

Congratulations and welcome to the great sport of cross country skiing! We hope that Ski Tigers will be a fun, challenging, and enjoyable experience as well as an opportunity to meet new friends.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide basic information for all Ski Tiger families, but especially for new skiers. We hope you find it helpful.

About Ski Tigers...

Our Mission Statement: Copper Country Ski Tigers is dedicated to introducing youth from Houghton and Keweenaw counties to the joy of Nordic skiing in order to encourage a lifelong love of the sport and respect and appreciation for the outdoors. (2000)

A brief history: Ski Tigers began in 1990 as the dream of Beth and Russ Reid. Cross Country skiing was their passion and they wanted to share that passion with the local community and in the process create a ski community for area youth. Ski Tiger volunteers continue this dream with their commitment, generosity, and passion. Volunteers continue to be the heart of Ski Tigers. In fact, unlike many other youth organizations, **EVERYONE** involved is a volunteer.

2007 Ski Tigers Calendar

Date	Location	Date	Location
Jan. 6	Swedetown Trails	Mar. 3	Swedetown Trails
13	MTU Trails	10	Jr. Bear Chase-Swedet.
20	Swedetown Trails	17	Swedetown Trails
27	MTU Trails	TBA	Pool Party-Finlandia 1-3
Feb. 3	Swedetown Trails		
10	MTU Trails		Saturdays - 1pm
17	Swedetown Trails		at each location
24	MTU Trails		

Important Policies:

Safety: Every skier's safety is paramount. Please review the following safety policy with your skier(s).

Skier responsibilities:

1. Ski with your group & follow your coach's directions.
2. Wear your armband at all times during each lesson.
3. Return your armband to the group helper after each lesson.
4. Ski within your ability.
5. If you are lost, stay in the same location & wait for an adult.
6. Be respectful of other skiers on the trail.
7. Dress appropriately for the weather and make sure that your clothing is dry before heading out to ski.
8. Go to the bathroom before heading out to ski.

Parent responsibilities:

1. Make sure that your child is dressed appropriately and fed before skiing.
2. Make sure that your child is ready to ski and join their group by 12:55pm each Saturday.
3. Make sure that your child has gone to the bathroom before they head out to ski.
4. Ski with all children **7 and under** or those in the **green group** during the lesson.

Weather: Ski Tigers will be CANCELLED when:

- temperature at the ski site is below 0 degrees F (-18 C)
- the wind chill is BELOW -10 F (-23 C)
- in the judgment of the Ski Tigers president or her designee, a combination of factors, such as temperature, wind, blowing snow and road conditions makes Ski Tigers unadvisable.

Parents will be notified of cancellation via the phone tree or by the email list serve by 11am on Saturdays.

Parent Involvement: Ski Tigers is successful because of the commitment and involvement of our parents. In fact, our group wouldn't exist without it. As volunteers, we've developed a program to share responsibilities. It's our Parent Involvement Program, or PIP. **Each family is required to earn 4 points** by volunteering. There are many opportunities to help from coaching to pouring juice. More info. is available at registration.

Saturday Skiing

Group Descriptions:

At the beginning of each ski season, the Ski Tiger Board places skiers in groups based on ability, age, social maturity, group dynamics, and the number of coaches available. New skiers, depending on information from registration, will either be placed in a group or put in an evaluation group for placement. There is movement between groups during the season. This will be determined by the coach coordinator. Parents are encouraged to ski with their Tiger, but it is a **requirement** for GREEN skiers. Here is a brief description of each group.

Green: young beginners, accompanied by a parent, learn the basics of classic ski technique, safety, & etiquette. The focus of this group includes: how to put skis on, getting up from falls, skiing up and down hills, and taking short tours.

Blue: Skiers improve their balance, confidence, endurance, continue diagonal stride development, double pole, herringbone snowplow, snow plow turn, and step turn. **(Classic only)**

Red: Skiers continue skill development while skiing longer distances. Depending on group's progress, skate skiing may be introduced. **(Predominately classic, may introduce skating.)**

Yellow/Bronze: Skiers cover longer distances at greater speeds while developing advanced aspects of classic & skate skiing.

Silver & Gold: All Ski Tigers are encouraged to try racing, but members of this group focus on racing, developing their strength, endurance, and technique. They usually ski 90 min.

Tuesday Tigers: these Tigers want to spend more time on their skis, were in RED or above last year, are too young for the MS/HS team, are proficient skaters, can ski 5-8k in an hour, LOVE to ski, want to be there. This group does NOT take the place of your Saturday Ski Tiger session, but is in addition to it. The site alternates between Swedetown and Michigan Tech.

Middle School & High School Racing Team: these Tigers practice 5 days/week during ski season and ski in local and regional races. Most of these skiers were green group skiers and wanted to continue skiing after Gold and Silver, but all area middle and high school xc skiers are welcome and encouraged to join. Some of these skiers even qualify and compete in the Junior Olympics (the junior national championship).

Equipment Basics

Skis, bindings, boots, poles, wax, oh my...

