



2026 ALPINE ONTARIO SPRING DEBRIEF

May 8, 2026



WELCOME

We would like to acknowledge that all of us in this meeting are located on the traditional and ancestral lands of Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat peoples who have inhabited this land, since time immemorial.

AOA acknowledges the history that many nations hold in the territories on which we work, train and race.

AOA is committed to a relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples based on the principles of mutual trust, respect, reciprocity, and collaboration in the spirit of reconciliation and inclusivity.





ANNOUNCEMENTS & AGENDA

- **Please be conscious of side conversations, step outside if need be**
- **Washrooms - downstairs**
- **Want to share? - use a microphone, even if you think you are loud, still can't hear you**

- 8:30 Doors open and Registration
- 9:00 Opening Remarks - Patrick Biggs
- 9:30 Coach Education and Development update - Sarah/ Jacques
- 10:00 Break
- 10:15 Ontario Ski Racing "State of the union" address - Joseph Lavigne
- Followed by engaged discussion between panel of experts and coach audience
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 Coach Interview - Tim Gfeller (via Zoom)
- 2:00 Break
- 2:15 Coach pathway – how to navigate the platforms and pathways - Sarah Edwards
- 3:00 Social Hour - Ice Cream!
- 4:00 Summit ends

TERRA SMITH & KALLE ERIKSSON
OLYMPIC SILVER & 2X BRONZE

MICHAELA GOSSELIN
OLYMPIC BRONZE

HANNAH SCHMIDT
WORLD CUP 2X BRONZE
JARED SCHMIDT
WORLD CUP SILVER & BRONZE

KEVIN DRURY
VAL THORENS WORLD CUP GOLD





HOW DO WE GET THERE?





PATRICK BIGGS

AOA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OPENING REMARKS



MESSAGE OF URGENCY





COACH ED & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

**SARAH EDWARDS
JACQUES REID**





AOA Coach Education 2025–26

- This season was about growth, consistency, and impact
- Your work as facilitators directly shaped coach development across Ontario
- → **This program works because of you**



Program Overview

- 1124 total coaches supported this season (671 M / 417F / 36 Other)
- Entry Level: 290 (↑ from 258)
- Development Level: 48 (↑ from 46) - 19 Female
- Performance Level: 19 (↑ from 17) - 7 Female
- Growth at every level of the pathway
- → **Demand for coach education is increasing**



Funding - Subsidies and Changes

- Investment in female coach development continued, supported by Mackenzie Investments to subsidize 7 DL and 1 PL course fees by 50%.
- AOA also subsidized lift ticket costs for DL and PL candidates to \$50 per day to help offset course expenses
- EL Course - MED is now deintegrated - Coaches will need to take the online module to receive EL trained status (\$85)



Entry Level Impact

- 30 courses across 20 clubs
- 28 facilitators (7 women)
- Majority coaching U8–U12 athletes
- First exposure to structured coaching for many participants
- → **You are shaping the next generation of coaches**



DL & PL Pathway

- DL: 3 courses - 3 Hosts - BV/ CRA, GP, MSLM
- (1 split + 1 full formats - 1-December and 2 March
- PL: high demand with national alignment
- New facilitators entering the pipeline - Chris Wiwchar, Richard Vendrig, Adrienne Keyzer
- → **The pathway is progressing and producing results**



Evaluation Activity

- EL Part A: 120 | Part B: 47
 - DL coaching (training 9) (race 1)
 - PL coaching (training + race): 3
 - Evaluation activity still uneven across levels
 - → **We need to strengthen consistency in evaluations**
- Congratulations to New PL Certified Coaches!

Chris Wiwchar, Carey Heeney, Thomas Trusler, and Brian McGregor



Satisfaction

- Entry Level: 97–98%
- Development Level: 98%
- Performance Level: 99%
- Very few 'needs improvement' responses
- → **Coaches value the experience you deliver**



Impact on Coaches

100% reported improvement in coaching ability

- EL: building confidence and basics
- DL: applying structure and feedback
- PL: refining performance coaching
- **You are making coaches better at what they do**



Pathway Clarity

- 87% understand next steps clearly
- 12% only partially understand
- 1% unclear on next steps
- Consistent across all levels
- → **We need to be clearer at the end of every course**



Facilitator Feedback

- “Amazing, encouraging, professional”
- “Helped me improve so much”
- “Would work with them again”
- Repeated across many responses
- → **You are remembered — and appreciated**

The background of the slide is a photograph of a ski race. In the foreground, a skier is seen from the side, wearing a white helmet with 'POC' on it, a blue and white jacket, and pink ski pants. In the middle ground, another skier is visible, wearing a white helmet and a grey and white racing suit with 'MACKE Investme' and the number '37' on it. The background is slightly blurred, showing other racers and a snowy slope. The text 'Impact of Facilitators' is overlaid on the right side of the image in a dark teal color. Below the title, there are three bullet points in black text, each enclosed in a semi-transparent white box. The overall design is clean and professional, with a light blue and white color scheme.

