STILL TURNING HEADS (AND SKIS) AFTER 50 YEARS pg. 34

32 DEGREES

THE JOURNAL OF PROFESSIONAL SNOWSPORTS INSTRUCTION | FALL 2010

POWER HUNGRY?

OUR ALIGNMENT DRILL WILL FEED THE NEED pg. 52

Rocker Revolution!

Get In on the Innovation pg. 20

Snowboard Shift

Freestyle Focus Offers an Educational Edge pg. 78

Teaching Tip

Step Right This Way for Cross-Country Cornering pg. 66

THE 82TI HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY TEACHING PROS FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

SEE WHAT THE EXCITEMENT IS ALL ABOUT . . .

AVENGER 82 Ti:
"THE SKI" FOR PSIA

"We worked closely with product guys to develop a ski that would be dynamic at any speed and in any condition, we finally have a ski that's fun at 4 or 40 mph. There is no question that I ski better and have more fun teaching on the 82Ti, it's truly an extension of my body."

- Nick Herrin, PSIA Alpine Team

"This ski is perfect. I'll ski on the 82 Ti in anything."

- Dave Lyon, PSIA Alpine Team

Rossignol's PSIA Purchase Plan:
Go to **www.TheSnowPros.org**.
Simply log into the
MEMBER SERVICES page
and click the link for
PRO OFFERS to access
the latest from Rossignol.

ROSSIGNOL

32 DEGREES

The Journal of Professional Snowsports Instruction

EDITOR
Wendy Schrupp

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Tim Johnson

TECHNICAL REVIEWERS

Gwen Allard
Linda J. Crockett
R. Mark Elling
K.C. Gandee
Geoff Krill
David Lawrence
Jim Lindsay
David Lynch
Eric Lipton
Ross Matlock
Charlie McArthur
J. Scott McGee
Ben Roberts
Earl Saline
Eric Sheckleton

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
daveallendesign

AD SALES/SPONSORSHIP INQUIRIES
Andy Hawk, Marketing Director
Professional Ski Instructors of America
American Association of Snowboard Instructors
133 South Van Gordon Street, Suite 200
Lakewood, CO 80228
Phone: 303.987.9390
Fax: 303.987.9489
E-mail: marketing@thesnowpros.org

32 DEGREES is an official publication of the American Snowsports Education Association Inc. Education Foundation and is published in the fall, winter, and spring of each year. *32 Degrees* is a registered trade name of the American Snowsports Education Association Inc. Education Foundation, located at 133 South Van Gordon Street, Suite 200, Lakewood, CO 80228.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Address changes and inquiries regarding subscriptions may be submitted via e-mail to 32Degrees@thesnowpros.org or by conventional mail to 32 Degrees, 133 South Van Gordon Street, Suite 200, Lakewood, CO 80228. Please reference the old address and ZIP code as well as the new. Association members can also indicate a change of address through their member profile accessed via www.TheSnowPros.org. The post office will not forward copies unless you provide additional postage. Replacement copies cannot be guaranteed.

PSIA-AASI WEBSITE:
www.TheSnowPros.org

PSIA-AASI MEMBER SERVICES:
303.987.9390 or 303.987.2700
mist@thesnowpros.org

MIX
Paper from responsible sources
FSC® C015919
www.fsc.org

VISION:
Inspiring life-long passion for the mountain experience

MISSION:
We support our members, as a part of the snowsports industry, to:
- Develop personally and professionally
- Create positive learning experiences
- Have more fun

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
Eric Sheckleton

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
John Peppler

OPERATIONS VICE PRESIDENT
Ed Younglove

COMMUNICATIONS VICE PRESIDENT
Peter Donahue

DIVISION REPRESENTATIVES
ALASKA: Bill Ellis
CENTRAL: John Peppler
EASTERN: Bill Beerman
INTERMOUNTAIN: Carl Boyer
NORTHERN INTERMOUNTAIN: Walt Coiner
NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN: Eliza Kuntz
NORTHWEST: Ed Younglove
ROCKY MOUNTAIN: Peter Donahue
WESTERN: Neil Bussiere

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mark Dorsey

MANUSCRIPTS AND ART: *32 Degrees* invites the submission of articles, photos, and letters to the editor from its readers. All material submitted becomes the property of the American Snowsports Education Association Education Foundation, unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed mailing container. Send submissions via e-mail to 32Degrees@thesnowpros.org or by conventional mail to 32 Degrees, 133 South Van Gordon Street, Suite 200, Lakewood, CO 80228. For more information, call 720.963.4827. Queries and articles may also be submitted online at www.TheSnowPros.org.

ISSN 1943-7463

32 Degrees is printed on paper that contains at least 10 percent post-consumer waste fiber and is derived from forests that meet the strict environmental, economic, and social requirements of the Forest Stewardship Council. Inks used contain 27 percent renewable resources including linseed, soy, and corn oil.

32 DEGREES

CONTENTS

Fall 2010

COVER SHOT: PSIA Alpine Team member Nick Herrin powers through the pow at Colorado s Crested Butte Mountain Resort.
Photo by Sherri Harkin.

Photo shot with the HD HERO in automatic “photo every 2 seconds” mode.

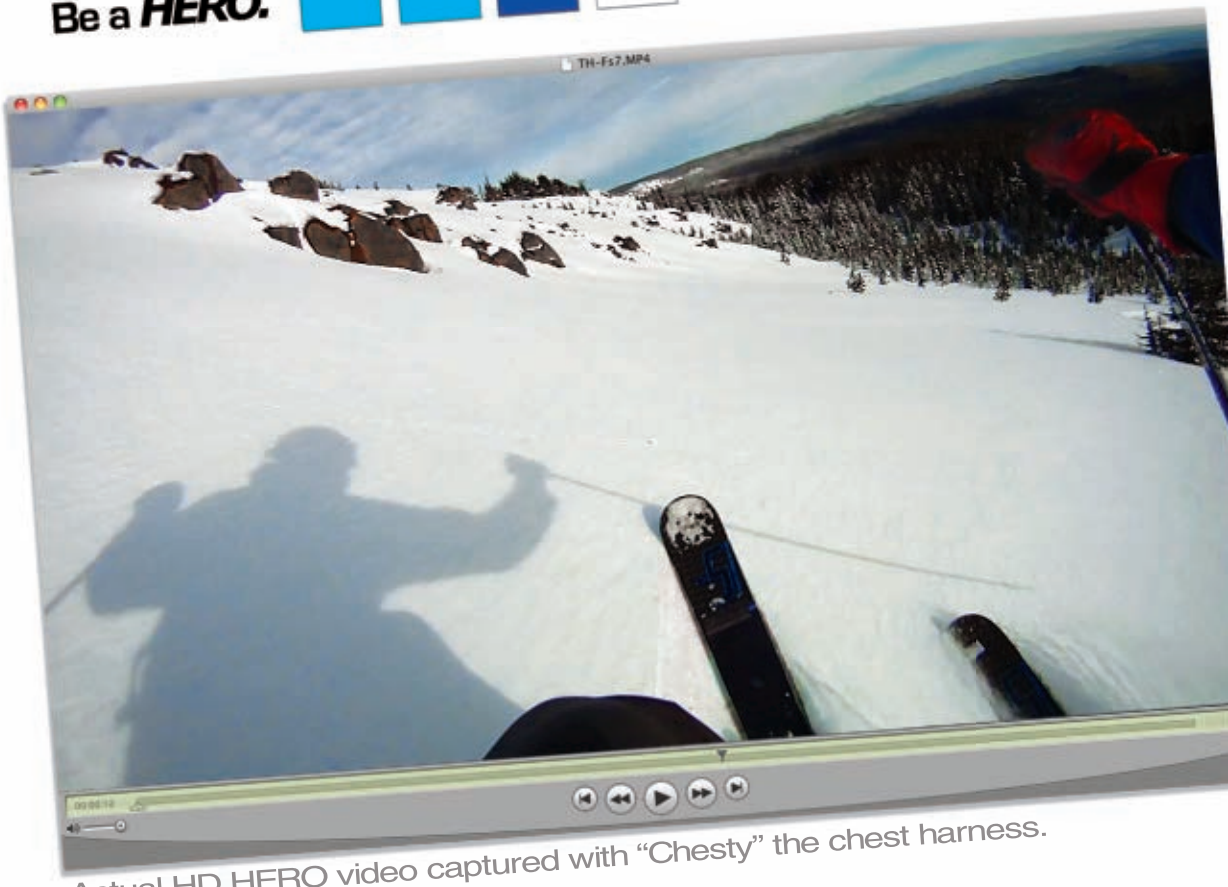
HD HERO
Starting at $179

Wearable HD Video.

1080p / 960p / 720p HD Video
Professional Quality Sound
Lithium-Ion Rechargeable
32GB SD Compatible
30 and 60 FPS Recording
5MP Auto Photo Mode
Waterproof 180’ / 60m
Integrated Battery Warmer
1 Year Warranty

GoPro

Be a HERO.™



Actual HD HERO video captured with “Chesty” the chest harness.

Chesty

Optional chest harness provides a “knees and skis” view and allows for easy access to the GoPro camera on your chest. $39.99 msrp

Also available at:

REI
www.rei.com

gopro.com

415.738.2480 / dealers welcome

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Onward, Upward, and Forward

By Eric Sheckleton
PSIA-AASI Chairman of the Board

There are many story lines I could choose for my first commentary as PSIA-AASI board chairman. None of them would be possible without the hard work and dedication of my predecessor, Ray Allard. ¶ Truly the right leader at the right time, Ray faced significant challenges during his two terms:

- A difficult separation of staff and infrastructure from the National Ski Patrol after 17 years of consolidation, all while navigating the financial crises of the past three years.
- Implementation of the single biggest project in our history, a common association management software system for all nine divisions and the national organization.
- A push to set PSIA-AASI and the divisions on the path to truly work as a unified organization.
- The need to enhance PSIA-AASI's relationship with area operators as they focus on increasing trial and conversion through lesson-taking.

The course for our association's immediate future was set during Ray's second term when, in October 2007, the national board and staff met with division presidents and division staffers for some timely strategic planning. One main outcome was a willingness to work together more closely—through communication, collaboration, and consolidation.

This required Ray to dedicate much of his time to phone calls, meetings, and facilitation. The result of outstanding leadership, vision, and commitment to the member is evident in two years of record membership—now at 30,172. Ray and the board of directors were willing to take risks and make the hard decisions. His legacy will be PSIA-AASI's progress toward becoming the organization our founders envisioned in 1961. As we approach PSIA'a 50th anniversary, it is only fitting that this commentary begin with a heartfelt thank you to Ray Allard.

So where do we go from here? Our industry knows it must do a better job of attracting and retaining young skiers and snowboarders. While not everyone is on board, many area operators are working hard to include their ski and snowboard schools in efforts to create programs that bring in more guests. PSIA-AASI and its members are valuable partners in that endeavor, both nationally and within individual resorts.

This requires a renewed focus on creating a connection with guests and nurturing passion for the sport. As one resort operator told me, instructors do a great job of teaching people to turn right and left, but we could do a better job of teaching people to smile and come back. Don't get me wrong, I think we are pretty darn good at both and I don't think anyone would like to see us focus any less on technique. However, there is a need to make a positive guest experience the priority, and emphasize the tools PSIA-AASI provides members to perfect the guest experience without diminishing the technical tools that give guests access to more of the slopes.

This coming season, you'll see significant changes to PSIA-AASI's website (www.TheSnowPros.org) and services. The website is fast becoming the hub for resources on learning snowsports and enjoying the mountain experience, allowing us to forge valuable partnerships with other organizations to support programs like Go With A Pro, Learn a Snowsport Month, Winter Feels Good, and Your Mountain. Through social media outlets—particularly Facebook and Twitter—we've extended our reach and access throughout the industry and beyond. We will soon be rolling out a web-based community for members that will help us connect with each other far more easily; sharing ideas, war stories, and plans. And the *Movement Matrix* will see significant change—think caterpillar to butterfly—with new design, expanded content, improved navigation, and easier access. All these initiatives help position us as leaders in our industry and, we hope, keep you fired up about skiing and snowboarding.

The bottom line? Your association is working to provide tools and resources that help you succeed and have more fun teaching skiing and/or riding. The end result is that your presence helps your ski and snowboard area attract and retain more visitors. More visitors means a more successful industry.

Like I said, I had many potential story lines. "PSIA-AASI Inspires People to Ski and Ride: Helps Save the Ski and Snowboard Industry" is a great start. 32°

Eric Sheckleton was elected this past June to serve as PSIA-AASI's chairman. An instructor trainer for Bridger Bowl Resort in Bozeman, Montana, Sheckleton was a member of the AASI Snowboard Team from 1997–2000 and currently serves as a division snowboard examiner, alpine clinician, and children's clinician. He is the first PSIA-AASI chairman to have started his career as a snowboard instructor. Sheckleton is also a Level I-certified nordic instructor.


Julia Mancuso, Ski Champion
Zealöt since 2010.
Julia at home in Hawaii with her Kenjas, Racetiger GS Race Stocks and Kikus.
Franck Berthuot
See why Julia is a Zealöt.
Get the free app at gettag.mobi
How fast? How confident? How sure on your feet do you want to feel? For Völkl skiers, it's not a question of which brand of ski; it's which model. Become a Zealöt at Volkl.com.
Völkl
It's your turn.
NO BEACH ACCESS

My PSIA 'Vacation'

What was going through my mind when I assumed I could just show up and pass that exam? After five years of being away from teaching.

Silly me.

One of my trainers said, "You're a strong candidate." Another one didn't say much except, "It'll be good, it'll be good."

So I went to the Level III exam at Killington.

I decided one month before the exam to attend, and between that day and the exam date I had exactly four ski/training days to devote to passing the thing. So with a general consensus that my skiing was up to par, I worked on teaching-oriented tasks with my trainers.

Did I mention that I only had four days to prepare? And yes, I do realize people put in years of training for this exam. I'd been on that plan before: eight years prior I went to a Level III exam and failed. Well, I didn't so much fail as end up at the hospital with a blown ACL. That was the end of my previous Level III exam experience.


