U.S. Elite
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April 8, 2016

School's Out, Skis On

By SR Staff

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Forget the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. These ski racing camps are where the gold medals are really hidden.

Sure, Brazil may have the beaches and the fanfare this summer, but our picks for outstanding performance lie elsewhere around the globe, from Vermont to New Zealand, at a specialized training and conditioning camp.

"Summer skiing is a great time to dial in equipment, work on fundamentals and slow everything down," says Martin Guyer, the USSA Eastern Regional Development Director. "It's the time for focused, deliberate practice to improve the quality of key movements and find some feel for the snow."

Camps offer more than the white stuff, however — they also provide fitness fundamentals and fresh air, critical to skier growth. "If you want to see gains in your skiing performance, building an aerobic base and improving strength endurance over the summer is key," says Guyer. "It's important to emphasize that a good conditioning and cross sport training program should follow a year round plan. Be creative, make it fun, push your perceived limits."

Choosing where, and when, to go, however, can be as exhausting as sprinting up Sugarbush Mountain or zipping down a New Zealand peak. So to help you navigate the course of camps, SkiRacing.com has partnered with the pros to present this exclusive feature.

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Who Were the Top American Juniors This Season?

Ambition Racing

Ambition Racing is heading to Coronet Peak, New Zealand, this summer with both FIS and top U16 athletes. The camp is specifically for the 2016-17 Ambition Racing Team, and coaches can't wait to get started in New Zealand. The camp kicks off in mid-July and extends through to mid-August or even the start of September for those FIS athletes who wish to follow the Continental Cup tour. For more information on dates, prices and detail, email marc@ambitionracing.co.uk.

Burke Mountain Academy U16/U14 Camp

The focus of the Burke Mountain Academy Camp at Les Deux Alpes, France, will be on technical freeskiing and drills on a variety of terrain. Les Deux Alpes is the second largest skiable glacier in Europe, with thousands of acres open for summer skiing. The conditions in town will be summer-recreation friendly: lots of hiking, biking, and sunshine; on the glacier it will be winter conditions for skiing. Camp dates are June 15 to 29 for U14-U16 aged athletes. For more details on activities and the benefits of attendance, see the SkiRacing.com Premium feature here that covered last year's camp at the same venue.

ELITEAM Conditioning Camps & Clinics

ELITEAM Conditioning Camps are specifically designed for young athletes ages 8 to 14 to teach the importance of sports physiology, sports psychology and sports nutrition. Celebrating its 25th year in 2016, ELITEAM is high-energy with nonstop action and is all about pushing limits, learning new skills and having fun with a simple goal: to develop healthy, confident and complete athletes.

Coaches use activities such as rock climbing, ropes courses and race situations to teach focus, mental imagery skills and stress management. Running, agility workouts and ski-specific exercises help racers understand the body's physiological functions. By baking bread and other healthy snacks, and nutritionally evaluating a variety of foods, athletes discover how diet can affect their health and performance.

ELITEAM is for high-energy kids who love the outdoors and are involved in competitive sports.

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Many of the campers who attend are young ski racers, but any young athlete is welcome. No matter what sport your children participate in, they can benefit from the ELITEAM program.

New in 2016, ELITEAM is offering a girls-only overnight camp called Girls Power Camp. This program remains true to ELITEAM's commitment to sports physiology, psychology and nutrition. But this camp also includes multiple daily workshops that teach skills to help young girls navigate the challenges of their sport and daily lives with a feeling of confidence and empowerment. Ultimately, the goal is to provide a focused path forward in which female athletes can more easily tap into their inner strength and confidence, and are inspired to push their limits with a strong body and powerful mind.

Olympian Doug Lewis, creator of ELITEAM camps, is a two-time U.S. Olympian and world championship medalist who has been involved in world-class athletics as a ski racer, coach, broadcaster, motivational speaker and spokesperson for more than 30 years.

Erich Sailer Ski Racing Camp

This long-established ski racing camp attracts racers from all over the U.S. and Canada. Erich Sailer co-founded the first U.S. summer ski racing camp on Mount Hood in the 1950s. "Safety first" is his motto, and with a lifetime of experience skiing on summer snow, his safety record is excellent. Parents can lodge with their children if they wish and are also welcome on the mountain.

Racers can expect intense slalom and GS training, coached by unmatched professionals who are dedicated to working with every racer with the goal of improving their racing skills. The camp includes daily videos and analysis, and a conditioning program, plus luxurious accommodations in a lush golf course setting with opportunities for recreational activities. The Erich Sailer Ski Racing Camp website features more information.

The list of notable alumni includes Lindsey Vonn, Kristina Koznick, Julia Mancuso, Sarah Schleper Gaxiola, Resi Stiegler, Michael Ankeny and Paula Moltzan.