Impact of Facilitators

- “Very positive learning environment”
- “Great coach – made me enjoy the course”
- “Taught us how to teach and create a positive atmosphere”



What Coaches Want More Of

More individual feedback

- Clearer feedback on progress vs expectations
- More consistency between facilitators (DL PL)
- Better clarity throughout the course
- → **Small changes here will have a big impact**



Learning Experience

- Top strengths: group size (79%), facilitators (77%), feedback (71%)
- Top gap: video sessions (~47%)
- Content improvement (~23%)
- On-snow delivery is strongest
- → **The experience is strong — delivery format needs work**



Other Modules

- **Speed Module - 28 - Craigleith/ Mealey**
- **Cam Stephen/ Jacques - Tell coaches early - LFs Needed**
- **Ski Cross Module - 10 Craigleith**

Coach Verification Report

For the first time AOA completed a coach verification process for SCUP coaches. Clubs provided the names of coaches in each program and AOA provided data on ACA membership and licensing status. The goal was to work with the coaches and clubs to ensure compliance, here are the results as of March 31 2026 -

U16 SCUP		
Number of Coaches	40	
Coaches Without ACA Membership	0	
Coaches Not Licensed	7	Safe sport
Number of Clubs with unlicensed coaches	6	

U14 SCUP		
Number of Coaches	76	
Coaches Without ACA Membership	0	
Coaches Not Licensed	9	Safe sport
Number of Clubs with unlicensed coaches	8	





Coach Verification Report

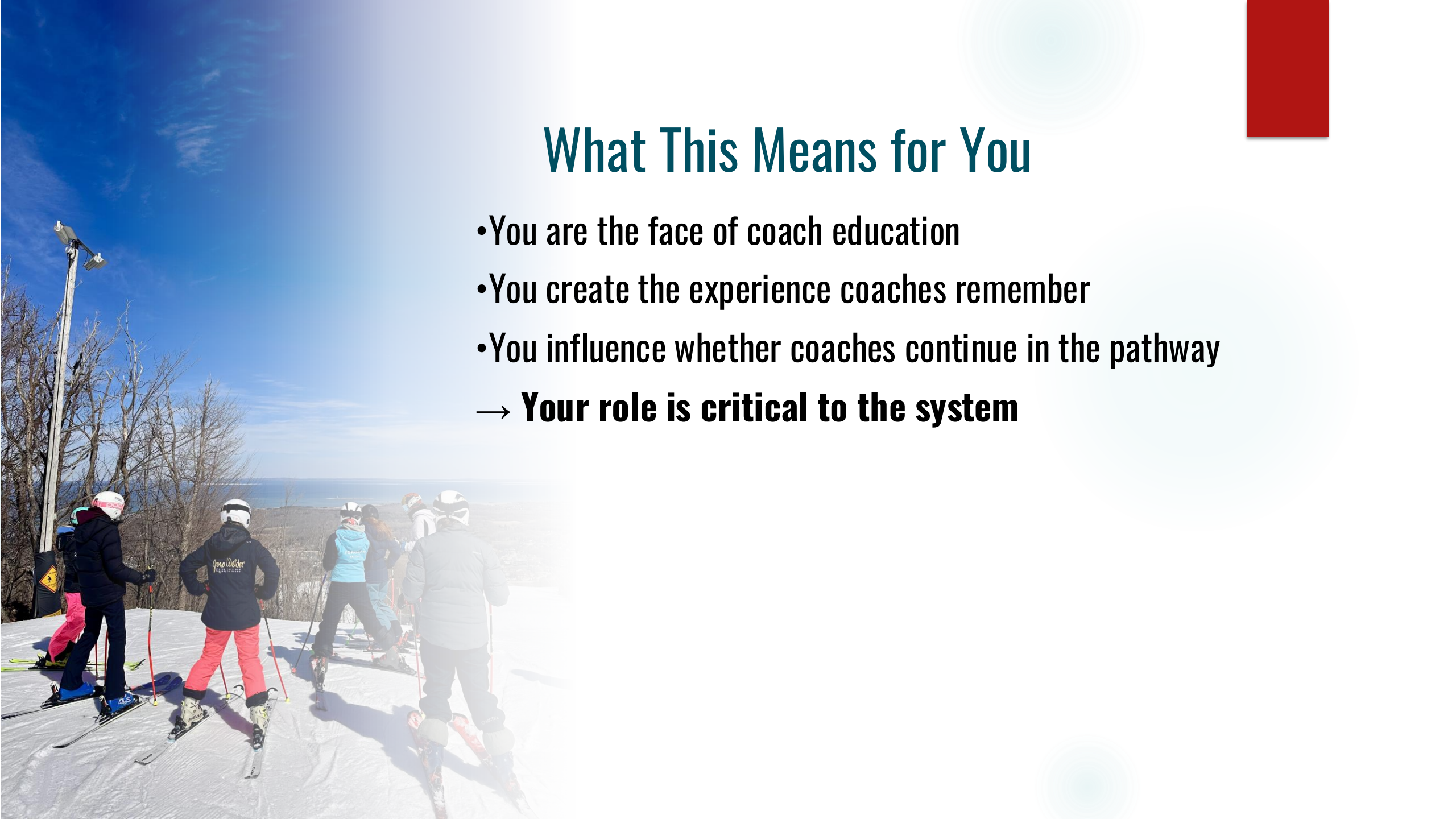
→ **Compliance is a growing priority — especially at U12**