Sharron Eastman

Courtesy of Sharron Eastman

After surgery and rehab I taught for two more years, then free skied, and simply didn't teach for the five years after that. While having no ski school commitment was good for my family and my skiing in general, I was ready to return to teaching.

So it was with very little preparation and not much enthusiasm that I signed up to attend the exam. "Well," I thought, with a shrug, "I really need a vacation; why not go?" My PSIA friends were rolling on the floor, laughing at that one. Nothing like a nice relaxing exam experience to rest up for my busy, complex Monday-to-Friday job.

But here's the really funny part, I've never been to a PSIA event where I didn't learn something about me. What I learned this time around is that life is better when you're working to improve yourself and not just sticking with the skills you already have. In order to pass, I was really going to have to train and not just assume my skills at that time were enough.

Anyway, I bet you can guess my results. I passed one out of three. I was stunned . . . and stunned in a good kind of silent way. My number was 16. Hey, my number was supposed to be up there.

So I walked out onto the deck at Killington in the late March sun and sat by myself. The thought I couldn't shake was this: I didn't pass. There was a reason I didn't pass. So what door is going to open for me because I'm not destined to take this path yet?

After totally stumping myself with that question and still feeling a little bummed about not passing, I did what any devoted skier would do. I went skiing. I made huge, arcing, Level III turns down Double Dipper with two

What PSIA-AASI Has Done For Me

I had a terrific time passing my Level I snowboard exam, and immediately said to myself, "I want to do that again." The people, the riding, and the new concepts helped me forget the minus-20 degree weather and my frostbitten nose. When the 2009–10 season arrived, I signed up for the Level II exam.

One month before the exam, though, I fell off a horse and hit my head. I had a minor concussion, some hairline fractures, an AC shoulder-joint separation, and a possible torn ligament. Out of work and money, I would now lose two precious weeks of on-snow training.

Burleigh Sunflower, the development team member who'd been helping me train for the exam, arranged a bake sale to help me out financially. On the day of the sale there were tons of baked goods whipped up by the snowsports school staff. The event raised enough cash for me to take my exam.

Courtesy of Laura Gervais

Helping with prep, fellow instructors offered tips for exam success. I was nervous, but knew that my friends were behind me.

When the exam arrived, the three days of testing flew by. On the evening of the last day the results were posted: there was my name on the list of those who'd passed!

The experience helped me realize that anything's possible if you really want it. I celebrated with friends I'd made during the exam, and went home saying the same thing I said after passing my Level I: "I want to do that again."

Laura Gervais
Bromley Mountain, VT

Web Extra

For more on Laura's exam experience, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and go to the "Web Extras" page in the *32 Degrees* section.

OFFICIAL SUPPLIER TO THE AASI AND PSIA. For area uniform sales, contact Tanya Faw at (888) 367-6743. For all pro sales inquiries, email patagoniapro@patagonia.com. To sign up for your pro account, please log into the member center at thesnowpros.org. Click on the "pro offers" link and then click on the Patagonia logo to register.

patagonia®
patagonia.com

For those who think it's not the deepness, but the steepness. Haines, Alaska. ADAM CLARK

guys I had met the day before. I smiled and started to recover.

I spent the end of my day watching my friends pass the second part of their Level III exams, and witnessing their huge relief and celebration was wonderful.

I mentioned that I was wondering what door would open when I didn't pass the exam, and in case you're wondering too I can now share what happened. I returned to my home mountain and skied only four hours that Saturday. What I found in those four hours, though, was worth the entire winter and the vacation, er, I mean exam experience.

Cake I baked for friends who did pass the exam.

Sharron Eastman

What I found was a beginning place, a place from which to start. I hadn't really found that starting point before the exam, and now I had the opportunity to learn and grow for me, my skiing, my heart, my life.

As I watched my friends at their "end", proudly wearing their gold pins, free skiing that morning I knew I may not have gotten what I went for but I'm pretty sure I got what I needed.

(Note: on April 4, 2010, at Maine's Sugarloaf Resort I passed part one of my Level III exam. Moving on to part two . . .)

— *Sharron Eastman*
Sunday River, ME

REACH OUT IN YOUR SPACE !

32 Degrees welcomes your views! Feel free to write a letter to the editor, opine on a topic near and dear to your heart, or submit an essay on "What PSIA-AASI Has Done for Me." Submissions to the "Your Space" department may be sent by fax (in care of *32 Degrees*) to 303-987-9489, by e-mail to 32Degrees@thesnowpros.org, or by conventional mail to *32 Degrees*, 133 South Van Gordon Street, Suite 200, Lakewood, Colorado, 80228. Please include your full name, address, and daytime telephone number.

WHAT DO YOU DRIVE?

M-Power FS IQ

G-Power FS IQ

Learn why you must take Blizzard's new Power Series for a test drive at:

blizzardsportusa.com/media/testdrive.html

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA

PSIA Members:
Katie Ertl - Teams Manager
Bobby Murphy
For online pro sales go to **thesnowpros.org**

BLIZZARD SKI
www.blizzardsportusa.com

LINEUP

Sign up online

Activate your online account at www.TheSnowPros.org and get instant access to all the benefits of PSIA-AASI membership like pro offers, educational opportunities, association events, instructor tools, and more.

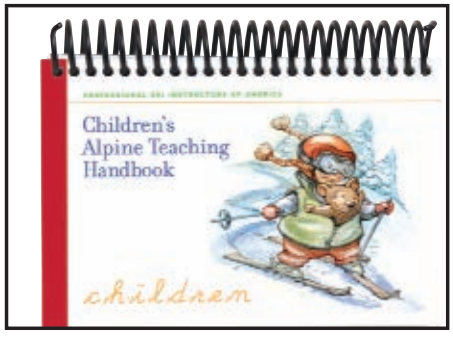
Facebook/Twitter

Just a casual reminder that PSIA-AASI is on Facebook and Twitter. Join our social networking communities online at www.facebook.com (search for "The Snow Pros)" and www.twitter.com/thesnowpros.

NEWS OF NOTE

New Handbook for Children's Alpine Instructors Released

Looking for a children's alpine teaching resource you can stash in your pocket for quick reference on the hill? Look no further than PSIA-AASI's *Children's Alpine Teaching Handbook*. This new resource, produced in cooperation with the Vail and Beaver Creek training departments, offers fun and innovative drills, exercises, and



tips to keep your students engaged and learning all lesson—and all season long.

Available now through the print or online PSIA-AASI *Accessories Catalog* (item# 161, $19.95).

Ski Visits Nearly Top the Charts

Good news for U.S. ski resorts, which hosted 59.7 million visits during the 2009–10 season, only 1.2 percent below the all-time record of 60.5 million skier visits in 2007–08, according to the *Kottke National End of Season Survey*. Across the country, every region (except the Northeast) saw substantial gains in skier visits, despite mixed snowfall, a decrease in average days open, and a decline in capital improvements.

HOT

PADDLEBOARDING: Inland surfing is taking over the mountains, from the lakes to the rivers. Great for balance, exercise, and stoke, now you can ride the unfrozen water right up until the snow falls.

ROLLING FOR ROCKER: Ski and snowboard's hottest technology is blowing up this winter, with enough new designs for a Top 40 parade of hits. Get on the bandwagon now, or you might just get left behind. Check out all the good info on pages 20–26.

SKATE BANANA

REGISTERING EARLY FOR THE 50/50: The PSIA-AASI 50/50 is reveling in half a century of American snowsports. That's a lot! While we handle the corresponding party plans, now's a great time to book a great room to use as a basecamp. See the ad series in this very magazine, and log in at www.TheSnowPros.org for more details.

PSIA 50 YEARS 1961 2011

NOT

VIDEO GAMES: Pretending you're Shaun White or Jon Olsson stomping joystick tricks may be tons of fun, but that much time inside isn't good for anybody, and the only thing it's helping get in shape for the season is your wrist.

DOWNROCKING: You think those folks who doubted snowboards and shaped skis would've learned. But some small on-snow segments still say—maybe a little too loudly—that rocker won't work. Word of advice: hit the mute.

WAITING UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE: Or you could just sleep in your car if really want to get back to your snow-bum roots. But putting quarters in the meter every two hours gets old at midnight, and you're guaranteed not to have a date.

"It was kind of a stealth season," said Nolan Rosall, who prepares the Kottke survey for the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA). "The ability of the industry to perform well in a difficult economy and without the catalyst of exceptional snow points to the underlying enthusiasm of snowsports participants and the resilience of their participation in a suboptimal environment."

Even better news for ski and snowboard instructors is that, across a sample of 84 U.S. resorts, lesson volume increased by 9.2 percent. Those same resorts only saw a 3.2 percent increase in visitation, which equates to a 5.8 percent increase in visitor lesson volume. But don't break out the champagne just yet. As Baby Boomers increasingly retreat from the sport, the NSAA's Model for Growth is predicting a 2.5 percent decline in ski and snowboard visits every season from now until the year 2021.

"For the decision makers at ski areas across the country," said Michael Berry, NSAA president. "This has got to be priority number one."


Nakon


Johnson


Hamley


Tulley

New Staffers Join PSIA-AASI

PSIA-AASI heads into the upcoming 2010–11 snowsports season with four new staffers filling positions in the member services, communications, and marketing departments.

Joining the national office staff in Lakewood, Colorado, are Sara Nakon, who serves as membership services director, Kyle Hamley as membership services coordinator, Tim Johnson as assistant editor, and Erin Tulley as marketing coordinator. For more information, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and see the full press release in the Press Room link for the PSIA-AASI Info Center.

PSIA-AASI Board Leadership in Place for 2010

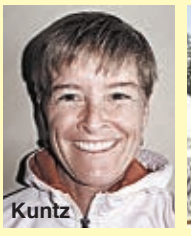

Sheckleton

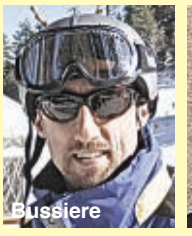

Peppler


Younglove


Donahue


Coiner


Kuntz


Bussiere


Hickey

On the heels of elections held at the PSIA-AASI Summer Meeting, the association is heading into the 2010–11 snowsports season with new leadership at the board level.

Eric Sheckleton, who most recently served as the association s executive vice president, ran unopposed for the chairman s position, taking over the gavel from Ray Allard, who chose not to run for a third term. Sheckleton is a snowboard examiner, alpine clinician, children s clinician, and nordic instructor for Northern Rocky Mountain Division. A former member of the AASI Snowboard Team, he is the first PSIA-AASI chairman to have started his career as a snowboard instructor.

In other election news, a new executive committee took shape, with John Peppler (of Central Division) winning his bid to be vice chairman, Ed Younglove (Northwest Division) winning the treasurer s post, and Peter Donahue (Rocky Mountain Division) selected to serve as secretary. (Changes in board titles were approved on second reading prior to the elections. Former titles for these positions were executive vice president, operations vice president and communications vice president, respectively. As part of the approved title changes, the position of president and chairman of the board is now known simply as chairman of the board.)

Three board terms were up for ratification during the summer meeting. Walt Coiner returns for another term as Northern Intermountain Division s board representative, with Eliza Kuntz and Neil Bussiere getting the official nod to serve as board representatives for Northern Rocky Mountain Division and Western Division, respectively. These board terms are for three years. Officers (chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and treasurer) serve two-year terms. For more biographical information on the PSIA-AASI Board of Directors go to www.TheSnowPros.org and click on the Board of Directors link in the PSIA-AASI Info Center.

Where Do You Read *32 Degrees?*

WIN!

C. Kjell Petersen, a Level III alpine and Level I snowboard instructor in Kalispell, Montana, spent five days this March in Zermatt, Switzerland, which he calls "a stunningly massive place to dance on the snow." Okay, so the Matterhorn didn't exactly cooperate for the *32 Degrees* photo op, but it did show its impressive face on another day (inset).

If you read your mag somewhere equally cool, snap a picture and you might just win a $25 gift certificate for the *Accessories Catalog*. Submit your high resolution photo, and a tale of the epic locale, to lineup@thesnowpros.org.

Allard, Albright Retire from Board

The June 2010 board meeting served as a coda, of sorts, for two board members who have served the association with distinction for many years: Ray Allard and Craig Albright.

After two terms as PSIA-AASI president and chairman of the board, Allard chose not to run for reelection. However, he will continue to serve at the board level for two more years in the role of past president. From 1985 to 1999—and again in 2001—Allard was executive director of Eastern Division, becoming that division's representative to the PSIA-AASI Board of Directors in 1997. During his 13 years on the board, he served on the executive committee as communications vice president and operations vice president before becoming president and chairman in 2006.Over the years Allard also led several committees and task forces, including the PSIA Certification Committee (1979–84), the PSIA-AASI Publications and Technology Task Force (1999–2003), and the PSIA-AASI Education Advisory Council (2003).

Also retiring from the board is Craig Albright, who joined the body as Western Division's representative in 2002 and served on the executive committee as operations vice president (i.e., treasurer) since 2006. At the national level he also served on the association's education and certification committees, the Presidents' Council, the Teams Task Force, and the Educational Advisory Committee. His service at the division level has included roles as president, certification vice president, and education vice president.


Allard


Albright

Retiring Administrative Director Honored

The ranks of PSIA-AASI members has grown by one very special person who, though not a ski or snowboard teacher, has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help countless instructors excel on snow. Frankie Barr, who retired in June after 20 years as PSIA-AASI's administrative director, has been designated by the PSIA-AASI Board of Directors as an Honorary Member of the association.

According to past PSIA-AASI President and Chairman Ray Allard, who presented Barr with a plaque and gold membership card at a special gathering held in her honor June 12, 2010, she is only the second person to receive this honor in the past 20 years, if not the nearly 50-year history of PSIA. The only other recipient is rumored to be former U.S. president—and skier—Gerald R. Ford (that information is still being gathered, alleged to be hidden in the same warehouse as the Ark of the Covenant from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*).


Barr

Said PSIA-AASI Executive Director Mark Dorsey, "Frankie's example is a reminder that our highest duty is loyalty to the members that enable us to do what we do and to the volunteers who devote countless hours to the association. Frankie's devotion to this principle cannot be understated."

