

## **Suffolk Vikings Ski Race Team**

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### **Information Sheet 1: An Introduction to the Suffolk Vikings Race Team**

The Suffolk Vikings are a slalom ski race team based at the dry slope at Suffolk Leisure Park in Ipswich. It is a club run by volunteers for anyone who is interested in ski racing. We hold two/three training sessions each week and compete in races locally, nationally, and sometimes internationally. Although we are based at the Suffolk Leisure Park, the Vikings are an independent club, run entirely by volunteers and run on a not-for-profit basis. The Vikings are funded through a small membership fee and various events held throughout the year.

This fact sheet is one of a series produced by the club to help introduce new members and potential new members to the club and its activities. The full set of fact sheets are:

1. An Introduction to the Suffolk Vikings Race Team
2. Dryslope slalom racing, an introduction
3. Membership Fees and Costs
4. Blue Ribbon
5. ERSa Summer League
6. Other skiing races and competitions
7. Equipment
8. Non-Vikings Training
9. Contact Information and Useful Websites

All the factsheets can be found on the club website at [www.suffolktivings.org.uk](http://www.suffolktivings.org.uk)

#### **History**

Founded in 1983 the Vikings have grown from a small group of ski race lovers to over 100 members, aged from 5 to over 60! The Vikings compete in the Eastern Region Summer League against clubs from Norfolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire.

#### **Can I join?**

If you want to ski race then yes, you can join. Vikings' training is intended for those who can already ski and is not suitable for complete beginners. However, it is not necessary to have skied on snow to join the Vikings. If you can't ski yet, you need to learn first, and the place for that is on one of the courses run by the Suffolk Leisure Park. Successful completion of the beginners and improvers courses at the Slope, plus some practice, should bring you to a standard that is suitable to join the Vikings. Many of our members started on the dry slope and raced with us long before they ever skied on snow. Before you join you will be offered a trial at our Saturday 8.30 – 10.30am training session, where a coach will assess your ability and, if you are not quite ready, tell you what you need to do to get to the required standard. Once accepted you will start training with us in this session, where the focus is on technique and skiing around brush gates or stubbies (targeted points on the slope). The Vikings Saturday session is where the foundation for slalom racing is developed. Once you have mastered these basic techniques you may also be invited to join the Vikings Monday 6.30 -8pm session where techniques learned on Saturday are consolidated.

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The Vikings are committed to ski racing and expect all members will commit to compete in at least four ERSA races during the season. Although skiing with the Vikings will improve your skiing, our training is focussed on racing and not leisure skiing. If you just want to brush up your skiing technique before your next holiday, perhaps consider some of the ski improvement courses run by Suffolk Leisure Park.

### **Vikings Training**

The core training session for the Vikings is Saturday morning, from 8:30-10:30. Once you have joined you will be put into a group according to your training needs. Each group has a permanent coach or coaches assigned to it and that coach will work with you and the group to improve your technique and racing ability. The groups are mixed ability groups based on predominantly on training needs rather than speed or experience.

The other training session is held on Monday 6.30-8pm and attendance is by invitation once you have established yourself in the Saturday sessions.

You can monitor your performance through the monthly timed Blue Ribbon races, see the Blue Ribbon fact sheet for more details.

### **Vikings Races**

The Vikings compete in the Eastern Region Ski Association (ERSA) summer league and other competitions run by SnowSport England. Vikings members often compete in other competitions as well, either as individuals, school teams, or other teams. See the information sheets on the ERSA Summer League and Other Competitions for more information.

### **Other Vikings Activities**

The Vikings are a sociable team, and organise several other non-skiing activities as well, including a summer camp, trips away, a bowling afternoon, as well as an annual presentation evening. Non skiing family members are welcome and encouraged to get involved, there is always plenty of help needed in many aspects of running the club and the training.

### **What does it cost?**

For a full explanation of the costs involved, please see our information sheet on Membership Fees and Costs. We try to keep the cost to a minimum, and please remember, all the coaches give their time for free, as do the committee and volunteers that help run the events and training.

We also have a fact sheet explaining the equipment you'll need.

### **Next Steps**

To find out more, read our other fact sheets, and then email us at [info@suffolkvikings.org.uk](mailto:info@suffolkvikings.org.uk) and we'll invite you to come and visit us and find out what it's all about.