U12 SCUP		
Number of Coaches	101	
Coaches Without ACA Membership	4	
Coaches Not Licensed	21	Safe sport
Number of Clubs with unlicensed coaches	10	

Recommendation - Discussion to be held with AOA and clubs regarding coach verification process for 2026-2027 season at the AOA Spring Summit May 8 2026.

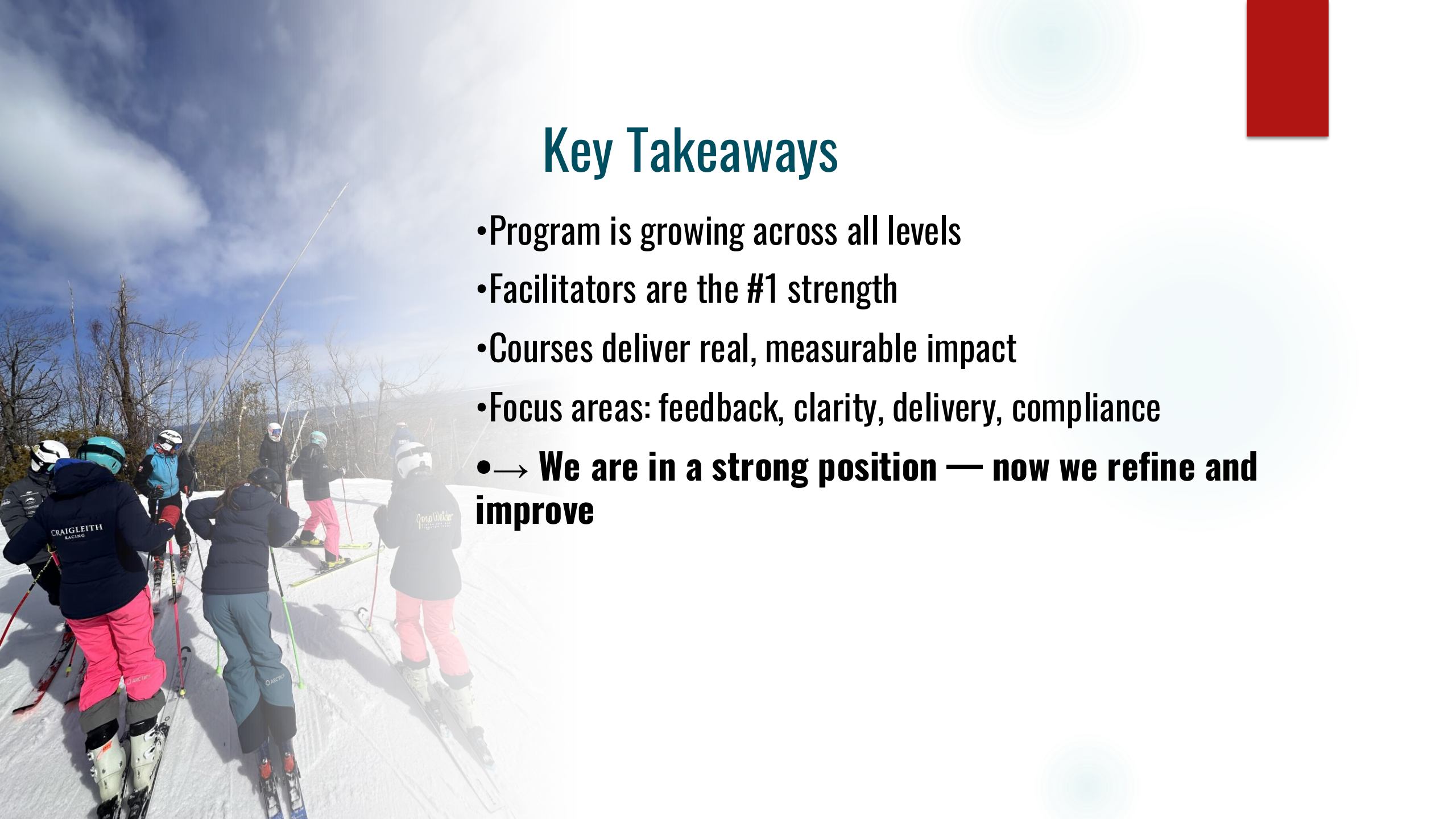
What This Means for You

- You are the face of coach education
 - You create the experience coaches remember
 - You influence whether coaches continue in the pathway
- **Your role is critical to the system**



Key Takeaways

- Program is growing across all levels
- Facilitators are the #1 strength
- Courses deliver real, measurable impact
- Focus areas: feedback, clarity, delivery, compliance
- → **We are in a strong position — now we refine and improve**



Final Thoughts ✨

- Fall Coach Conference Oct 24, 2026
Blue Mountain Resort

- Entry Level LFs Needed





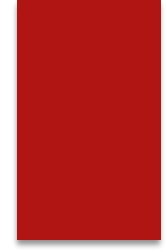
ONTARIO SKI RACING & DISCUSSION

Joey Lavigne
AOA High Performance Director





AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT
PREPARATION
PLANNING
HARD REALITIES
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
ONTARIO UNITED



	CAUSES/ PROBLEMS	SOLUTIONS
TRAINING ENVIRONMENT/ COACHING APPROACH	Lack of high-level coaches	More deliberate coach interface opportunities
		More deliberate coach development plan & Identification
		Focusing more on Coach Progression & Guidance
CALENDARING	We Race too much/ Training for specific races rather than overall LT skill development	Have a long term goal for calendaring (Plan)/ Allow for more training