What we're talking about online: Tweeted, Quoted, or Stuck to the Wall

What's Your Favorite PSIA-AASI Memory?

"Watching friends get their pins after a long season of helping them train. It's like watching Christmas morning, except they serve beer." — Rich Carpenter, Ski Sundown, CT

"Sprinting in full gear and doing a penguin dive to chase after a runaway snowboard (not one of my student's, mind you) that was headed down the mountain. I did catch it. :)" — Emily Safer, Mt. Baker, WA

Go With A Pro *at Altitude*

Rocky Mountain region air dates have been announced for the 2010–11 installment of *Go With a Pro*, the PSIA-AASI produced must-see TV show with an instructional message for the masses.

This season's one-hour show focuses on "small-town stories" of PSIA-AASI Team members and the sacrifices and lifestyle choices they have made to live the dream of being career snowsports professionals. Air times on the Rocky Mountain region's Altitude TV are as follows (all times are Mountain Standard Time):

October 10: 4 p.m.
October 13: 11 a.m.
October 15: 1 p.m.
October 19: 7 p.m.
October 27: 2 p.m.
October 31: 1 p.m.

As other viewing opportunities become available—on networks far and wide—we'll post details on our Facebook "Go With a Pro" fan page, so stay tuned. 32°

ROAD TRIP WORTH TAKING

It seems almost anticlimactic to say that the PSIA-AASI 50/50 is a road trip w orth taking. It is, without a doubt, the must-take road trip of the last 50 years. Load up the Outback and point the GPS to a little Colorado town called Snowmass for a week of great friends, phenomenal spring skiing, and legendary parties. Catch the latest at www.TheSnowPros.org.


HESTRA
1936
HESTRA IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE PSIA AND AASI.
A PRO DISCOUNT IS AVAILABLE TO ALL ACTIVE MEMBERS.
LOG ON TO THESNOWPROS.ORG TO PLACE YOUR ORDER.
GUIDE GLOVE
XCR SLIP-ON
SKI CROSS GLOVE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS
PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA
Photo: Jenny Fellows. Launch to new levels in your skiing, check out *TOTAL SKIING. A new book* by NASTC Director, Chris Fellows, order a copy at www.skiNASTC.com.
hestrausa.com

PRO FILE: DAVE LYNCH

AASI Snowboard Team Member

Andy Hawk

Tell us about your transition from ski instructor to member of the AASI Snowboard Team.

When I started with AASI, I was a ski instructor and nobody would hire me as a snowboard coach. I settled in teaching skiing at Jiminy Peak, Massachusetts. Within a year of getting my AASI Level I, I got on the AASI Eastern Education Staff, and tried out for the AASI Snowboard Team. I didn't have a clue and got my butt kicked. But, wow did I learn a lot. Four years later I tried again. I got my butt kicked, but not as bad, and more importantly I learned a lot and had a great time. That's why I tried out in 2008. This time I made it.

But snowboarding isn t your r eal job, right?

Teaching calculus fell into my lap. After six years of winter—hopping between Massachusetts and Australia—I decided enough was enough. I looked for employment in Bethel, Maine, and someone found out that I was a mechanical engineer. They put me in touch with the public school's superintendent. He offered me a job as a summer school teacher. When Gould Academy found out that the snowboard coach that they hired a few months before could teach math as well, they eagerly had me join the faculty the next fall. That was about eight years ago, and I'm still loving it.

Do you bring math into snow teaching or snowboarding to the classroom?

Math is a tool I employ to better understand physics. Physics is also a tool. I use that to understand my snowboarding better. Newton arguably invented both physics and calculus. I guess he's the reason I snowboard. I always bring snowboarding to my class. Calculus is basically the study of slopes. I only snowboard on slopes. It goes hand in hand. And YouTube provides amazing snowboarding examples of good uses of math, and bad. I think my students prefer to watch the bad uses.

So you live in the dorms. How s your wife feel about that?

My wife Carrie is a tough saint. She is the only female in a dorm that houses me, two single male dorm parents, and about 50 teenage boys. One incident explains what I love and hate about dorm life: Last fall we woke to the first frost of the year and that makes the kids a bit rambunctious. After classes, Carrie and I were in our living room and heard a loud bang. Then another. We ignored the first few, assuming it would work itself out. But it didn't. Then there was this harsh vibration, like the sound of a spoon on a washboard, then cheering. So I had a look in the basement—and I found the best thing ever.

Four boys were there with helmets and snowboards, bouncing around on a 30-foot corrugated pipe, working on stalls and lip tricks. Two new students stopped dead when they saw me. The other two smiled—they knew me. I told them to keep going. After a few falls, I stopped them. I gave them kudos for energy and imagination, but said outside might be a better venue. They headed outdoors, added a ramp plus some AstroTurf I had, and turned it into a full-blown rail jam. Energy, imagination, kids, and sliding—what else do you need? 32°

NORDICA®

BRINGING THE FUN BACK TO THE FRONTSIDE

The new FIREARROW combines a modern frontside sidecut shape with a versatile waist and a twin tip ski design.

To purchase the Firearrow and other NORDICA products login at www.THESNOWPROS.org and click on the NORDICA logo in the Pro Offers section. www.NORDICA.com

FIREARROW 80
sidecut: 132-80-115
radius 14.5-16

FIREARROW 74
sidecut: 126-74-109
radius: 14.5-16

SUBARU

NATIONAL SKI PATROL

Endorsed by PSIA Team Members:
Robin Barnes, Michael Rogan, Mike Hafer, Geoff Krill and Jim Schanzenbaker

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT:

OSPREY

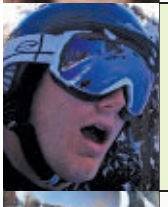
Location: Cortez, CO
Years in the biz: 36
Website: www.ospreypacks.com, but you can access your pro offer when you log in at www.TheSnowPros.org.
Why they rock: In addition to making bomber snow packs, Osprey supports the efforts of the Winter Wildlands Alliance, a national non-profit organization promoting and preserving winter wildlands and a quality human-powered snowsports experience on public lands.
What you may not know: Last year, Osprey introduced the "All Mighty Guarantee," and will repair for any reason, free of charge, any damage or defect in their product—whether it was purchased in 1974 or yesterday.

Mikael Pilstrand

BY THE NUMBERS

86 MILLION MILES: Estimated driving capacity of vehicles purchased by PSIA-AASI members through the Subaru VIP purchase program last year. **30,528:** Number of trips you could make from Killington to Mammoth with those cars. It would take you **140 years**, unless you had to stop for gas. For more information on the VIP purchase program, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org, click on "Pro Offers," then click on the Subaru logo.

LOCKER ROOM TALK

	NAME/ CREDENTIALS	MEMBER SINCE/ DIVISION/ SCHOOL	SUMMER STOKE	IF YOU CAME OUT ON THE SLOPES TO A THEME SONG	GOAL FOR SEASON	MUST PURCHASE GEAR LIST THIS SEASON?
	**Bill Sandreuter, Alpine III**	1983/Eastern/ Saddleback, ME	Backpacking in the Bigelow Range with my son	"You Wreck Me" – Tom Petty	Inspire other pros to weave the joy of skiing into their training	New boots and footbeds
	**Jan Seybold, Snowboard I**	2010/Central / Snowstar, WI	Adult snowboard camp at Woodward @ Copper	"Amazing" – Aerosmith	Compete at USASA (Kahuna category) and meet the fabulous Donna Vano	Wrist guards
	**Cameron Snyder, Alpine II, Snowboard I**	2003/Western/ Mammoth Mountain, CA	Working as a wildland firefighter and surf roadtrip	"Livewire" – Motley Crue	Alpine Level III training, get some pow days, huck some cliffs	New pow skis and new boots
	**Kristan The Dancing Fisch Fischer, Alpine I**	2007/Intermountain, Deer Valley, UT	I am a pilot for Cape York Helicopters in Australia and we go croc spotting and heli fishing	"Summer of '69" – Bryan Adams	To finally nail a front flip	A beacon for backcountry days

"When it snowed last January, the city shut down. As a result, a few Subaru buddies got a 'free pass' from work and decided to search out some fun. We had many powerslides, donuts and other shenanigans that day."
–Jeremy C., Independence, KY. **Love. It's what makes a Subaru, a Subaru.**

SUBARU

Tell your story at subaru.com/dearsubaru

ROCKER GOES RICHTER

No Longer Just for Powder, Ski and Snowboard s Hottest Technology Goes Mainstream

BY PETER KRAY

Like a Top 40 pop song you can't get out of your head, "rocker" ski and snowboard technology will be what everyone's talking about this season—as well as what's beneath just about everyone's boots.

"I've seen three revolutions in my 30-year career—snowboards, shape skis, and now this," says Craig Albright, managing director of the Mammoth Mountain Ski and Snowboard School. "And just like how the old-school guys said that shape skis were cheating, or that snowboarding wouldn't last, the same people are pooh-poohing this."

"Until they try it," he laughs. "Then they become great advocates."

Also called "early rise," "reverse camber," and even "pre-bent," skis and snowboards have all employed some form of rocker since boards were first built with curled tips. But in recent years, a more exaggerated rise in the shovel—and often the tail—has proven to provide excellent flotation in powder and crud conditions, all while giving the rider quicker maneuverability underfoot.

In powder especially, where instead of deflecting snow the tip is riding above it, the ease of turn initiation is especially dramatic. So is the decrease in leg fatigue from pushing all that snow around, as riders who might've tired out by mid-day are suddenly ripping until the last lift—as many ski and snowboard companies have been quick to notice.

"Depending on the category, about 80 percent of the powder skis on the market have rocker right now, and I'd say it's employed in about 15 percent of the skis being built

Alex O'Brien/K2

The late Shane McConkey was an early proponent and innovater of rocker boards.

for the mainstream market," says Kurt Hoefler, Rossignol's alpine brand division manager. "But I think in two to three years, it will be hard to find a ski or snowboard that doesn't have some level of rocker design in it."

The numbers certainly back that up. According to Snow-Sports Industries America's *Retail Report*, while snowboard sales fell in units and dollars this season, rockered snowboard sales doubled, from 20,070 boards sold in the 2008–09 season, to 43,772 rockered snowboards sold through February 2010.

This year those numbers are expected to grow even more dramatically, especially as more hardgoods manufacturers discover that the relaxed tip design that works so well in powder also has tremendous advantages on-piste. The bottom line is everyone can benefit from a ski or snowboard that's easier to initiate or to pivot, and rocker design is rapidly being incorporated into everything from beginner boards to skis for the World Cup.

"Many manufacturers of World Cup downhill skis have had early rise for the past four years, and it's really an extension of what most people have been trying to accomplish since they first detuned their tips," says Mike Porter, the former director of the Vail and Beaver Creek Ski Schools, as well as a former member and coach of the PSIA Alpine Demonstration Team (the precursor to today's PSIA Alpine Team).

The pre-bent shape of reverse camber actually mirrors a carved ski or snowboard's mid-turn flex—but without the aggressive tip initiation traditionally needed to accomplish it. With varying levels of early rise in the shovel, ski and snowboard engineers are working to keep the forward edge of a board off the snow until the exact point that a rider needs to engage it.

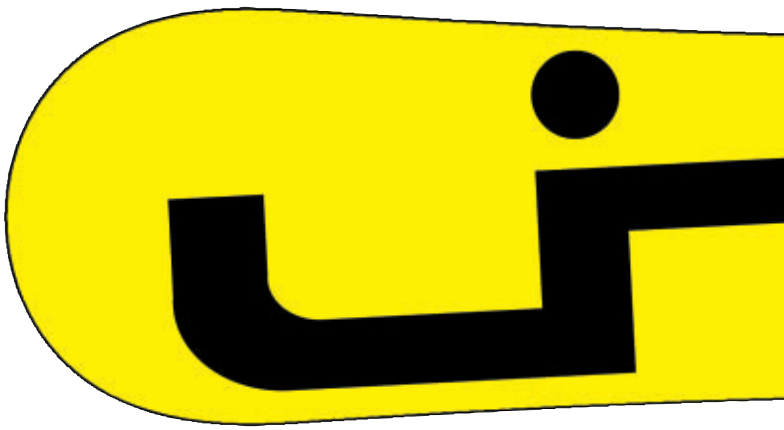
Which all sounds fantastic. But as the industry introduces so many technical variations on the same theme, it's difficult to know what tangible information skiers and snowboarders are actually picking up. And with so much new terminology hitting the market, how many different technologies are we actually talking about?

"There are all sorts of different levels of rocker, and the term is really being used to describe a broad category where we're seeing a lot of experimentation right now," says Porter. "It applies to everything from the more aggressive turned-up tips and tails of rockered skis that really don't have much relevance for the recreational piste skier, to early rise, which I think is more the bread and butter of where this trend will go, just because it makes skiing so much easier and more efficient."

ORIGINAL ROCK(ER) STARS

In the same way that Elvis electrified rock and roll, and Michael Jackson fused funk and pop, rocker has needed its share of high profile prophets—if only to first prove the new technology's worth. Shane McConkey, arguably the most influential big mountain skier North America has ever produced, almost singlehandedly provided the push for more rocker designs on the two-plank front.

McConkey, who died in a ski BASE jumping accident in Italy in 2009, reasoned that since snow was simply frozen



ROSSI ROCKS THE MASSES

Big mountain thrill-seekers and new-school pros may have been the first to embrace rocker technology, but Rossignol s new Avenger 74 is aimed at a decidedly more mainstream audience.

A rental ski, with dimensions of 120/74/110, and 27 centimeters of early rise in the shovel, the Avenger has rocker in both the tips and tails, and traditional camber underfoot (a technological cocktail that Rossi calls Auto-Turn, or AMPTEK). While the camber delivers power and grip, the rocker provides easier steering and more forgiveness.

"The first time I skied rocker in deep powder, I knew there was an evolution to come, and this is it, says Jason Newell, Rossignol s director of sports marketing and partnerships. The ability to merge maneuverability with a longer effective edge that engages as you need it is perfectly suited for building more versatile skis for groomers, and better learning products.

Newell says that Rossi has aggressively sold the Avenger into several resort rental programs. They have also been discussing the ways in which instructors can integrate the Avenger into their beginner and intermediate lessons, all in the name of getting more skiers further up the slopes.