For more information on Erich Sailer's Ski Racing Camp click here.

Keely's Ski Camp for Girls

Keely's Camp is the first girls-only racing, big mountain, and backcountry ski camp in North America. Keely's Ski Camp is dedicated to bringing girls powerful role models to inspire, guide, and mentor girls. Keely's Camp provides an encouraging, supportive, learning environment and the opportunity to be mentored by female Olympians and other successful athlete-coaches who have been where these girls are going. Keely's hosts camps at Mount Hood, Alta, Big Sky and Portillo.

The Ligety Weibrecht Ski Camp

Ligety Weibrecht Ski Camp provides coaching from Olympic and World Cup medalists Ted Ligety, Andrew Weibrecht, Phil Mahre and Steve Mahre, helping you improve while having fun.

Ligety Weibrecht Summer Ski Camp

The camp includes additional coaching from U.S. Ski Team members, NCAA All-Americans and experienced certified USSA club coaches for ages 7 through masters (adult accompaniment required for those under age 10). Learn from the best. Other activities include soccer, hiking, swimming, paddleboarding, mountain biking and an optional Deschutes whitewater river trip.

Mt. Hood Summer Ski Camp

This is Mt. Hood's most continuous and longest running summer ski camp: a 35-year tradition of ski racing excellence with world-class conditions, coaching and training facilities. Mt. Hood Summer Ski Camps, Inc., is Oregon's only ski racing camp licensed and bonded as a State of Oregon "Youth Organizational Camp," permitted under the United States Forest Service, and insured, bonded, and registered as a guide and outfitter under the State of Oregon Marine Board. Organizers report that they have been running the premier afternoon activities program in the Mt. Hood area longer than any other camp and have developed and maintained quality programs for athletes. A private campus is five miles from Government Camp, which promotes the safety of athletes while allowing the personal freedom on campus to be kids.

After-skiing activities include whitewater rafting, rock climbing, mountain biking, windsurfing, swimming, soccer, tennis, trampoline, skate boarding, challenge course, field sports and paintball.

National Alpine Ski Camp (NASC)

Ski camp with a twist – racers train GS and slalom in the mornings, and then play summer sports in the afternoons. (NASC also offers super G training during the first and second sessions.) Campers choose from three different after-ski activities each day. Hand-selected staff members are highly trained in ski racing and coaching and have the passion for working with young athletes in a safe, fun learning environment. In fact, the NASC philosophy is safety, fun and learning. A 6:1 athlete to coach ratio ensures effective learning for each athlete.

Coaches tailor a program for each individual athlete based on their motivation, level of understanding and movement patterns. NASC uses terrain-based learning (TBL), the only camp at Mt. Hood reporting to do so, in which a custom wave track is built every season to challenge the athletes' balance.

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National Alpine Ski Camp 2016
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Camp activities include giant slalom and slalom alpine summer ski race training, tennis, swimming, croquet, windsurfing, mountain biking, rock climbing, climbing wall, mini-golf, whitewater rafting, hiking, field sports, volleyball, rollerblading, ski tuning, ski video analysis, race tactics and more. Double-session campers participate in a day trip to the Oregon coast.

NASC is located at Mt. Hood (Timberline Ski Resort) in the summer and Copper Mountain in the fall. The NASC summer campus is The Resort at the Mountain in Welches, Oregon, a premier ski and golf resort nestled in the western highlands just 15 minutes from Mt. Hood. Its modern luxury condominium custom houses are located on the golf course or on the banks of the Salmon River in beautiful locations. Privately catered with locally-grown fresh produce, the camp serves healthy, balanced home-cooked meals. The fall camp is at the Copper Mountain Inn, slopeside at Copper Mountain in Colorado.

Olin/Lacasse Ski Racing School

This camp features advanced instruction in ski racing from world-class coaches Tony Olin and Josee Lacasse and their acclaimed international staff. Coaches provide students of all ages with the leading GS and slalom techniques and present them with tactical evaluation in a safe, well-supervised environment. The staff designs proven, innovative drills and exercises for the long-term technical development of each racer, plus video on HUDL's all-new video feedback system. Racers can also expect off-hill video analysis; highly effective, low student-to-coach ratios; full-length courses and race simulations; cross-training activities enhancing coordination/sport specific skills; equipment and basic biomechanical evaluation; and conditioning and tuning. Other activities include cookouts, swimming, and exploring Oregon. Camps are located at Mt. Hood in the summer and Vail in November.