		Calendaring plan should be age appropriate with proper progression
		Plan needs to be communicated with Parents and part of Parent education
		U14-16 Calendar Gaps to allow for Club or PSO Projects
		Creative Caledaring when it comes to racing allowing for more development of skills/ Ex: rent out space at MSM & run speed training camp + race



<p>MENTAL HEALTH/ PERFORMANCE</p>	<p>Not focusing enough on the speed factor/ Accepting to take risks/ Wanting to win</p>	<p>Provide coaches with mental performance tools to implement on/off the hill Using outside resources/ experts for MP: Kiri, Jackson & others... Competitive Assessment ???</p>
<p>OTHER</p>	<p>Lack of proper Parent education re Performance Pathway</p>	<p>Start early with Parent Education (U10 & below) Identify within Parent education where each age group fits in the big picture of our sport Cost and value of programming needs to be properly laid out for parents...Good coaching comes at a price and long term cost outline is important to help parents make good decisions for their kids</p>
<p>FITNESS/ S&C</p>	<p>Lack of culture around fitness & hard work required</p>	<p>The Culture of good fitness for our ski racers should be AOA Driven and FUN There should be rewards (meaningful) for fitness excellence See ideas from Project Column...Fitness/ cycling and off snow camps need to be created Promote Physical Literacy Proper Parent education when it comes to the importance of physical fitness</p>