As a ski manufacturer, we partner with the snowsports schools and the mountains to build a program that works for all of us, says Newell. The educational body, the manufacturing body, and the resort body all form the three-legged stool that both supports and builds this sport.

PETER KRAY

Lib Tech s B anana Tech put rocker between the feet for greater transfer of energy along the length of the board.

SKATE BANANA

Blake Jorgenson

water, the best skis for deep powder skiing should be designed in the same fashion as the hull of a ship. He famously put a pair of alpine bindings on water skis and proceeded to rip big lines in Alaska to prove his point. Then he developed the category busting catamaran-styled Spatula ski with Volant (introduced in 2002), and the appropriately named Pontoon with K2 after that. When interviewed for the SIA tradeshow dailies during the Pontoon's 2006 debut, he said, "Over the next few years, all the companies out there are going to start making rockered skis. It just works too well."

But it was snowboarders who first started to develop the design for widespread use. That's because the same way that the wider bases and greater surface area of snowboards influenced fat skis, they were also better adapted to incorporate rocker first. Particularly as traditional camber, that holy grail of ski design, didn't add nearly as much energy to the flex of a snowboard as it did for someone riding skis.

In fact, that piston-style pressuring of one foot on one board—the classic initial impulse for beginning to flex and carve a ski along the length of the shovel—got trapped when it was placed between two feet. On snowboards, that often meant that traditional camber wasn't enhancing the turn, but instead was actually sucking energy out.

"As snowboards became more inspired by dual directional freestyle skateboarders, we began building twin symmetrical shapes," says Pete Saari, co-founder of Mervin Manufacturing, which owns the snowboard brands Gnu and Lib Tech. "This meant camber was centered between your feet, leaving a 'dead' and un-pressurable spot."

In the effort to transfer more positive energy along the length of the snowboard, for Saari and partner Mike Olson, trying to reverse that dead spot was the most obvious place to start. What they came up with, called Banana Tech, places the most aggressive rocker or reverse camber between the feet, with less pressure on the tips and tails until the depth of a turn warrants direct contact.

Blake Jorgenson

ROCKER TALK: THE GLOSSARY

Still confused? Here s a quick-hit glossary of rocker lingo. We d love to hear your best explanation or metaphor for rocker. Send your thoughts to: 5050snowpro@thesnowpros.org, and we ll post them on PSIA-AASI s website www.TheSnowPros.org.

CAMBER: Ski and snowboard manufacturer's go-to flex technology for the past few decades, traditional camber is the arch in the center of the board which, when pressured, engages the tip and the tail for grip and control.

ROCKER: An exaggerated rise in the tip of a ski or snowboard for easier turn initiation and more float in mixed conditions and deep snow. In full rocker, there is also an exaggerated rise in the tail. This provides quick turn release and a marked increase in the ability to smear out of a turn as well.

EARLY RISE: Primed for even more innovation in future seasons, this is a designed rise from the forebody of a ski or snowboard that extends into the shovel. With an infinite possibility for adjustment and fine-tuning, it reduces the effort required to initiate a turn, with a pre-bent flex for improved edge control.

PETER KRAY

"The pre-bent rocker between your feet is the natural arc you need to turn your board," Saari says. "And also what allows the board to provide incredible edgehold on hardpack and ice."

Which seems to be the mantra of what rocker technology is offering us: Control when you need it, catch-free float when you don't. This benefit is even more pronounced in a telemark turn, according to PSIA Nordic Team member Ross Matlock, who says that "Rocker technology is telemark specific.

"(During a telemark turn) tip pressure is created on the rear ski when we develop a lead change and lift the rear heel," says Matlock. "The lifting of the rear heel causes the binding springs to activate, resulting in tip pressure on the rear ski. This can be detrimental in soft snow conditions, causing the rear or trailing ski to dive.

"Tip rocker in a ski essentially neutralizes rear tip pressure, allowing the rear ski to stay with us rather than plunge," he says, and adds that it also makes telemark turns in powder easier for beginners and intermediates.

"Rockered skis allow the ski tips to float at lower speeds," says Matlock. "You can be less precise with your movements, allowing for better balance, and they are easier to steer and pivot compared to regular cambered skis."

Which all might mean that the nonstop search for the quiver of one board that really can do everything may have reached its last stop. For once, there really is a design that can be surfy in the soft stuff, but with hold and stability on the hardpack.

It is why rocker is being more quickly adapted in the West, due to its big mountain, variable snowpack focus. In the East, the technology will have a more subtle, cumulative impact, with the first real results expected following the introduction of the more on-piste rockered boards that are only just hitting the market.

But make no mistake, across the country rocker is already providing snowsports instructors with plenty of new tools to bring to class, as well as at least one potentially significant roadblock.

PROVIDING THE BACKBEAT

Talk to a couple dozen instructors about rocker, and "shortcut" is the term that keeps coming up. From the bunny hill to the backcountry, the technology promises a more intuitive style of learning, with a methodology that can focus more on the environment than it does on the equipment.

"I do think it's better to learn on rockered boards because the board is friendlier, less likely to catch edges, and easier to steer and skid," says Earl Saline, PSIA-AASI education co-manager. "For somebody learning to ride, that offers a little more wiggle room than you get on stiffer, cambered boards. Which means less falling down. And more distance from the myth that 'learning to snowboard has to hurt.'"

Bobby Murphy, director of skier services for Keystone Resort and a member of the PSIA Alpine Team, says that while the methodology and movements of on-snow instruction will remain as relevant now as they were in the 1970s, the big breakthrough of rocker will be in how quickly it

OUTDOOR

CLIMBING RUNNING

DUOFOLD®

WHICH

VARITHERM®

ARE you?

CYCLING

EXPEDITION WEIGHT

The ultimate in thermal insulation and performance for extreme weather conditions.

Two-layer construction built to protect you when you need it most. This flexible fabric will move with you for maximum comfort and fit. Performance features will keep you dry and odor-free every step of the way.

MID-WEIGHT

Designed for superior performance without weighing you down during a wide variety of cold weather activities.

Each style provides thermal warmth and excellent moisture management in cold weather. Single-layer jersey fabric helps control odor when you sweat, and moves with you during high-performance activities for unbelievable comfort.

DRI-*release*®* WOOL

Provides natural thermal insulation and moisture management that dries 4 times faster than 100% wool. FreshGuard®* technology prevents odor to keep you fresh and comfortable in very cold weather. Fabric moves with you for optimum fit. All performance features last the life of the garment so you are guaranteed to stay warm and dry all day long.

*Dri-release® and FreshGuard® are registered trademarks of Optimer.

GEAR OF THE YEAR GEARJUNKIE 2008

HIKING

FIELD & STREAM

Look for Duofold® base layer products in the PSIA-AASI Accessories Catalog or at www.thesnowpros.org

www.duofold.com

provides students with immediate results.

"With rocker technology, what we've been teaching for years will now be more quickly and more easily felt," Murphy says. "We don't have to reinvent the wheel as far as teaching goes. Instead, we should be preparing for how the blending of skills that we've always relied on is now going to be that much more effective and easier to pick up."

This is good news for instructors at any level, especially those who can expect to start teaching mixed classes, with some students on rocker, and some who aren't. The lesson plan doesn't have to undergo a complete overhaul—nor does the terrain choice—as long as instructors realize that the students on rocker are likely to start picking up new techniques more quickly than the rest of the class.

In fact, the real concern is that rocker is so intuitive—especially in the most variable, challenging conditions on the mountain—that it might signal the end of the expert, all-mountain, deep-powder private.

"If we don't figure out a way to make rocker an opportunity, especially on the upper mountain, then it will be a threat," says Mammoth Mountain's Albright. "You don't have to be as skilled to have a great time on a powder day now as you did on older equipment. And if we don't figure out a way to talk to those people who are trying rocker right now, then they will try and figure it out by themselves."

"As easy as it is for them to start having fun," Albright adds, "is a measure of how quickly they could be forever lost to us."

The message instructors and the industry as a whole needs to impart to those newly born to rocker may also be skiing's most timeless. From the first steel edges all the way to this new breed of snowships that we're starting to ride right now, we just need to keep reminding skiers and snowboarders that now that they've bought such great new gear, they could certainly benefit from having a snow pro showing them the best way to use it.

"We have to help people understand that 'yes, the equipment is magical,' but we have the ability to show them an even better experience," says Albright. "It sure feels good. But we can help make it great." 32°

Peter Kray is the special projects editor for 32 Degrees, *with a particular focus on emerging snowsports trends, on-snow innovations, and the PSIA-AASI 50-50 Project. Kray skis, telemarks, and snowboards out of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is the founder of Shred White and Blue* (www.shredwhiteandblue.com), *a media and apparel company celebrating American boardsports.*

THE AMPLIFIERS: HOT ROCKERED GEAR

Rocker will be on stage everywhere this year, from the shops to the slopes. With all the new designs on the market, it s a good idea to check out a few of your favorite magazine tests to narrow down just which boards best fit your style of riding, and your own specific winter environment. Be aware that some brands have gone hard for rocker K2 has designed early rise into every ski in its line—while others are still fine-tuning their innovations in sidecut and flex. Here are a few snapshots of where you can expect to see rocker next.

SKIS:

DYNASTAR PRO 115

While Rossignol s S-7 has been dropping jaws with its rocker tip and tail and camber underfoot, Dynastar continues to build on the cult of the Legend line with the Pro 115. Deep rocker and bomber construction make this a heavy condition favorite.

VOLKL BRIDGE

Big mountain and freestyle skiing meet in the middle, with Volkl s own early-rise Extended Low Profile (ELP), utilizing the new technology for versatility in all terrain, from the top of the mountain all the way down to the halfpipe.

SNOWBOARDS:

BURTON CUSTOM FLYING V

For boarders who want to soar from peak to park Burton is offering the Custom Flying V with a just right mix of rocker and camber under each foot for a surfy, laid-back feel but with lots of pop.

NEVER SUMMER SUMMIT

Rocker hits the backcountry with the built-to-order Summit Series. The surprise? The upturned rocker tips of these splitboards are turning heads on the uptrack, because they make it just as easy to skin up a powder slope as they do to rip down it. **PETER KRAY**

LOVE YOUR SPORT
SHARE YOUR PASSION

29 99 255 NORAM CLASSIC II

29 99 560 NORAM CLASSIC MITTEN II

FOR THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE...

Reusch has mastered the fine art of glove construction for over 75 years—combining high quality, extra-ordinary functions and distinctive design. Only the best materials and latest technologies are embedded in Reusch products, we make sure that your experience is an outstanding one.

For online prosales visit www.PSIA.org
PSIA early buy discount of 50% off through November 1, 2010.
Use the following discount code at checkout: PSIAFL210

reusch®

LOVE YOUR SPORT

Proud sponsor of

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA®

» » www.reuschusa.com

REUSCH SNOWSPORTS • ENGLEWOOD, CO 80110
877-473-8724 (TOLL-FREE) • 720-833-0814 FAX • INFO@REUSCHUSA.COM

Make a Career Out of Snowsports Instruction: Become an Intra

By Kelly Coffey
Photos by Julie Shipman

The glamour of snowsports instruction as a full-time job wears off quickly when slow seasons, small paychecks, and aching bodies enter the equation. Yet plenty of people have broken out of the paycheck-to-paycheck mentality to make a lasting career from their passion. Join author Kelly Coffey as he surveys instructors to decode the insider secrets of those who have been able to turn the job into a thriving career. In this article—the second of a series about how to build a career in snowsports instruction—we meet Howard Peterson, a man with a habit of creating his own jobs from the inside out.

As a snowsports instructor, you spend more time getting to know resort guests than any other employee on the mountain. Your exposure to resort operations gives you the perfect viewpoint to identify needs, make connections, and create better experiences for all of your area's guests.

Yet seemingly few instructors recognize the knowledge they have, let alone tap that knowledge in a productive way that adds value to the resort. Some instructors—typically those with an entrepreneurial mindset—take on new projects both inside and outside their resorts. They successfully bridge the gap between once-separate careers, develop their own skills, and among their coworkers and supervisors, they become known as individuals who get things done.

If your job title is "snowsports instructor," you're already en route to being an entrepreneur: You don't have the security of a steady paycheck, or even guaranteed work 12 months a year. You've found solutions to challenges that mere mortals in corporate America have never dealt with.

Don't let that problem-solving stop there. You don't have to quit your day job to become an entrepreneur. You just need to develop an entrepreneur's mentality within your current job. There's even a term for this: "intrapreneur."

Take Howard Peterson, for example. The general manager of Utah's Soldier Hollow Cross Country Ski Resort took every job he earned and turned each into something of his own creation.

preneur

The focus of Howard Peterson s i ntrapreneurial spirit is Utah s Soldier Hollow Cross Country Ski Resort.

Soldier Hollow focuses on bringing youth into the nordic scene. Here, kids get a feel for the biathlon s shooting station.

AN INTRAPRENEUR'S CAREER

Soldier Hollow is located in Midway, Utah, a 45-minute drive from Salt Lake City. The resort was the nordic venue for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

After years as the CEO of the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association and former president of the Cross Country Ski Areas Association, Peterson joined the Soldier Hollow staff roster as general manager. It was the planning process of the Salt Lake City Games that landed Peterson at this resort.

During that planning process, Peterson and others saw how the facilities of the earlier Calgary Olympics struggled to remain profitable after the Olympic Games packed up and left. Vowing to create a very different outcome after the Salt Lake City Games, Peterson set out to build a world-class athletic venue that would still be relevant years later. To him, that meant Soldier Hollow needed to cater to a greater range of athletic abilities, to accommodate beginners as well as elite athletes.

The result: Eight years after the Olympics left Utah, Soldier Hollow continues to garner praise from both the international nordic community and from local recreational skiers. The nordic area has a major focus on youth, enticing 9,000 kids a year to try their heels at cross-country skiing, according to Peterson, now the general manager.

As illustrated by his history at Soldier Hollow, Peterson is most at home in a new job with a new organization, one that gives him the opportunity to steer his job description and develop what needs to be developed. He demonstrated this creative vision over and over throughout the span of his career, starting with his first industry job.

