

## **UNIVERSITY SKIING**

### **Preamble**

1. Several Canadian universities have supported cross-country ski racing teams and/or clubs within their athletic programs. At one time, there was an official national championship sanctioned by the national governing body for university sport (a predecessor to the Canadian Interuniversity Sport: “CIS”). As of the date of this policy, the sport is officially recognized by the Ontario University Athletics organization, which sanctions an annual championship. In addition, an unofficial national championship – the Canadian Colleges and Universities Nordic Championships – is held in conjunction with the Canadian Cross-Country Skiing Championships with the cooperation of Cross Country Canada (CCC).

2. At present, university skiing is surviving largely through the enthusiasm and voluntary leadership of the participants and a few supportive administrators. Generally speaking, university skiing is challenged by limited formal organization and financial resources, which may limit training and coaching support and access to travel for competitions. These challenges threaten the viability of existing programs and make expansion of university skiing problematic.

3. Although university skiing is not a formal program of CCC, the Association views it as a valuable constituent element of the broader cross-country skiing community within Canada. University skiing serves to retain more competitive skiers in the sport after they complete their secondary education, whether those skiers are continuing to pursue goals at the national and international level or simply interested in remaining competitive for the enjoyment of the sport. University skiing can also attract new athletes to the racing dimension of the sport. In the USA, university skiing (under the auspices of the National Collegiate Athletic Association – the NCAA) fills the critical role in skier development that is performed in Canada by CCC training centres and some full-service clubs. Therefore, the promotion of university skiing in Canada has the potential to fulfil an important role in support of the CCC mission.

### **Aim**

4. The aim of this operational policy is to provide direction for how the relationship between CCC and university skiing will be managed.

### **General Policy**

5. CCC formally acknowledges that a strong university racing program with a national footprint will make a positive contribution to the development of cross-country skiing as regards athlete recruitment, athlete retention, athlete development, coaching and general promotion of the sport. Although CCC cannot accept responsibility and accountability

for the governance and/or management of university skiing, CCC commits to partnering with the university skiing community to achieve shared objectives and to providing limited staff and communication support subject to availability and affordability.

## **Policy Objectives**

6. The general objective of this policy is a healthy and expanding university skiing program. In addition, there are three specific objectives:
  - a. **Integration.** There are mutual benefits to be gained through the closer integration of university skiing programs and CCC. In principle, university ski programs should function within the CCC structure of divisions and clubs, either as stand-alone entities or in partnership with CCC clubs, and all athletes should be members of CCC.
  - b. **CIS Status.** At present, cross-country skiing is not specifically recognized by Canadian Intercollegiate Sports (CIS), the national governing body for university sport, as an official sport wherein participation culminates in a national championship. CCC supports the objective of obtaining CIS status for cross-country skiing, and will provide assistance to the university skiing community in achieving it. Efforts will be focussed on both strengthening existing university programs and expanding to create new ones where local circumstances warrant.
  - c. **Winter Universiade Participation.** The Winter Universiade provides a high-calibre international multi-sport competitive experience for participating athletes. As the Winter Universiade serves as a valuable development vehicle, CCC supports the provision of funding by Sport Canada for this event and will provide staff assistance to the selection and organization of the cross-country team.
7. Strategies and tasks designed to support the attainment of these objectives will be developed within CCC's annual Business Plan.

## **Responsibility Assignment**

8. Although several of CCC's operational committees may be involved in matters relating to university skiing, CCC considers this activity to fall predominantly within the Sport Participation Development mandate. Therefore, within the CCC management structure, primary responsibility for the implementation of this policy is assigned to the Coach and Athlete Development program area, and the responsible staff contact is the Director of Coach and Athlete Development (DCAD).

## **Scope of Responsibility**

9. The DCAD's specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. facilitating communication between university programs and local CCC divisions and clubs, with a view to improving integration and creating mutually productive partnerships; and
- b. assisting with the organization of the cross-country team for the bi-annual World Universiade; when time availability permits, and subject to the availability of funding, the CSPD may fulfil the role of Team Leader.