TRAINING ENVIRONMENT/ COACHING APPROACH	Divided culture at Clubs/ U12 - U14 - U16 are very "siloed" and don't generally work together or communicate well	ACA SnowStars info/ Make more available to provide proper planning
OTHER	Athletes leaving the sport after U16	<p>What are the goals & objectives from each club towards Ski Racing?</p> <p>Help build a better culture...One that fosters identities as ski racers/ Encourages a love of going fast/ Builds the meta skills as athletes (dedication, love of sport, high personal standards)/ Make ski racing fast and doing well in school fit together</p> <p>Identify within Parent education where each age group fits in the big picture of our sport</p>
OTHER	Costs are too high to stay in the sport long term	Cost and value of programming needs to be properly laid out for parents...Good coaching comes at a price and long term cost outline is important to help parents make good decisions for their kids



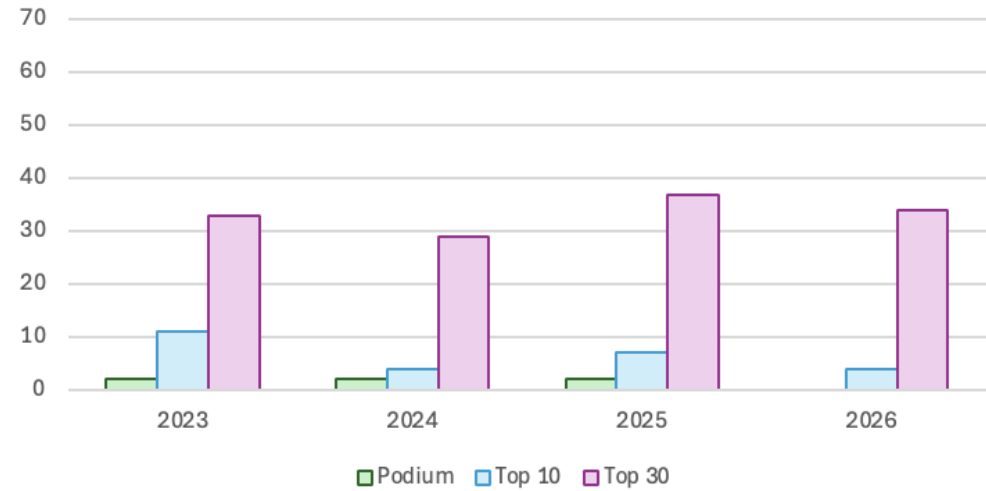
COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

WHAT WE DO ON A DAILY BASIS	An honest reflection of our current state
WHAT WE PLAN VS ACHIEVE	- AOA ability to affect performance at club level
REVIEW OF ACTUAL ACHEIVEMENTS	- Club ability to deliver results at U14/16 level
results at U14/U16 and FIS	- what is going on - planning of programs
ASSESSMENT OF INFORMATION FLOW	Information - AOA - have we done enough
- input given regarding planning and	- club - do they have the band width to deliver
execution - Pilarski for example	
Re calculation of delivery and execution	Build a review mechanism to deliver the changes needed
- review ADP	
- review Club effectiveness	