Flash back to 1973, when Peterson landed an entry-level position at Bretton Woods, a brand-new ski resort in New Hampshire. Through a fortuitous combination of work ethic, employee turnover, and flat-out luck, Peterson pinballed his way in a matter of months up the company ladder to find himself the director of skiing.

The director of skiing position was so new it didn't even have a solid job description. So the young Peterson created his own, deciding that one of the job responsibilities was to create a new cross-country race program—one that would be more inclusive to more people. "We went with affordability," Peterson said. "We wanted to put our name on the map of the cross-country resorts."

Also during his tenure as director of skiing, Peterson saw a need for a national organization that would oversee cross-country resorts. Shortly thereafter, he helped found the Cross Country Ski Areas Association and soon became one of the organization's first presidents.

Each stop along his career path put Peterson into an

Eight years after the Olympics left Utah, Soldier Hollow continues to garner praise from both the international nordic community and from local recreational skiers.

What were you doing in 1961?

Bonanza was a big TV hit.

Approximately 3 million people skied.

Popular drink: The Martini.

Skis made from fiberglass.

Snowmass is still just a dream waiting to happen.

Barbie and G.I. Joe were a hit.

PSIA was founded in Whitefish, Montana to support snowsports instructors and grow the sport.

First PSIA meeting in Alta, Utah.

THE PSIA-AASI 50/50 CELEBRATION IS COMING...

Go to www.TheSnowPros.org to learn more.

Train Your Intrapreneurial Eye

It's time to become an active participant in your career. If your goal is to land new projects that will supplement your instructor income and create synergy between your winters and off-seasons, there are a few steps you need to take to become a successful intrapreneur.

BUILD YOUR NETWORK.

Most of you have heard the saying, It s not what you know, it s who you know. Embrace the concept. Make it a habit to get to know new people at your resort and beyond. Don t limit yourself to other instructors. Meet the people in the rental shop, marketing department, and other parts of the operation. And talk to anyone in the industry: instructors at other resorts, people at other businesses. Get to know them and find out what makes them interesting. Your next private lesson could come from a referral by the golf pro you met while mountain biking last summer.

TRAIN YOURSELF TO SEE OPPORTUNITY.

Everybody s good at seeing problems. But only the skilled few are able to identify opportunities in the holes those problems create. This is not a skill you re born with, but with practice you'll find yourself noticing opportunities everywhere, like Keanu Reeves seeing the digital code in the walls of The Matrix.

The next step is to identify which opportunities add the greatest value to your resort. Will that opportunity increase revenue or improve the products your resort offers? Put your ideas through the value filter to keep from chasing windmills and ensure that you devote your time and effort to ideas that are likely to succeed.

HONE YOUR SKILLS, AND RECOGNIZE THOSE YOU CURRENTLY OFFER.

Here s a great way to develop new skills: volunteer for projects at your resort or in your community. For example, you could work with your marketing department to visit local hotels, explaining to concierges the benefits of their guests taking lessons. Everyone loves free labor, and organizations are more willing to give responsibility to a less experienced but passionate employee if it s not costing them anything.

FOLLOW THROUGH.

There s a big difference between having great ideas and *implementing* great ideas. It s a rare and highly valuable person who can take a great idea and see it through to completion. The process requires substantial passion and commitment.

Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari Game System and Chuck E. Cheese s, said it best: The critical ingredient is getting off your butt and doing something. The true entrepreneur is a doer, not a dreamer. **KELLY COFFEY**

You can improve your luck in landing off-season jobs by tackling creative projects, says Howard Peterson.

organization poised for a new direction—an environment in which he thrived. The specific set of circumstances made it easy for him to rearrange his job description into something that aligned with his skills and where he was headed. "I think I've been really, really fortunate to end up in positions where there were a lot of opportunities to create," Peterson said.

Therein lies the secret sauce of success for Peterson's career and what he sees as potential for other instructors' careers: the opportunity and desire to shape jobs within organizations.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN JOB

Like Peterson, you should never feel constrained by your job description. Try to see things differently than your fellow instructors. Develop your curiosity. Find opportunity where others identify problems. Peterson says some of his most valuable instructors at Soldier Hollow adhere to these guidelines.

Case in point: Scott Peterson (no relation to Howard) and Andrea Faust, two instructors who work at Soldier Hollow under Peterson, developed their skills in event management. Their personal development added value to Soldier Hollow within their cross-country ski instructor positions in the winter, but also gave them a valuable skill

please turn to pg. 102

Web Extra

Intrigued by the potential for your summer job to complement your snowsports gig? For Kelly Coffey's list of off-season combo opportunities that may await the enterprising instructor, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and check out the "Web Extras" link under the heading for *32 Degrees*.

What were you doing in 1971?

A gallon of gas cost 40 cents.

The Partridge Family ruled TV.

Snowmass sees the first moon boots hit the après ski scene.

Popular drink: Whiskey Sour.

Foam core skis introduced.

Bell-bottom pants, platform shoes and leisure suits were all the rage.

PSIA gets rocking with the Skills Concept.

– Celebrating PSIA's 50th –

PSIA Archives

BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN TECHNIQUE

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles celebrating the upcoming 50th anniversary of the founding of PSIA, and the people whose experimentation, initiative, and innovation continue to define American snowsports instruction. We welcome your voice, and look forward to hearing memories about your role in the first 50 years. At the end of the article, you can find information on how to join the conversation.

What were you doing in 1981?

Raiders of the Lost Ark hits the big screen.

The term “internet” was first mentioned.

Alpine Springs and High Alpine areas are open at Snowmass.

Popular Drink: Long Island Ice Tea.

Vibration absorbing system in skis introduced.

The compact disc revolutionized the music industry.

Horst Abraham introduced *Skiing Right* with increased focus on how students learn.

It is a story that has no end. Not as long as there is gravity and there are mountains, and people who have found their passion, culture, and lifestyle in celebrating the intoxicating freedom of going up and down a snow-covered slope.

But as for the beginning? Well that was in May 1961 at Big Mountain in Whitefish, Montana, when Curt Chase, Max Dercum, Jimmy Johnston, Bill Lash, Doug Pfeiffer, Don Rhinehart, and Paul Valar formed the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA), thereby agreeing to set the national standards for the promotion and certification of American ski instruction. Elected as PSIA's original board of directors the following November—with Lash as president, Valar vice president, and Johnston secretary treasurer—these magnificent seven set out to establish the easiest and safest way to make that freedom of the slopes available to anyone and everyone.

"I am proud of that moment, because of what it meant for ski instruction in this country," Lash says now from his home in Bothell, Washington. "For the consumer, it meant that wherever they went skiing they could expect the same level of lesson."

PSIA Archives

It s said that PSIA co-founder Jimmy Johnston served as inspiration for Mammoth Mountain s W ooly logo.

It was still decades before e-mails and cell phones, when trains still outstripped planes as the long-distance mode of transportation. John F. Kennedy had just been sworn in as president—it was the first inauguration broadcast in color—Barack Obama and Wayne Gretzky were born, and The Beatles were just beginning to play at Liverpool's Cavern Club. And ski lessons in the United States were a confusing mix of Swiss, Austrian, and French techniques, with the likelihood of neighboring mountains offering a completely different instruction experience.

"When I came to the United States in 1949, I was very surprised to find that, in the East alone, just about every technique I had ever heard of was being taught—and with all possible modifications," PSIA co-founder Paul Valar wrote in *SKI Magazine* with regard to the lack of standardization.

In the October 1961 article titled "Can We Have a Unified American Ski Technique?" Valar wrote, "Imagine the confusion that must have resulted among recreational skiers because of so many different techniques being taught at resorts only a few hours' drive apart."

Add that to a national stage in a country as big and diverse as America and you have even more confusion. Especially as the growing popularity of the sport meant that the regional divisions of instruction that did exist were busy focusing on their own weather, building their own chairs, cutting new runs, and instructing their own locally expanding ski population.

But more and more of those skiers also began traveling, encountering more varied terrain, a veritable glossary of snow conditions, and a new technique's slow-building cohesion. That's because America, in its ever-amazing capacity for integration, was smoothing out the sometimes incredibly subtle differences between all those techniques from over the ocean, accelerating a step that would be critical to PSIA's evolution.

COUNTER-ROTATION

"The question of a unified ski technique will again be aired," the April 1961 issue of *Skiing Magazine* reported in advance of that momentous Montana meeting in May. "Also up for discussion will be the long deferred plan for a professional ski instructor's organization."

What helped turn both of those long awaited probabilities into reality was the increasingly inescapable fact that no matter how the best skiers learned—or taught—when they skied, their styles all contained the same critical elements.

In his article in *SKI*, Valar took special note of Austrian Professor Stefan Kruckenhauser's theory of "the reverse shoulder" as practiced in Austria's Arlberg region. Counter-rotation, really, and how positively the exaggerated upper body shift of the reverse shoulder affected a skier's position, turn initiation, and timing.

Today, Pfeiffer acknowledges that what was quickly labeled the American Technique was really "a distillation of the Austrian and Swiss styles." But it was treated as a revelation here in the U.S. In *Teaching & Technique: A History of American Ski Instruction*, the excellent book on the early years of U.S. ski instruction by E. John B. Allen, "a photo-essay demonstrating P.S.I.A.'s American technique was published in the influential *SKI* in January 1965." And in that classic Mammoth Mountain "Wooly" logo, the shaggy skiing elephantidae with such a pronounced reverse shoulder himself bears much more than an incidental resemblance to another PSIA co-founder, Judge Jimmy Johnston.

Counter-rotation—that upper body baseline for downhill

What were you doing in 1991?

Nirvana kicks off the grunge era.

The cast of *Friends* provide evidence that you can live the high life without actually having to work hard… but instructors had known that for years.

Aspen Extreme…*Dumb and Dumber*… enough said.

Shaped skis begin to attract attention.

Snowboards become mainstream.

Popular drink: Sex on the Beach.

PSIA gets behind snowboarding in a big way, leading to the launch of the American Association of Snowboard Instructors.

Archival photo courtesy of Bill Lash/Cal Tassinari

Where it all began. PSIA got its start at this National Ski Association Certification of Ski Instructors Committee and Ski School Directors Meeting in May 1961 at Whitefish, Montana's Big Mountain. PSIA co-founder Max Dercum is in the red sweater.

motion—became one of PSIA's core talking points. It would also set the stage for the mantra of "Edging, rotary movements, and pressure control," which, with balance, formed the legendary skills-development concept that drove the innovation of the next generation.

But along with that victory of a unified technique, in the formation of PSIA Lash himself was just as critical in building an association that would stretch from Mammoth Mountain to Cannon Mountain.

Or as Pfeiffer says, "Lash made it happen."

LASH S LEADERSHIP

An honored member of the U.S. Ski Hall of Fame (as are Dercum, Johnston, Pfeiffer, and Valar) Lash was raised in Twin Falls, Idaho. He first went skiing with his scout troop at Galena Lodge, and saw his first lessons being taught at Dollar Mountain.

Duly inspired by Sun Valley, the books and movies of Otto Lang, and the instruction of Alf Engen, Lash published *Outline of Ski Teaching Methods*, a paper he had undertaken to chronicle American ski instruction, in 1958. And with Valar, he wrote three editions of *Official American Ski Techniques*, quite probably—along with Horst Abraham's *Skiing Right*—one of the two most influential books in American skiing.

"I sold 35,000 copies of that book," Lash says. "I used to pile them in the back of the station wagon. I knew that book had to be available to the general public, because that's where ski school directors would get their new ski instructors from."

As one of those seven individuals who agreed to the formation of a national body of instructors that day in Whitefish, Lash bet that his ski instruction colleagues from across the country would come and join them. And that a new national dialogue would begin that would continue to advance the best aspects of ski instruction.

He says that the first wave of certified instructors from across the country were excited for the chance to be part of the national organization. They also wanted the pin.

"It's been there forever," says Robert "Hak" Hakkinen, of his national PSIA certification pin. Hakkinen, who has Central Division certification #00159, says that he and his three best friends, "The Four Aces," haven't taken a run without their PSIA-certified ski instructor pins on their parkas since 1962, when they first earned them.

"It represents the whole aura of skiing for me," Hak says. "When PSIA became a national identity, it gave us a national identity, too."

"There was a new sense of authenticity," Pfeiffer concurs. "Of belonging to a profession. It broadened your pride that you were part of a national organization."

BOOM TIMES

It was a heady time. Mountains were being built, and skiers

What were you doing in 2001?

The iPod!

Everybody Loves Raymond on TV.

Aspen Skiing Company is awarded the 2001 Golden Eagle Award for Overall Environmental Excellence in the Ski Industry.

Popular Drink: The Mojito.

Some of you still had a one piece suit… and you totally pulled it off.

PSIA-AASI turned 40 and has regretted not having a bigger party ever since. SO…

THE PSIA-AASI 50/50 CELEBRATION IS COMING…

Go to www.TheSnowPros.org to learn more.

PSIA 50 YEARS 1961 2011

Official American Ski Technique **tutorials keeping it real, 1966. Groovy, baby.**

and alpine entrepreneurs were literally constructing their own legends.

One year after the formation of the PSIA, in 1962, Vail Mountain would open. Five years after the Whitefish meeting, in 1966, Jackson Hole would first operate its iconic red tram, unveiling skiing in the Tetons. And in 1971, 10 years after Whitefish, Snowbird was also open. By 1972, John Denver was crooning Rocky Mountain High on the radio. The new, big mountain era of the Rockies had officially begun.

To hear the stories from the people who lived it, as urbanites decamped to the high alpine, the ski instructors were the gods of the mountain.

"There was a whole cultural fascination with and love of the mountains," says Pfeiffer. "People were excited by the outdoor life, healthy exercise, good friends, and good times. They had left the big cities behind because they couldn't stand them, and the mountains were opening up a new world of possibilities to them."

Sports like rock climbing, kayaking, and hang gliding came into vogue. But none of them exploded like skiing. None of them had the lifts, and both the groomed and powdered runs. Nor the fireplace and friendship of the lodge, or the depth of that national organization, built on creating a school of instruction around the most important person of all: the person taking the lesson.