With so many styles, models, prices and sizes to choose from, selecting ski equipment for your skier can be confusing. Here's some basic information we hope you find helpful:

STYLES & TYPES of SKIS

1. **No-wax (fish-scale)skis:** don't require a grip wax. This is an ideal BEGINNER ski, requires the least maintenance, usually costs less, and can be mounted with any type of binding.
2. **Skating skis:** are designed for skating & aren't suitable for striding. DO NOT buy skating skis for a beginner. Skate skiing requires a ski with no grip, so the skis don't have fish scales & the flex (camber) of the ski is such that applying a grip wax won't give the ski grip. Skate skis tend to be more expensive & require glide wax maintenance. Unless your skier is an advanced skier, we don't recommend purchasing skate skis.
3. **Combi skis:** can be used for either striding or skating. They don't have fish scales, so you apply a grip wax to the kick zone (where the fish scales were) if you're striding. If you're skating, the kick/grip wax can be removed. Combi skis are a good choice for the young, advancing skier who wants to stride and skate. They are generally less expensive than skating skis.

SKI SIZING and FIT

DON'T BUY SKIS THAT ARE TOO LONG no matter what the ability of your skier. Longer skis are more difficult to maneuver- period! Many a young skier and coach have been frustrated by skis that are too long.

Beginners: ~head high or slightly taller

Intermediate: can be taller than head-high depending on ability; never taller than the wrist of a raised arm.

Skating: these skis tend to be a little shorter than striding skis
Head high or slightly higher is about right.

BINDINGS: the things that hold the boot to the ski.

1. **NNN & Salomon-** this type of binding on almost every new pair of skis. Either one is excellent.
2. **3 Pin-** this is an old style binding still found on old skis, but not generally on newer equipment. We don't generally recommend 3 pin, but they are ok.

Equipment Basics, cont'd

BOOTS

This is easy--just make sure the boots match the bindings. General touring boots work for beginners and combi boots, which have a stiffer ankle, for more advanced skiers who stride and skate.

POLES

Poles are not as critical as skis and boots to a skier's performance and experience. General touring poles work well for beginners. Poles with a smaller 'racing style' basket promote better technique for intermediate & advanced skiers. Skating poles are longer and stiffer than touring poles.

Height: just under the armpit for **beginners**

slightly higher-chin high- for more **advanced skiers**
below the nose for skating poles for **skating**

WAX

1. **Glide wax:** for both striding and skating skis. Iron on.
2. **Kick wax:** for the kick zone of classic skis. Cork on.

Note: Both local ski shops, Cross Country Sports and Downwind Sports, will wax skis for a nominal fee. Throughout the season, wax clinics may be held. Both Swedetown and MTU have community wax benches. Again, ask. You'll get plenty of advice!

WHERE CAN I PURCHASE EQUIPMENT?

Cross Country Sports, Calumet

- offers a trade up program for youth general touring (no wax) skis, has package deals, a good selection of equipment, and very knowledgeable.
- offers club discounts on designated day

Downwind Sports, Houghton

- package deals, very knowledgeable, and a good selection of equipment.
- offers club discounts on designated day

Ski Tiger Ski Swap/ Ski Tiger Gear Swap

- Club-run swap with registration in fall.
- Second swap in the spring and includes all season gear.

Some helpful information:

Label equipment: To minimize equipment mix-ups, we strongly encourage all skiers to label skis, poles, hats, water bottles, etc., with tape and a permanent marker.

Dressing in layers: A layering system usually consists of 3 different layers. The inner layer should be moisture-wicking, the middle layer should be insulating, & the outer layer a shell. (Dress Green skiers like they are going to play outside, at least until they're skiing/moving more.)

More information:<http://www.nsp.org/Safety/dress.htm>

NOTE: cotton is not a good inner layer because it doesn't wick

Communication: Most of Ski Tiger seasonal information will be dispersed via e-mail newsletter, with a few exceptions: the first newsletter will be mailed to all existing Ski Tigers, if other arrangements have been made (ie no email), or timely notification requires activation of the phone tree.

Kilometer Club: Keep track of your kilometers from the first day you ski until early April (this year's date TBA) on your KM calendar*, mail them to the Kilometer Club Coordinator before the Pool Party. Everyone in the KM Club will receive special recognition. More details in March newsletter. *available at registration.

Important Contact Information

President: Betsy Rossini 482-4824

PIP Coordinator: Deb Hart 492-7534

Newsletter/VP: Steve DeLong

KM club: Elise Nelson elillesk@mtu.edu

Swedetown Chalet: 337- 1170

List serve: skitigers-l@mtu.edu

Web: www.keweenawtrails.com Click on Ski Tigers

2006-07	<i>Kilometer</i> Skier Name	<i>Club</i> Skier Name	<i>Weekly</i> Skier Name	<i>Totals</i> Skier Name
Week				
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
TOTAL				

KMs to: Elise Nelson 401 2nd St. Houghton 49931
 elillesk@mtu.edu