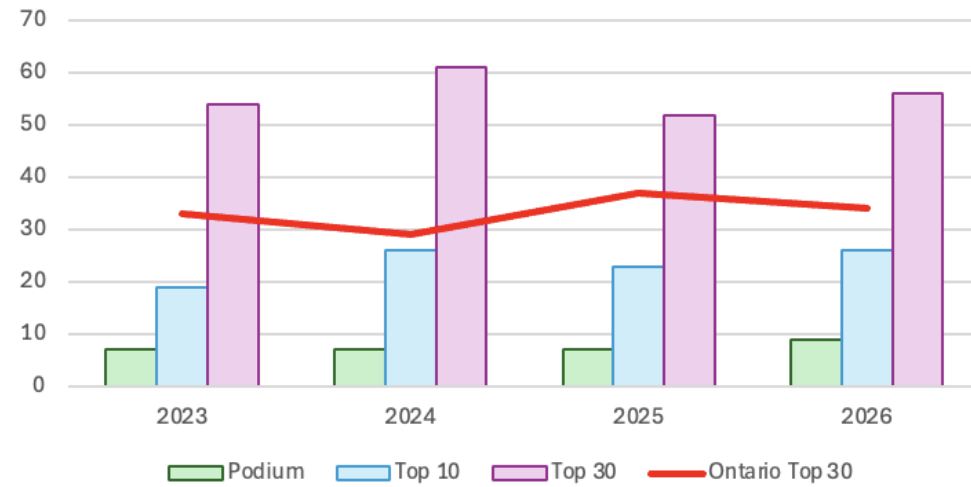


U16 EASTERN'S MALES

AOA U16-M



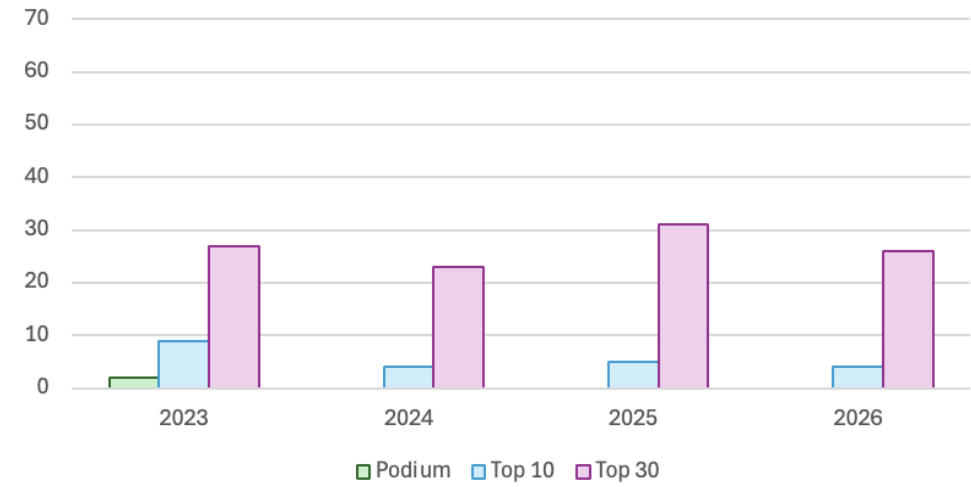
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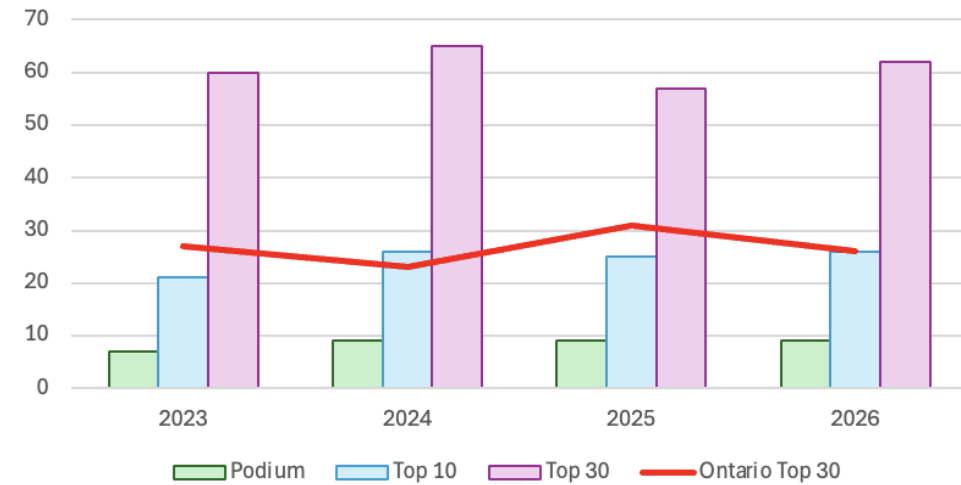