And that is really the most important point in the story of the PSIA's creation. That whether it was for consistency, certification, or in divining the best technique for instruction simply by watching how people really skied, it was always about the student first. About creating the best environment for learning.

What those seven founding fathers built was so flexible it also allowed for the easy assimilation of snowboard, nordic, and adaptive techniques as the sport kept growing. It encompassed terrain parks and tow ropes, and is just as relevant to beginners on boardwalk-buffed snow as it is in the backcountry, atop the wildest windblown peaks.

But they would be the first to acknowledge that they didn't start with all of the answers, and there were still many important questions to be answered in the Glory Years to come. 32°

GET MORE HISTORICAL NUANCE ONLINE

Read Peter Kray s blog leading up to PSIA-AASI s 50/50 celebration in the From the Wire section of the PSIA-AASI website at www.TheSnowPros.org. Be sure and take a look at the post titled, The 50/50 Blog: What Story Do You Have to Tell? to see how you can join the conversation and share your own personal moments in the ongoing history of snowsports instruction. For more about the upcoming fantastic PSIA-AASI 50/50 celebration in Snowmass, Colorado, April 4□9, check out the 50/50 page at www.TheSnowPros.org.

Web Extra

For another glance into America's ski history, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and check out the profile of powder-skiing legend Junior Bounous in the "Web Extras" link under the heading for *32 Degrees*.

Peter Kray is the special projects editor for 32 Degrees, *focusing on emerging snowsports trends, on-snow innovations, and the PSIA-AASI 50-50 Project. Kray skis, telemarks, and snowboards out of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is the founder of Shred White and Blue (www.shredwhiteandblue.com), a media and apparel company celebrating American boardsports.*

Archival illustrations by Kathy Coomer

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN 2011?

THE PSIA-AASI 50/50 CELEBRATION!

Snowmass, CO April 4-9, 2011

You, your family, and your friends are invited to join PSIA-AASI in Snowmass, CO for the biggest party in the history of snowsports instruction. This massive celebration includes six days of parties, powder, eating, drinking, singing, reminiscing, skiing, riding, learning, sleeping, spa-ing, and whatever else it takes to throw down in the name of five decades of instruction past and decades yet to come.

Visit www.TheSnowPros.org for the latest pre-event info.

THIS PARTY HAS BEEN 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING.

PSIA 50 YEARS 1961 2011

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS

www.TheSnowPros.org

SnowSports 360

FOCUS ON FUN: KID'S INSTRUCTION IS TAKING A DIFFERENT TURN

By **EUGENE BUCHANAN**

The focus is on fun. That's the motto being adopted by today's kids instructors, ensuring that students have a good time as well as learn skills.

While the teaching methodology remains largely the same, the new movement focuses on connecting with the students and their families and keeping instruction enjoyable. "We want to get them involved when they're young, and keep them coming back," says PSIA-AASI Education Co-Manager Ben Roberts of the industry's new growth initiative. "It's not just about keeping kids safe and teaching them how to ski, but highlighting fun for the whole family. Historically, success has been defined by whether kids know how to turn at the end of the day. Now it's more a question of did they enjoy themselves?"

EMBRACING TOGETHERNESS

The change in focus is important, especially for sports facing an uphill battle as far as participation goes. In choosing how to spend time together as a family, parents have more choices than ever—from school activities to Disneyland trips to humanitarian "volunteer vacations"—all competing with potential time on the slopes. Cost has also reared its head as a barrier. Make it fun, says Roberts, and chances are they'll come back for more.

The children's track at this year's PSIA National Academy showcased new approaches designed to keep instruction fun while increasing kids' conversion rates. "The clinics provided a mix of the theoretical and practical," says Roberts. "It gave experienced kids instructors the chance to gain some new insights, angles, and tricks."

One of those leading clinics at Academy was Stacey Gerrish, training manager for Colorado's Beaver Creek Ski & Snowboard School and co-author of the PSIA-AASI *Children's Instruction Manual*, second edition. For her, the emphasis is on the family. "Many families still divide and conquer," she says, adding that children take one class, while their parents take another. "But there's a growing trend of families taking lessons together."

The challenge, she adds, is connecting with all family members and keeping the lesson fun and relevant for everyone. "Much of our instructor training is geared toward working with a variety of ages and abilities within one lesson," she says. "We combine this with strategies for dividing the lesson time to accommodate the whole family."

ENJOYING THE EXPERIENCE

At the core is creating an experience that can be enjoyed by everyone. "We call it 'adventure-based learning,'" says freestyle specialist David Oliver, a PSIA Alpine Team member and kids' instructor at Colorado's Breckenridge Resort. "We find out what they want to learn, in conjunction with their parents' goals, and then go from there. We're trying to get away from issuing a report card at the end of the day and instead going with the *experience* they had," he adds. "We're moving away from the checklist."

Here are a few approaches you can take to keep lessons fun—and kids coming back for more:

Introduce freestyle-type moves early in the game, even on day one. Oliver and Gerrish often have their students jumping up in the air on their skis and snowboards, practicing 180s and 360s on the ground, and learning the basics of sliding so they can progress to ramps and boxes. "We're incorporating freestyle into our lessons long before children are ready to enter a park or pipe," says Gerrish. "The kids also like the lingo that comes along with it, and being able to identify the moves they see."

Make your class more of a camp-like atmosphere than a lesson. Engage them and capture their attention. "We make it so they're learning tricks instead of skills," says Oliver. "The goals are the same—it's just a change in focus in how we're packaging it."

Introduce themes. At Beaver Creek, Gerrish does this with kids' lessons every day of the week, which keeps them

Kids are involved in the shaping of their lesson, rather than a dictator-type approach. They're pilots of their own experience.

actively involved. "They come back because they want to participate in the next day's theme," she says. "If it's bump and bash day, the morning's lessons are geared towards the skills they need to participate in it."

Look for "teachable moments." Oliver keeps his eye out during his class's warm-up runs for things that the kids want to do (i.e., a secret trail, jump, etc.). He then uses that as a basis to impart what they need to learn to do it. "This way the kids help shape their lesson, rather than be subjected to a dictator-type approach," he says. "They're pilots of their own experience."

Keep whatever events you incorporate applicable to a wide variety of abilities. That way everyone can participate and have fun at the same time. Ideas include adding music, prizes, and other things that turn a lesson into a festival-like atmosphere. Gerrish's technique: Doling out buttons with skill-based stickers. "As children master each skill they earn a sticker," she says. "This gets them coming back for more."

While today's guests are still looking for value, they also want some success to point to when the lesson is done. In particular, parents want to know two things: 1) If their child improved, and 2) If he or she had fun. If the answer to both questions is yes, conversion is as easy as pizza pie. "There's a wide range of how parents define their child's success," says Gerrish. "If their child is happy, beaming about his or her experience, and asking to return, they'll put them back in for more." 32°

A former reporter for the Denver Business Journal *and member of New York's Explorer Club, Eugene Buchanan has a wide-ranging media career, from working the Olympics for NBC to writing for ESPN.com. He is also a long-time writer for such publications as* Outside, Men's Journal, Skiing, Powder *and other magazines. His second book,* Outdoor Parents, Outdoor Kids, *was released by Heliconia Press (www.helipress) this past spring.*

Sherri Harkin

KIDS NUMBERS

While overall skiing participation numbers might be treading water, kids statistics are encouraging.

According to Snowsports Industries America, from 1999 to 2008 kids (age 7–11) participation in snowsports rose from 7.9 to 13 percent (percentage of the total alpine population). For the 12–17 age bracket, it increased to 18.1 percent from 15 percent. The 6–12 age group represents 9.9 percent of the skiing population (and 10.7 percent of all snowboarders), while the 13–17 age group comprises 11.6 percent of all skiers (and 22.2 percent of snowboarders). Nearly 10 percent of the 6–12 bracket skis one time per year, while 11.6 percent of the 13–17 category skis once a year. More encouraging: 7.8 percent of the 6–12 category hits the slopes nine or more times per year, while 14.6 percent of the 13–17 group skis that often. E UGENE BUCHANAN

SnowSports 360

TAKE CUSTOMER SERVICE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

By **MICHAEL PATMAS, M.D.**

The Smith family had planned a ski vacation months in advance. The resort they chose is known for its excellent terrain, snow quality, uncrowded runs, and service. The family's goal was to spend one week at a posh destination ski resort in a slopeside log home and to put the three kids in private lessons.

Little did the Smiths know that their vacation would seriously test the resort's ability to deliver on its renown as a purveyor of outstanding customer service. What follows is the true story of how the family's vacation started out as a nightmare and was turned around when one instructor stepped up to save the day—and the week!

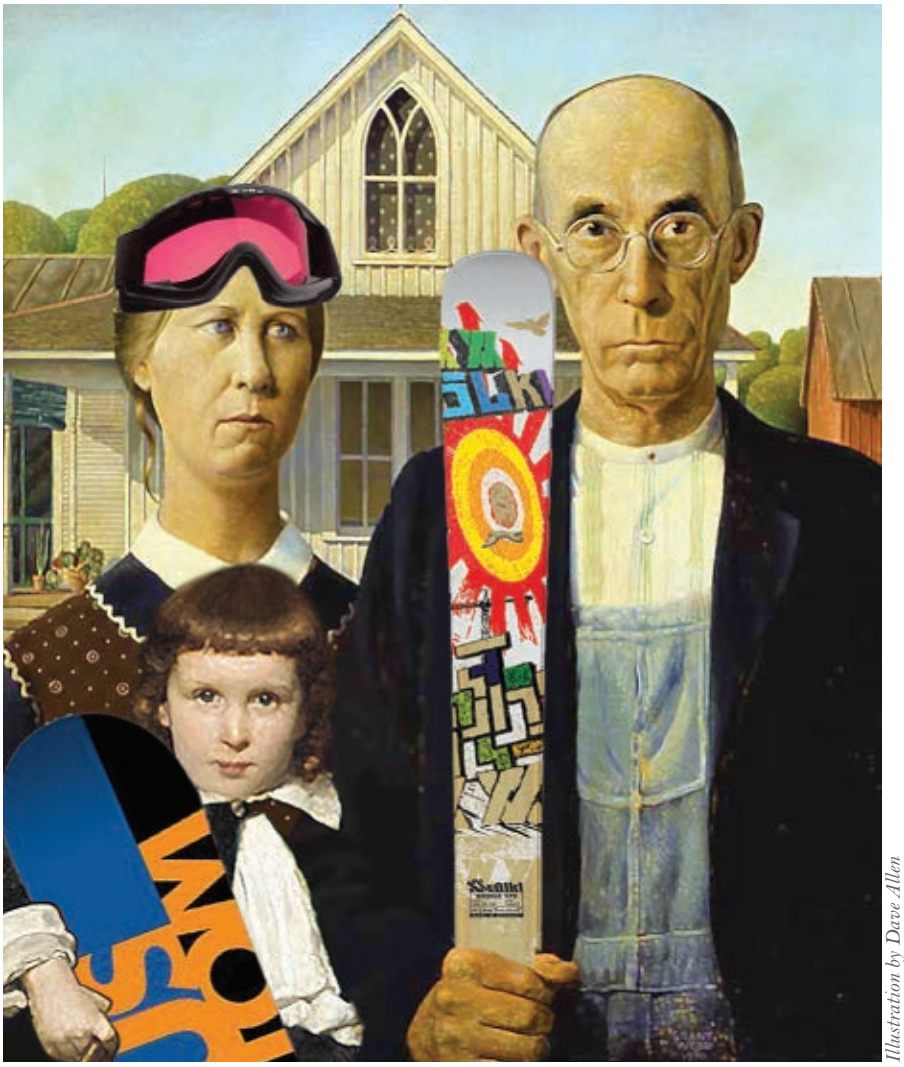


Illustration by Dave Allen

ONE LEG AT A TIME

Shortly after the Smiths left their home things turned bad . . . and then worse.

Their flight was delayed by weather, and they missed a connecting flight. Fortunately, there was another flight to their destination, but their luggage—including all of the clan's ski gear—didn't make it on to the plane. Not to worry, said the airline representatives; all of the luggage would arrive early the next morning.

The expected two-hour drive to the resort took longer than usual due to heavy snow, and the Smiths didn't arrive until nearly midnight. Exhausted, they were ready to settle in for the night at their ski-in/ski-out residence. Much to the family's Goldilocks-like surprise, someone was already sleeping in their beds—another family was ensconced in the house the Smiths had reserved! It was close to 2 a.m. before the situation was rectified and the family had alternative, comparable accommodations.

A few bleary hours later, the family arose to head out for their all-day, private ski lesson. The lesson was scheduled for 10 a.m., but despite the airline's promises, the skis and ski gear would not arrive in time for the lesson.

So, the Smith family showed up at the private-lesson booking area at 9:30 without skiwear or gear. The three kids were dressed in pajamas and winter coats, and nothing else. No skis, boots, or ski pants. The three little ragamuffins were left wearing only sagging cotton socks and Tony the Tiger pajamas.

Sensing the family's exasperation, the instructor assigned to the family immediately launched into damage-control mode. He calmly took the family to the rental area and assisted with the process of renting skis, boots, and poles. He then escorted Mr. Smith to the retail area to purchase gloves and hats. Mr. Smith then announced that he drew the line at having to purchase three new pairs of ski pants when luggage containing new ski clothes would surely be arriving shortly.


Life is a Journey.
Love the Glove.
Official Supplier of:
PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS
www.swanyamerica.com
SWANY®
performance gloves

SnowSports 360

"Isn't there something you can do in the meantime?" he asked, implying that he'd like the instructor to do something about finding temporary coverage for his children from the waist down. (After all, skiing in pajamas is something only Glen Plake could get away with!)

After a split-second spent contemplating options, the instructor's mind flashed on the snowsports school's employee uniform department, where dozens of pairs of ski pants were stored. The instructor told Mr. Smith to hold on for a second and stepped aside to ask a supervisor if it would be okay to "borrow" three pairs of pants until his clients' luggage arrived. The supervisor shook his head, saying that he didn't have the authority to permit the use of resort uniform pants and simply didn't know who would have the authority to help out the family.