SBSTA Mt. Hood Camp

Designed for U10 through U16 alpine skiers who want to take their skiing to the next level, Sugar Bowl Ski Team & Academy's Mt. Hood Summer Camp aims to provide passionate, competitive skiers with the chance to work with SBSTA coaches from all levels, make lifelong friends, and have amazing experiences. Led by Seth McCadam, Technical Director of Alpine Development, this camp will focus on fundamentals in preparation for the 2016-17 ski season. Conditioning and other off-snow activities are also included.

While SBSTA camps are tailored to specific age groups and while ski disciplines vary, all SBSTA camps strive to promote athletes' love and excitement for the sport of skiing while simultaneously instilling the principles of grit, grace and courage. In addition to sport-specific training, all SBSTA camps incorporate fun, skill-based adventures and events.

Organizers report that they use the latest high-level equipment and training aids to provide the best and most comprehensive training available. On-snow camps incorporate video analysis on a regular basis, and, when appropriate, electronic timing — both of which allow athletes to gain timely feedback regarding their skill acquisition.

Speedy's Ski Camps

Another ski racing season could start with a training block at Speedy's Annual 2016 Mt. Hood Summer and Fall Camps, and at the Copper Mountain fall and Thanksgiving camps. Mark "Speedy" Archer reports on another successful winter season leading the Colorado Warriors, a Copper-mountain-based private women's team, and a series of successful Speedy's Hood summer and Copper fall camps. Speedy and his highly experienced staff, which includes USSA coaches, are kicking off their 2016 spring and summer sessions starting with the Mt. Hood summer camps project of three sessions from June 21 through July 15, followed by Speedy's Annual Thanksgiving camp in Copper from Nov. 20-26.

Speedy's Camp, staff members say, is a fantastic way to hone individual ski racing skills. The program is designed to allow for small, 1:6 coach-to-athlete (or smaller) ratios with multiple freeski and gate-training runs. Speedy's proven training progression creates a solid platform of fundamental skills, focusing on technique, tactics and individual racing skill development. This early-season foundation aims to provide racers with a head start on their forthcoming 2016-17 racing season and beyond.

Uros Pavlovcic Ski Racing Camp

Since its foundation in 2004, the Uros Pavlovcic Ski Racing Camp in Switzerland has earned itself reputation through its huge success. Besides excellent training at one of the best resorts for summer skiing, it also offers a great cultural experience for all its athletes. The Uros Pavlovcic Summer Camp consists of 10 days of skiing and two recovery days. The Saas Fee glacier, where various national teams train side by side, is one of the best spots for summer skiing.

During the camp, athletes and coaches stay at the Camillo Apartments, conveniently located close to the center of Saas Fee, a gondola and sport center. Saas Fee summer camp coaches (pacesetters) and surrounding national team skiers serve as brilliant examples for proper ski technique in order to push athlete's potential. Individual video analysis of athletes' performance on the glacier aims to ensure that he or she will receive in-depth feedback.

The staff includes Uros Pavlovcic, former Olympian and World Cup racer and 2014 inductee into the Sierra Nevada College half of fame; Matjaz Stare, Europa Cup racer and 2002 Olympic coach; Giulio Bosca, Westminster College Ski Team, Europa Cup and World Cup racer and former member of the Italian National Team; Ann-Kathrin Breuning, Westminster College Ski Team, Europa Cup racer and former member of the German National Team.

U.S. Elite
Train, Play, Smile

U.S. Elite Camps

U.S. Elite Camp takes pride in offering a high-level ski training program with a focus on fun and safe activities, and a team atmosphere. In Mt. Hood, campers enjoy the breathtaking beauty of the Pacific Northwest with a traditional camp setting featuring wood cabins nestled among fields and trails.

This action-packed camp is ideal for experienced ski racers ages 10-18 (U12-U19) who love being a part of a motivated team and fun outdoor post-skiing activities.

On hill, athletes train with supportive professional coaches in slalom and GS freeskiing, drill courses and full training courses. Training groups are based on age class and ability, as well as catering to individual learning styles, ensuring a successful camp for everyone. All training courses are age appropriate and in line with current rules and standards. The afternoons include fun, team-based activities; campers can choose from rock climbing, yoga, adventure and field games.

U.S. Elite commits to spending less time hanging out during off hours and focusing more on fun, fitness, and training. The staff strives to offer the best all-round summer ski camp available, and prioritize 24-hour supervision and safety. Parents can access the online Camp Diary at any time, and can rely on the all-inclusive tuition fee, with no hidden costs. For those traveling from the Northeast, U.S. Elite offers staff-chaperoned group flights from Boston and the New York area to Portland.

To be included in our Summer Camp feature please email stheis@skiracing.com.

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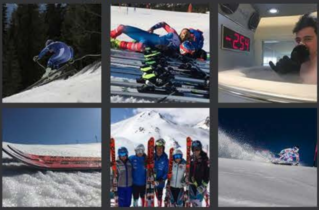

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