U16 EASTERN'S FEMALES

AOA U16-W



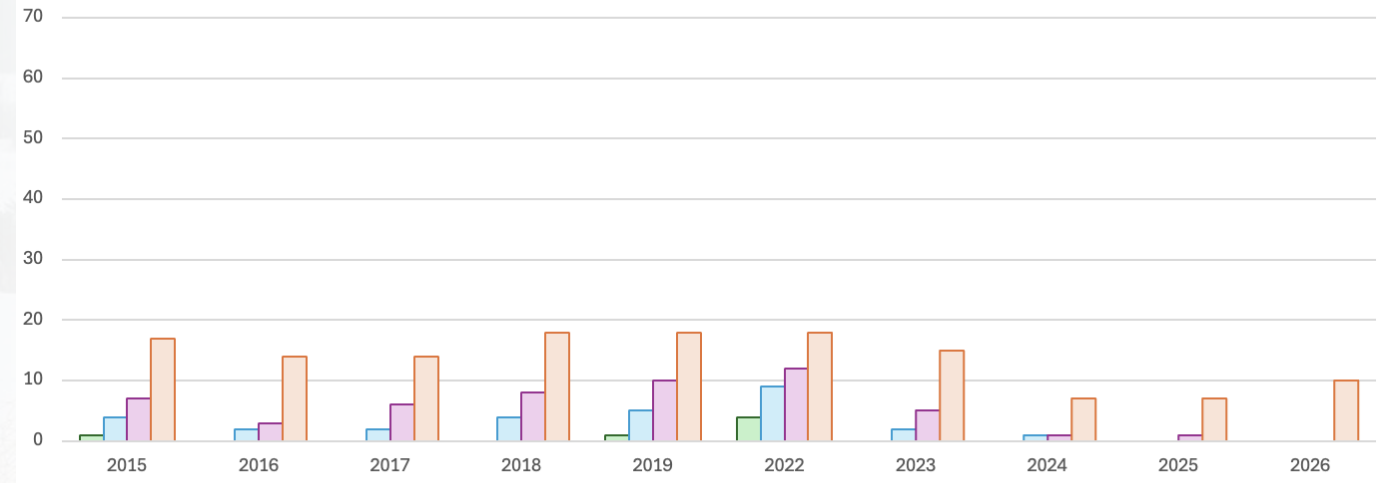
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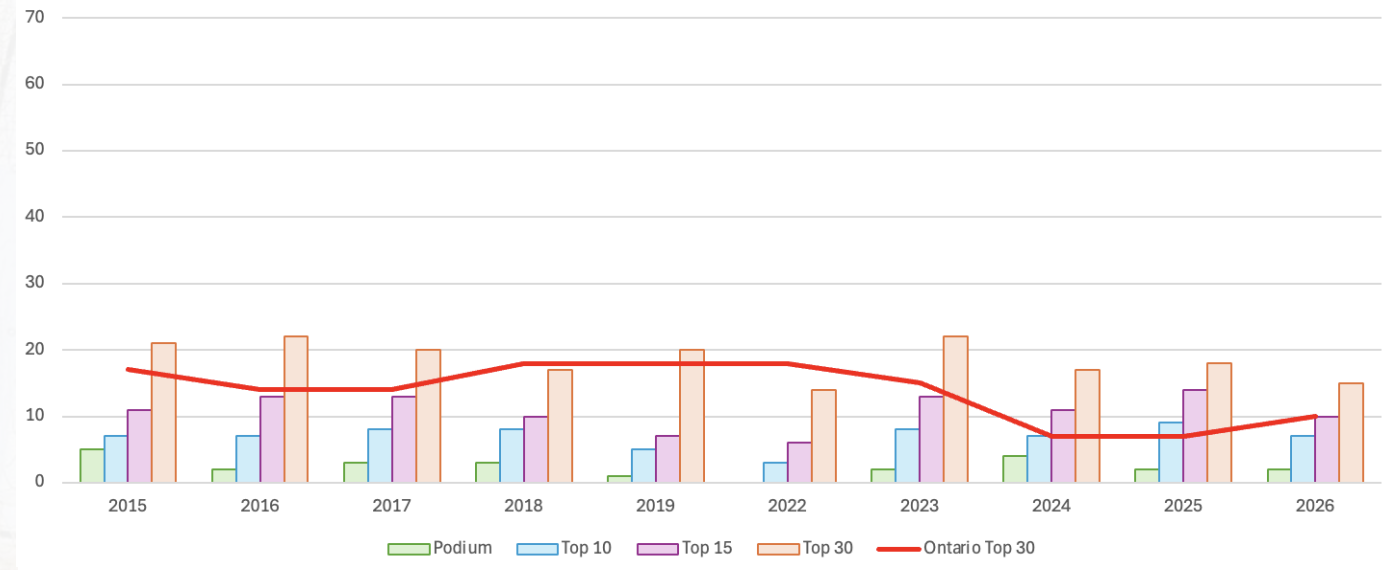


