not available to acknowledge the signed and completed medical form and remove the athlete from the membership hold roster.

**How does a Race Organizer know if an athlete is on a concussion hold?** USSA will host a roster of athletes who are on USSA membership hold or suspension due to medical reasons. The roster will be available on the website and will be updated regularly to reflect the athletes who are on hold and also to remove the athletes who have been cleared.

**Where can I find the "USSA membership hold roster"?** On the USSA Club Resource Concussion landing page: <http://ussa.org/global/concussion-information>

**Who is qualified to sign the release authorizing the athlete to return to competition or training?** A licensed health care provider who is trained in the evaluation and management of a concussion and who has, within three years before the day on which the written statement is made, successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of a concussion.

**Who is authorized to place an athlete on membership hold due to suspected concussion?** In the case of USSA competition or official training the jury has the authority and

the TD has final authority. In the case of club training, the USSA Coach who is in charge of the training session.

**How does a coach report a concussion to USSA?** Utilize the American Specialties' First Report of injury form that is posted on the USSA Concussion landing page: <http://ussa.org/global/concussion-information>

**Many states have Concussion Law, what takes precedence?** The USSA Concussion Policy requirements must be followed. However many states have also enacted head injury laws that may include additional requirements/restrictions. Please review the law for your state and, if required, contact USSA for direction. Additionally, if working in another state, you may wish to discuss with the Head Coach or Chief of Race, how the local club usually handles head injuries. This is a developing area of responsibility and it is important to be aware that USSA may provide further guidance in the future.

**Does this USSA policy and procedure regarding concussion apply to FIS races in the USA?** Yes, USSA is responsible for the conduct of those events held within the USA, these decisions by the TD and Jury need to be in concert with the FIS rules. In the case of foreign minor athletes attending USA FIS races it would be advisable for the TD to alert all of the Team Captains of the USSA concussion policy and procedures.

**What if a member coach influences the decision of the TD and jury to bench an athlete for the purpose of advancing his own athlete?** Unethical behavior of this nature will not be tolerated, all athletes are entitled to due process, the TD and jury will endeavor to provide due process in all decisions relative to competition.

**What if a coach enters an athlete who had a concussion previously?** Parents MUST also take responsibility! The coach and home club could be liable in this situation. It is critical that USSA coaches respond to and report on suspected concussion injuries in order to protect the welfare of the athlete and to be accountable to their home club. Suspected concussion injuries that occur in training must be reported by the coach to USSA on the standard American Specialties Insurance First Report of Injury with email or fax to USSA in order that the athlete can be placed on USSA Membership Hold.

**What symptoms may be utilized by the competition TD or USSA Member Coach in identifying a suspected concussion?** Concussion symptoms differ with each person and with each injury, and may not be noticeable for hours or days. More complete information is available at: [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html)

Common symptoms include:

- Headache
- Confusion
- Difficulty remembering or paying attention
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Feeling irritable, more emotional, or “down”
- Nausea or vomiting
- Bothered by light or noise
- Double or blurry vision

- Slowed reaction time
- Sleep problems
- Loss of consciousness

**How do I locate a medical professional to help manage and clear the injured athlete?** Club leaders should identify a volunteer medical coordinator to help network and route various medical issues for the local athlete. Other resources could include inquiring with USSA about their recommendations. Another recommendation for concussion management at the club level is ImPACT. Check out the services they provide by visiting their website and locate a qualified medical provider trained in concussion management. <http://www.impacttest.com/>

**For parents, we recommend the imPACT testing** so that they have an impartial opinion on the status of their child's concussion. Kids often are keen to get back too soon, and will underplay the effects. As we know this can be extremely dangerous, and so with the testing the decision is pretty black and white, and takes the onus off of the parents being the "bad guys".

**Is our Club covered under USSA policy and procedures for concussion issues** or do we, as a club, need to also have a policy? We recommend that the club has their own policy in order to adhere to and be in compliance with both State Law and with USSA policy. You are welcome to use or adapt our policy as much as possible. The important thing is that you adhere to the law.