The instructor glimpsed a nearby clock: it was almost time for the lesson. The instructor figured he had three options: 1) he could tell Mister Smith that he'd simply have to buy three new pairs of ski pants; 2) he could tell the family to cancel and reschedule the lesson, effectively wasting the family's first day of vacation; or 3) he could consciously choose to bend the resort's rules to help the family out of the situation.

Our fearless instructor chose Door Number Three. The instructor figured he'd take the risk of going against resort policy in order to help his clients have a positive experience. He decided to supersede the status quo to help out a customer in what most people would agree was an extraordinary situation. The instructor strode to the uniform storage area, found three pairs of ski pants, and "borrowed" them for the day.

He handed over the ski pants to the kids and had the entire family out on the slopes at 10:10 a.m.

As the day progressed, the Smiths were simultaneously stunned and overjoyed by the lengths to which the instructor was willing to go to in order to solve their dilemma. They were particularly grateful when the all-day ski lesson went exceedingly well for their children. The kids, in their borrowed alpine duds, had a great time. After the lesson the instructor simply returned the ski pants to uniform storage.

Mr. Smith was so impressed by the instructor's initiative in delivering outstanding customer service that he gave the instructor a nice tip and lavished praise on him in a report to resort management. The Smiths hired the instructor for additional private lessons during their stay. A year later the Smiths returned because of the exceptional service the instructor had provided.

SUPPORT FROM ABOVE

Of course, truly delivering on superior customer service requires the support of management. What our fearless instructor did at his home resort might've gotten him fired elsewhere. That fact may be the hidden takeaway from this article: resort management must truly embrace customer service and support its front-line employees.

I have seen instructors give clients an extra pair of goggles or gloves, buy hot chocolate for a shivering child, stay with an injured skier during transport to the emergency room, and gone on to check on that person the next day. Such actions create powerful and memorable customer experiences. One thing resort management can do is to acknowledge, celebrate, and reward instructors who undertake such measures. By doing this the organization can hardwire a culture of customer service. In these shaky economic times, dazzling customers with service quality doesn't just feel good—it's vital for survival.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS: THE "FANTASTIC FOUR"

Not that long ago customer service training consisted of four tips: Smile. Make eye contact. Engage in small talk. Thank the customer. Service-training standards have evolved, so here are four more detailed standards touted as having a direct impact on customer perception:

RESPECT: **Be courteous, positive, and upbeat. Do whatever you can to meet the customer s needs. If you can bend the rules without causing anyone or anything harm to make your customer happy, by all means do so. Managers and supervisors should encourage such behavior, not punish it.**

RESPONSIVENESS: **Tell customers what to expect. Apologize for delays. Don t just tell them where the rental shop is; take them to it.**

UNDERSTANDING: **Identify the customers needs and desires. Include them in planning the lesson. As Jerry Warren, the director of mountain operations for Utah s Sundance Resort, noted in a recent article in *32 Degrees*, it s not the turn that matters, it s the student. Take time to understand what outcome will meet your students desires. Tailor the lesson to them.**

ENVIRONMENT: **Customers pay attention to what their leader does. If your snowsports area has trouble with litter, do what you can to keep public areas clean. Pick up trash, and chances are your student will notice your effort. Maintain a professional appearance in grooming, uniform, language, and behavior. Wash your hands when you use the restroom. Help customers any way you can, from picking up their skis to helping them carry their gear. The opportunities to reach out to customers are endless. All it takes is looking at the resort experience through their eyes.**

MICHAEL PATMAS

uvex

PROTECTING PEOPLE

WHY UVEX?

Uvex has a fully integrated collection of goggles, lens options, helmets and sunglasses that work seamlessly together to ensure optimum performance and protection. Our products are painstakingly produced (Made in Germany), thoroughly tested, exceed international standards, and are repeatedly proven on the hill in all weather conditions.

For over 80 years, Uvex has been protecting people. Uvex makes products for all the winter sport disciplines, as well as bicycling, equestrian events, and various forms of motorsports.

This broad and deep pool of experience is your assurance of value, innovation, quality and performance.

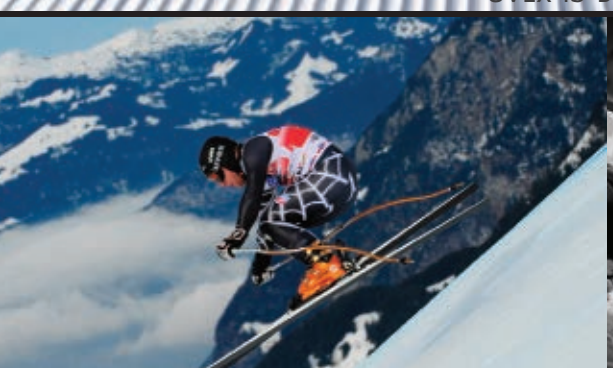
uvex PRO SHOP

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS

Now all PSIA and AASI members will have access to the full Uvex product line at special pro pricing. Visit the official PSIA website www.thesnowpros.org / Click on "MEMBERS ONLY" and log in!
Click on "PROMOTIONAL OFFERS" under member services. "UVEX PRO SHOP" logo and start shopping!

UVEX IS DISTRIBUTED IN THE U.S. BY SWIX SPORTS uvexsports.com



SnowSports 360

PUT YOUR H.E.A.R.T. INTO IT

When things go wrong for a client, they go wrong for you as an instructor. It's never a good thing to see a client unhappy, but when you buy into the melodrama or argue with the individual you're bound to rev up the negative energy in an already challenging situation. Your goal should be to quickly neutralize the situation and attempt to move things into a more positive zone. This means keeping your cool even when your clients do not.

Maintain the strength and equanimity necessary to look at service failures as an opportunity for learning. The idea is to engage in the art and science of "service recovery"—that is, seeing each negative situation as a shot at a "do-over." Studies show that a well-executed service recovery can be as powerful as a flawless first-time service experience in terms of building customer loyalty.

Two popular models for service recovery exist, and the first model goes by the acronym H.E.A.R.T.:

HEAR: Listen to your customers' concerns.

EMPATHIZE: Express empathy for the problem.

APOLOGIZE: Voice your regrets for the service failure.

RESPOND: Admit error and correct the problem.

THANK: Give your appreciation to the customer for bringing the issue to your attention.

Here is one example of how HEART can work: A customer is concerned about where her child is. The lesson was supposed to have been over a while ago, and yet the group has yet to return to the base area. Mom now fears the worst. An instructor who encounters the worried parent hears the mom voicing concern: "Your child is overdue, and now you are worried." What follows is an opportunity to empathize with the parent: "Yes, I understand your concern." This is followed by an apology and a response: "I'm sorry your child hasn't returned yet, but let's see what we can do to find out what's up."

The instructor alerts a supervisor who in turn radios others to locate the class. Ultimately it turns out that the group was delayed by a lift stoppage, and it is on its way in now. Finally, the instructor thanks the mom for bringing the situation to his attention.

I have watched this scenario unfold at my home resort. The instructor in this example actually waited with the worried mom until the class returned and witnessed the reunion of the mother and child. That level of concern was noted by management and greatly appreciated by the mom.

The second customer service model calls for service recovery "toolboxes." Essentially, resorts place boxes at various locales around the snowsports area, and they contain a variety of items, such as gift cards or vouchers for lift tickets, lessons, ski tunes, food, or retail items. To implement this model, resorts need to budget for these toolboxes, and encourage and empower managers, supervisors, and instructors to use them to achieve service recovery.

A former ski school director I worked for used a service recovery toolbox of sorts. He gave each instructor at the resort five vouchers for free lift tickets to be used only for service recovery situations.

Sherri Harkin

AT THE FRONT LINE

It's not breaking news that the world's economy has undergone a significant contraction over the last two years, and that resorts have been affected adversely because of it. Outstanding customer service by itself may not save a resort, but having a reputation for poor customer service can't help.

As an instructor, you're on the front line of resort employees, and are uniquely positioned to take customer service to the next level. Providing great lessons and exceptional service will not only be personally rewarding and gratifying, it will also contribute to the success of your resort and your future employment on the hill.

Beyond delivering good service up to the point of sale, instructors can take advantage of digital social networking to extend customer interaction long after the end of a lesson. Postings by instructors that provide advice on skiing in certain situations or dealing with on-snow conditions and circumstances can "virtually" take customer service to a whole new level.

To compete in today's challenging economy, every resort employee must understand the new world of service. Apologizing for service failures just isn't enough. To exceed customer expectations in an era when money is tight and customers have an abundance of recreational opportunities, you need to rise above and beyond the status quo. Your high visibility as an instructor gives you an ideal position to lead the way in the new era of customer service. 32°

Dr. Michael Patmas decided decades ago that he'd have to find some way to feed his skiing jones and while living life in style. His work as a medical doctor and hospital administrator helps fund his addiction.

SIA SNOW SHOW

JANUARY 27 - 30, 2011

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER
DENVER, COLORADO

ON-SNOW DEMO/SKI-RIDE FEST

JANUARY 31 & FEBRUARY 1, 2011

WINTER PARK RESORT /
DEVIL'S THUMB RANCH, COLORADO

THE INNOVATIONS, COMMUNITY AND PASSION THAT DRIVE THE SNOW SPORTS INDUSTRY.

REGISTER AND FIND SHOW INFO AT SIASNOWSHOW.COM

SIA SNOW SHOW

Presented by SIA SNOWSPORTS INDUSTRIES AMERICA, a national non-profit, member-owned trade association.

Wide Range of Training on Tap for **National Adaptive Academy**

By **BEN ROBERTS,** PSIA-AASI Education Manager

Adaptive instructors and those interested in crossing over from the "able-bodied" world of snowsports teaching will be making a beeline to Breckenridge, Colorado, December 5–10 for what's come to be regarded as *the* go-to training event of the season—National Adaptive Academy. Presented as part of Disabled Sports USA's The Hartford Ski Spectacular, the academy offers exceptional training clinics for instructors of all abilities, presented by the best adaptive instructors and trainers in the United States.

Beth Fox (operations manager for the National Sports Center for the Disabled in Winter Park, Colorado) took over leadership of the National Adaptive Academy beginning with the 2009 event and has worked hard with the adaptive community, Disabled Sports USA (DSUSA), and PSIA-AASI to develop five days of top-notch instructor training. This year's clinics and education tracks will focus on presenting the knowledge and practical information needed to lead excellent adaptive lessons—regardless of previous experience.

"What has made the National Adaptive Academy so special over the years is the range of attendees, from folks just getting started in instruction to veteran instructors looking to stay current," Fox said. "This year we've set up different tracks for these different instructors so they can get the information, feedback, and discussion they need."

One exciting addition is the creation of crossover clinics for current non-adaptive PSIA-AASI instructors who are looking to expand their skills to include teaching adaptive skiers and riders and for adaptive instructors who want to learn about another area of adaptive snowsports that interests them. (Adaptive snowsports covers the range of snowsports, including adaptive alpine and nordic skiing and snowboarding.)

"Teaching for transfer will be the focus here," Fox said. One goal that she's concentrated on is helping instructors learn about an area of instruction that is new to them so they can put their existing skills to use in a new venue. In addition to the crossover clinics, there are topics for trainers as well as experienced and new adaptive snowsports instructors.

Instructors seeking to gain knowledge and skills for working with students who have intellectual or developmental impairments (ranging from clients with brain injuries to autism spectrum students) will find a great deal of content this year. "Instructors in mainstream snowsports schools are increasingly finding themselves working with students from these populations," explained Fox. "The crossover clinics in these topic areas will do a lot to help mainstream instructors learn how to make those lessons truly special for their students."

While the National Adaptive Academy runs for five full days, attendees can register for the full week of clinics or for as little as a day. Said PSIA-AASI Education Co-Manager Earl Saline, "Traditionally, the average attendee comes for three days of clinics. What's really cool is that each attendee has the ability to customize his or her curriculum based on individual needs, interests, and schedule. That's one of the things I love most about the event."

Ken Watson

The PSIA-AASI National Adaptive Academy is an integral part of DSUSA's The Hartford Ski Spectacular, which is one of the largest adaptive snowsport events around. Ski Spectacular also includes learn-to-ski-and-ride programs, race camps and training for Paralympic hopefuls, and other exciting events through the week. Registration and a full listing of clinic topics and tracks are available online at www.dsusa.org and at www.TheSnowPros.org. 32°

YOUR PASSION.
OUR TECHNOLOGY.

HIGHGEAR AXIO MAX

The Axio Max is an exercise in balance; sleek design with rugged durability, relevant features with an intuitive interface. Get the most out of your altimeter with the Highgear Axio Max.

+ Altimeter/Barometer
+ 12 hour weather forecast icon
+ Digital thermometer
+ Digital Compass with adjustable declination
+ 100 hour chronograph
+ 10 run data storage
+ Time/Day/Date
+ Dual time zone
+ 2 daily alarms
+ 1 rest alarm
+ 1 hydration alarm
+ 2 altitude alarms

HIGHGEAR®

SUMMIT SERIES | ADVANCED TOOLS FOR VERTICAL PLACES | WWW.HIGHGEAR.COM

Go to the Poles for Better Power and Alignment

By **NICK HERRIN**; photos by **JULIE SHIPMAN**

As a member of the PSIA Alpine Team, one of the things I look forward to is working with fellow instructors at National Academy. The event is great because it caters to a lot of different needs, whether attendees are there to score some great spring skiing, get tips on the certification process, or work on specific goals for the next season. ¶ I had a blast with my group at the 2010 National Academy, all of whom wanted to enhance their personal skiing and better understand how specific body movements—even the smallest of movements—effect how their skis work and interact with the snow. The instructors I worked with in April at Snowbird, Utah, were high-level skiers with a solid understanding of the sport, so I decided to use a drill that would challenge their understanding of how the upper and lower body must be aligned—and move in the same direction—to optimize effective ski-to-snow reaction. I incorporated a short pole as a prop to help each skier find the right "line of action," depending on the conditions and the type of turn he or she was making.