U14 CANAM MALES

AOA U14-M



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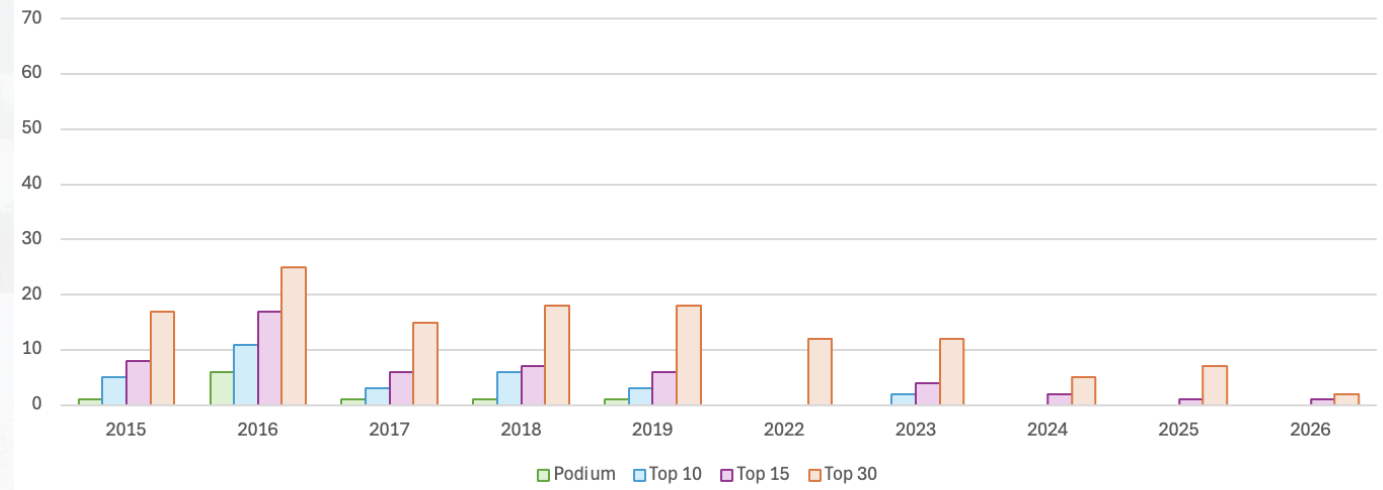


Podium Top 10 Top 15 Top 30 Ontario Top 30

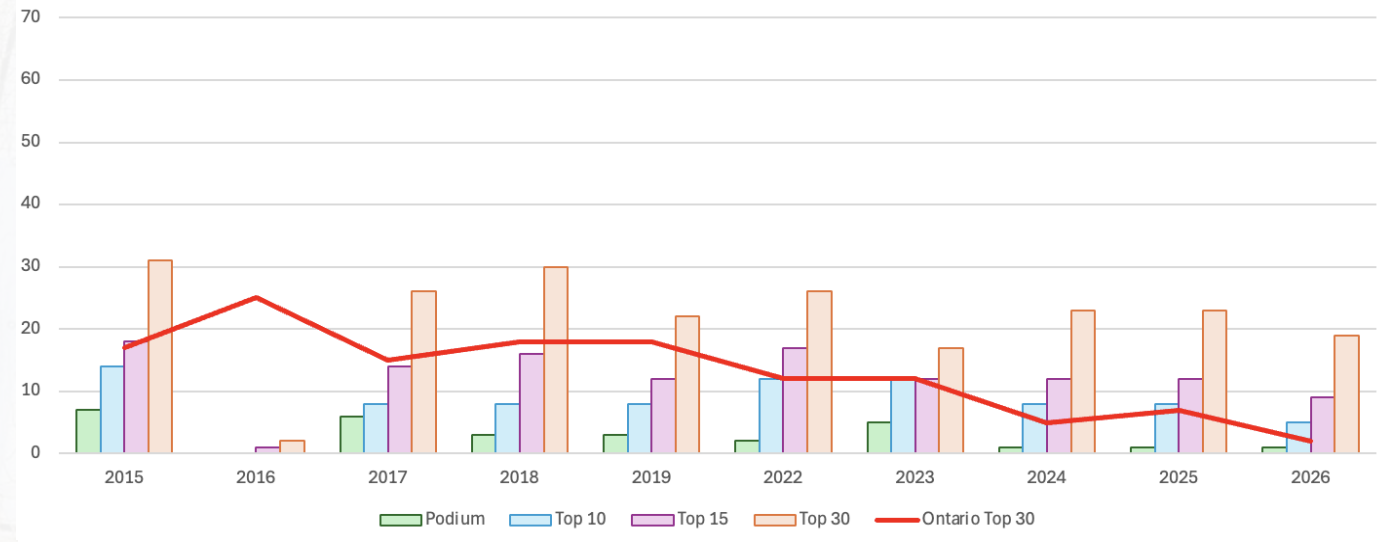


U14 CANAM FEMALES

AOA U14-W



SQA





NEXT STEPS

U14 U16 Summer Meetings



GUEST COACH
Tim Gfeller
Norway Women's Head Coach

