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Local athletes train with 3-time U.S. Olympian at Mount Snow

Mount Snow Academy ski racers learned some new skills from Erik Schlopy

At Mount Snow Academy (MSA), education is about more than just the classroom. It's about athlete growth on the mountain as well. Class was in session on Jan. 6-7 when retired World Cup alpine ski racer and U.S. Olympian Erik Schlopy trained with MSA students and other local athletes.

On Friday, Schlopy skied with 32 MSA athletes. The group spent time freeskiing and practicing drills, getting feedback from a living legend of the sport. Head of School Todd Ormiston said that not only are experiences like this amazing from a learning perspective, but also as a way to inspire the kids.

"Erik had an amazing career as an elite athlete and to have him visit us here at Mount Snow and share what he knows is invaluable for our students," Ormiston said. "He has been able to give them some great tips and reaffirm their excitement for the sport as we enter the busiest part of our season."

After skiing, Schlopy joined coaches, parents and MSA board members—some of who helped arrange the clinic—for a small private dinner at [the new campus](#), which opened this November. The dinner was a great opportunity for everyone to get fueled up for day two.

On Saturday morning, the Olympian worked with 50 athletes, ages 12 and under, from MSA and the Mount Snow Training Center at Mount Snow Resort. The group spent time working on USSA SkillsQuest drills as athletes work towards mastering skills critical for skiers interested in competing at an elite level.

"I like working with young athletes because of their excitement for the sport," Schlopy said. "They are out there with a smile on their face and if they don't get it right the first time, they get up and try it again. And being from New York, I love an excuse to work with the next generation of East Coast athletes."

While the retired World Cup skier had a chance to ski at the highest levels of the sport, he recognized that it's really all about creating life long skiers with a passion for the sport.

"The ultimate goal and the ultimate gift of ski racing is the love of the sport," Schlopy said. "If you don't make it to the Olympics, but ski for life, that's awesome. That's what it is all about."

About Mount Snow Academy

Based in West Dover, Vt., Mount Snow Academy is a winter-only ski academy, offering academic flexibility and elite training opportunities to winter sport athletes. Alpine skiing, freeskiing and snowboarding athletes benefit from one-on-one academic support and access to on-snow facilities at Mount Snow, Corinthia Parks and The Hermitage Club. Founded in 1972, the Vermont-based academy offers students the chance to spend their winters pursuing their athletic goals while they enjoy fall and spring at schools in their hometowns.