

JJST sports
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The Johnsville Junior Ski team held its first race of the season Saturday, Jan. 30, at Diamond Peak in Incline Village, Nev.

"The race went off without a hitch and the teams are really coming together under the direction of their coaches," said JJST Director Mike Wood.

Because roughly half of the 2009 team graduated to their high school teams or are playing other sports, coaches for the development team are working their racers to improve their skills for placement on racing teams.

"This year we have about 20 new skiers and roughly 16 returning skiers, which makes for a great hill dynamic and creates an opportunity for returning skiers to mentor new racers," said assistant JJST director Lisa Kelly.

This year there are five teams: the Blizzard Wizards, Fire on Ice, White Lightning, Extreme Team and the Snow Leopards, which is the developmental team.

All staff are volunteers, from the directors, timers, scorekeepers and coaches.

Coaches work with racers, ages 7-14, to develop basic skiing, racing techniques, and sportsmanship and to nurture the children's love of the sport.

After one race, there are five races left, with two intra-league competitions including the Big GEE and the Buddy Werner Competition.

This year, all the races take place in the Lake Tahoe area at Sugar Bowl, Alpine Meadows, Donner Ski Ranch and Homewood. This gives the team a chance to ski a variety of courses and terrain.

A typical day involves arriving at the hill by 8:30 a.m., a team meeting until 9 a.m. and drills until 11 a.m. The races are from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. After lunch it's free skiing with family and friends and sometimes special clinics with coaches and volunteers.

"It is no mystery that extra-academic sports are a great way for kids to feel successful and studies show that participation in clubs and organizations supports strong self-esteem and social growth, so JJST meets a very strong need for our Plumas County Youth," said Kelly.

There is still time to join JJST. If you are interested in getting your children involved and skiing with your children, call Central Plumas Parks and Recreation for registration. There are some scholarships still available.