



“Ski racing is unlike any other sport in the world, often times a race comes down to hundredths of a second. There is no such thing as a perfect run. The athlete who is able to most efficiently recover from their mistakes will be the fastest. The conditions are extremely uncontrollable as the racer is only able to control their own skis. That’s what makes it fun.”

- Sam Fuller

# THE ALPINE TEAM. GOING FAST. TOGETHER.



**IN 1995, COLLINGWOOD WON** our very first provincial athletics banner. It was for snowboarding. We didn't win another alpine banner for almost 20 years. But over the last five years, Collingwood has become a perennial favourite at the alpine provincials. Twice in the last three years, Collingwood has accomplished the outrageous by sweeping all three categories (boys, girls, combined).

Unlike most of our athletic competitions, Alpine isn't split into divisions based on school size. There is only one division that includes schools that may have many more students than Collingwood from which to select their team. There is also no competitive distinction for age or grade. Athletes simply compete, by gender, as either novice or experienced. The novice division is typically for Gr. 8/9 athletes that are new to racing. A feeder program, novice athletes race on a course that is shorter and a little less intense. The experienced division is for athletes that are more advanced, many of whom participate in ski racing outside of school. The experienced division team is capped at 15 athletes per gender.



Alpine is a short but intense season. Training begins in December and leads up to the North Shore championships at Whistler and, ultimately, the provincials in early March. Only the experienced division competes at provincials, with six athletes per gender. At provincials, athletes race on a GS course, with a combined time over two runs. There is also a timed terrain GS event, which takes place on a ski cross course. After competition, all of the individual placements are assigned

points, and the team with the most points takes home the banner.

So how did Collingwood become such an alpine powerhouse? Longtime alpine coaches Kevin Waterhouse and James Ravensbergen credit the arrival of Calindy Ramsden as a key moment in the development of our current success. Calindy grew up on the North Shore, racing for the Whistler Mountain Ski Club and represented BC on the North American circuit. "Most schools have coaches that can't really help the experienced racers," says Kevin, "With Calindy, we're different."

Since then, we've seen a unique culture of leadership emerge among the alpine team. The nature of alpine racing fosters many organic opportunities for leadership and mentoring that team members such as Sam Fuller, Jamie Border and Olivia Tiller have embraced. Even though it's an individual sport, there is an amazing amount of camaraderie that develops between the athletes as they support and look out for one another.

"The cool part is that it isn't just our experienced ski racers that win us the banners," said Calindy, "But they've been really important for the growth and learning of their peers. Leaders like Jamie and Sam have really helped the entire team succeed."

This year's provincial championships will be held at Panorama in March. Go Alpine Cavs! 🏆

### Wentworth Ski/Snowboard Club

This club is a great after-school activity for anyone in Gr. 4-7 looking to improve their ski or snowboard skills and have some fun. We head up the mountain for lessons with Grouse instructors for 4 weeks and celebrate with a banquet up on the mountain on the final night. This year we have our biggest turn out yet with over 30 participants.

- Jeff Stacey