TEAM TIP

As described by Dr. Juris Vagners in *ATM Teaching Concepts*, "For stability in the absence of any other external force such as a pole support, the ski-snow reaction force must pass through the skier's center of mass." This creates an optimal line of action (photo 1). In this drill, the skier moves through a turn, keeping the pole level and facing the direction of intended travel. This tactic effects the alignment of the inside and outside half of the skier's body as well as his or her fore/aft alignment and the rotational relationship between the upper and lower body. When performed correctly, the skier takes advantage of proper body alignment along the lateral and fore/aft planes to address forces building on the outside ski and create more power in the turn.

The author demonstrates the body alignment and directional focus that his pole drill helps reinforce.

A CLOSER LOOK

To offer a better sense of the drill—and brag about the progress of the Academy attendees I foisted this drill on—check out the following photos, captions, and quotes.

1

2

LEIGH

1) Here you can see Leigh moving too far to the inside of the turn, dropping her inside shoulder and hand at the finish. As a result, she's losing the strength in her outside leg and allowing it to drift too far behind her. **2)** Leigh's correction in the upper body strengthened her alignment on her outside ski and created a more desired line of action.

Says Leigh: "Before the drill I was moving inside the turn too quickly in the initiation phase, which was not allowing me to stay forward with my core and hips. As a result I was tipping inside in the shape phase through the finish and my outside ski was washing out. The pole drill showed me how to have a strong line of action in the initiation phase of the turn—which helped keep me from moving too quickly at the top of the turn—and gave me more reaction time to adapt to terrain throughout the turn. That kept my outside ski from washing out. It also was cool to feel a proper amount of counter develop, which helped in trying to correct the tipping in the bottom part of the turn."

1

2

3

KEVIN

With Kevin we were working on the separation of the upper and lower body and where it should come from; specifically, achieving more rotary out of the hip sockets. **1)** Here you can see that Kevin's hips are square with his skis and his shoulders and hands are countered. **2)** Here Kevin gets caught up, or, as he puts it, "coming along for the ride" with his lower body. As a result, he's putting his weight back and on his inside ski. Kevin did an excellent job of becoming more aware of leg steering. **3)** Here his hips are square with his hands and shoulders and his inside half is elevated, allowing active feet and steering of his legs. Great change!

Says Kevin: "This whole season I have been working on countering—allowing my legs to steer underneath me and disciplining my upper body to stay put. All too often it's easy for the upper body to come along for the ride with the lower body. This leaves me and my weight back and on my inside ski. This is not very powerful in Snowbird mank! Trying to keep the pole shaft level is harder than it looks. Keeping it up higher and out in front of you will help draw your center of mass over your base of support.

For me the pole shaft drill is very useful and helpful for learning how to separate one's upper and lower body. It also allows for stable upper body development."

1

2

CHRISTINE

1) In this photo Christine is "settling" the inside hip. In addition, her upper body is not allowing her to draw much power to her outside ski, thus reducing her ability to move with that ski. It's as if she is getting bogged down in the terrain. **2)** Notice here how Christine's alignment has strengthened. The power on her outside ski is due to a strong alignment of the upper body, moving with the skis and keeping the joints parallel. I love these two photos as it shows how a small change can make such a big difference in managing power through the turn.

1

2

3

CHRIS

1) Chris remained very square with his skis throughout the transition. He was having a difficult time with the pole drill, trying to create separation of his pelvis and femurs, and really working rotation in the hip joint. We modified the exercise and had him try the Heisman Drill. **2)** Here you can see Chris trying to reach across the skis to create better alignment from the hips up, but he's still not reaching his goal. **3)** Eureka! Here, the modified drill started to give Chris more separation through the transition of the turn. He's strengthening his upper body and achieving better upper-body alignment with his skis.

"Whether you are taking the level II skiing exam or trying to make the Demo team, the Speed Course Ti will give you the confidence to make it happen."
– Jeb Boyd, PSIA Alpine Team

5 of 12 members of PSIA's Alpine Team

Speed Course Ti

Race inspired construction, for powerful edge grip and a vibration tuned plate matched to a modified flex pattern for all around versatility. This, by far, is the most precise ski we have ever made.

Make every turn a great turn, regardless of conditions.

Dynastar's PSIA Purchase Plan:
Login at www.TheSnowPros.org to access your pro offer!
Simply log into the MEMBER SERVICES page and click on the link for PRO OFFERS to access our all-new, easier system.

DYNASTAR

http://prostaff.dynastar.com

PRO PURCHASE PROGRAM

Proper alignment helps skiers manage forces building on the outside ski and create more power in the turn.

YOUR TURN

If you incorporate the horizontal pole drill into your own teaching regimen, here are some movement patterns to watch for and either encourage or discourage:

Key Movement Patterns (Effective):

- At the fall line and finish phase of the turn, the skier keeps the pole level by elevating the inside hand, shoulder, and hip.
- The skier steers from the hip sockets to create rotation in the lower body while allowing the upper body (pelvis and higher) to face the direction of travel.

Key Movement Patterns (Ineffective):

- The skier over flexes the knee and hip joint, forcing the upper body to move aft and away from the optimal line of action.
- Upper body rotation through the turn creates a square or beyond square position at the finish/initiation phase.
- The skier drops the inside half of the body, such that the inside shoulder or hand is lower than the outside shoulder or hand.

Key Coaching Cues:

- Use a pole to help identify undesirable upper body rotation and or inclination.
- Take a snapshot at each phase of the turn to evaluate the body alignment, keying off the pole position.
- In the initiation phase be aware of the duration, intensity, rate, and timing (D.I.R.T.) of your students movements. It is very common for skiers to rush the initiation of the turn without matching it to the D.I.R.T. of the speed and turn size they choose. This effects their alignment later in the turn.
- The shaping phase of the turn can be a great cue for alignment of the pole shaft. Evaluate to make sure the hips, feet, and pole are square with each other.
- The finishing phase of the turn is another great phase in which to evaluate the relationship of the pole position with the posture of the upper body. Check to see if the skier is applying too much upper body rotation or dropping the inside half.

CONCLUSION

As you can tell from the photos and analysis of the Academy attendees highlighted here, the horizontal pole drill doesn't necessary boost the performance of each skier in the same way. I think this is great, because it allows each individual to focus specifically on what he or she needs out of the drill.

The next time you're looking to enhance your own body alignment and power on skis—or help your students with the same outcomes—maybe a horizontal pole will promote the goal. 32°

Nick Herrin is a member of the PSIA Alpine Team and the director the Ski and Ride School at Colorado's Crested Butte Mountain Resort. *He wishes to thank his 2010 PSIA National Academy group—Troy Nedved, Christine Baker, Jill Imsand, Emily Nedved, Gosh Fog, Kevin Jordan, Chris Jones, Leigh Pierini and Will Glaser—for support and feedback that aided the development of this article.*

For more photos and quotes from National Academy attendees who took part in Nick Herrin's horizontal pole drill, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and look for the "Web Extras" link in the section for *32 Degrees*.

LANGE'S PSIA PURCHASE PROGRAM FEATURES THE ALL-NEW LANGE RS

CONTROL FIT TECHNOLOGY


TRUE LASTED LINER


ANATOMICAL PADDING


ASYMMETRICAL TOE BOX


INSTEP POCKET


POWER WEDGE TONGUE

LANGE'S PSIA PURCHASE PLAN:
Login at www.TheSnowPros.org to access your pro offer!
Simply log into the MEMBER SERVICES page and click on the link for PRO OFFERS to get the latest Lange technology!

LANGE
ULTIMATE CONTROL. FEEL IT

How Boot Fit and Function Affect Student Success

By **GREG HOFFMANN** and **ELLEN POST FOSTER**

Skiing is a simple sport conceptually. We go up a snow-covered hill in a mechanized lift and then glide down the hill with the help of gravity. For most of the skiing population, it is relatively easy to attain a comfortable skill level and to experience much of the mountain. However, it is more difficult to become an all-mountain skier and safely have control over your destiny at any given moment on any given terrain. Too often, equipment hinders performance and does not allow skiers to achieve this goal.

Larry Simpson

Co-author Ellen Post Foster shows the form that well-fitting boots help promote.

Boots are the Achilles heel for many skiers. We will describe how the parts of the ski boot affect particular bones and joints of the body, and how they relate to specific skiing skills. This information will help you to understand and identify ski boot-related considerations that impede your students' ability to progress.

Manufacturers of skiing equipment have a difficult job to create boots that fit and function effectively for everyone because, clearly, people's physiques, body mechanics, and skill levels are different. Therefore, the skiers you teach may not have the appropriate boots. Acquiring knowledge about various boot components, stance balancing, and assessing alignment will help you to determine whether or not the boots are the cause of your students' problems, and if you should recommend a visit to a reputable bootfitter.

BOOT COMPONENTS

The word lower, also known as clog or shoe, describes the part of the boot that surrounds the foot and ankle (photo 1).

1

The shape (also called the last) of the lower is designed to accommodate different foot sizes and proportions. Looking at the profile of a boot, consider the distance between the heel and the instep/tibia flex location. It is noticeably greater for a boot that is designed to

QUEST 12

"I HAD THE LUCK OF MEETING UP WITH CODY IN UTAH WHEN HE WAS BETWEEN FILMING IN JACKSON AND THE VERBIER FREERIDE COMPETITION. WE DECIDED TO GO FOR A SUNRISE HIKE UP MT. SUPERIOR, ACROSS THE HIGHWAY FROM ALTA/SNOWBIRD. WE HAD NO AGENDA, NO FILMERS, AND WERE JUST OUT FOR A FUN SKI. IT'S A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO WATCH THE SUNRISE."
- ADAM CLARK

salomon

accommodate a bulkier foot in comparison to a boot that is configured for a smaller, low-volume foot. This is the most critical of all fit zones and much more important than forefoot width. This dimension must match the foot in order to keep the heel in the back of the boot, have even tongue contact, and flex the boot effectively.

Just as the lower engulfs the foot, the cuff embraces the leg (photo 2). The cuff should fit closely so that movement of the lower leg exerts pressure on the cuff. This force is transmitted to the ski though the spine of the boot. The forward lean of the cuff affects fore/aft balance and the position of the hip. It should allow the skier to stand balanced over the center of the foot. Forward lean should not restrict the range of motion necessary for extension movements. The amount of forward lean can be increased by adding a shim between the liner and the back of the shell. Many boots come with a detachable shim, which can be removed to make the boot more upright.

The boot board (also called the zeppa) lies at the bottom of the lower. All boot boards are higher in the heel than the forefoot (photo 3). The boot board angle, or ramp angle, balances the foot and ankle front to back, ball of the foot to heel. The boot board relates directly to the foot and ankle, which affects the lower leg and therefore, the position of the knee. Both the ramp angle of the boot board and the forward lean of the cuff are critical for controlling fore/aft pressure on the skis.

The foot should feel snug and secure within the liner of the boot without tight buckle tension. A thinner liner will allow for greater feel of the snow because the foot and leg are closer to the lower and cuff. A thicker more cushioned liner may feel good, but may not perform on snow as well. The liner can be modified to alleviate pressure points or by adding material for a tighter fit (photo 4).

STANCE BALANCING

In skiing, dorsiflexion of the ankle refers to flexing the leg over the boot towards the toes. Instructors commonly

bollé®

brings photochromic innovation to the spherical lens.

Chad Ptterstrom in the Quasar

ONE LENS FOR ANY CONDITION.

LIGHT IN THE DARK

DARK IN THE LIGHT

* Visible Light Transmitted

The Bollé Modulator™ is a state-of-the-art, high contrast, light reactive lens that changes lens tint density with the changing light conditions. The more UV light exposed to the lens, the darker the lens will become.

Bollé Pro Deals available in the PSIA AASI Accessories Catalog and online at www.thesnowpros.org.

bolle.com

call this movement "closing the ankle." Ankle joint dorsiflexion is crucial for maintaining fore/aft balance, absorbing excess pressure on the skis, and crossing uneven terrain smoothly.

Lack of flexibility (dorsiflexion) in the ankle prohibits the skier from matching the angle of the boot that is created by the ramp angle and forward lean. For example, if the ramp angle has 6° of slant and the forward lean has 16°, subtract these two numbers to find the amount of dorsiflexion that a skier needs to match the angle the boot creates. The result is 10° standing statically and more when the boot is flexed (fig. 1). If a person has less than 10° range of motion in the ankle, his or her heel will feel light in the boot when the lower leg matches the forward lean. As a result, the heel hovers above the footbed, and the skier often attempts to find solid ground by sitting back at the hips.

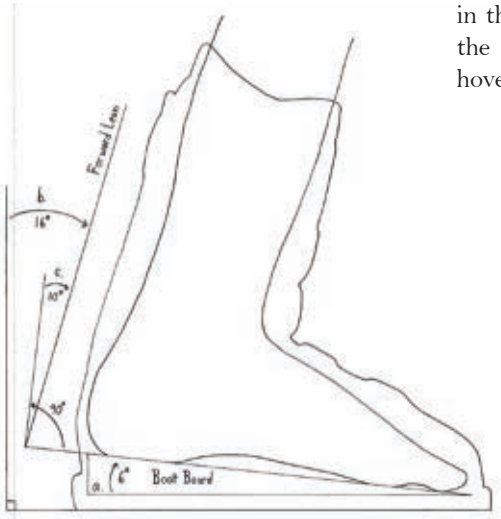


Figure 1

a. The ramp angle of the boot board is 6°.
b. The forward lean of the boot is 16°.
c. The forward lean (16°) minus the ramp angle (6°) equals the necessary ankle dorsiflexion (10°).

The addition of a heel wedge to the boot board will increase the ramp angle and resolve the situation just described. This additional heel wedge is a filler that brings the ground up to the foot in order to balance the foot. It serves a very different purpose from adding a heel lift solely to change a skier's stance and hip position, which is not recommended. Conversely, the ramp angle may need to be lowered for an ankle that displays excessive range of motion of approximately 20° or greater. This allows the skier to flex far enough forward so that the functional tension that occurs at the ankle's end range of motion applies force to the cuff that will be transmitted to the ski. Rigid or excessively mobile ankle joints should be assessed by a qualified bootfitter because subtalar joint movement below the ankle joint can disguise the actual amount of dorsiflexion in the ankle (fig. 2).

A custom footbed is an insole that is made by a bootfitter specifically

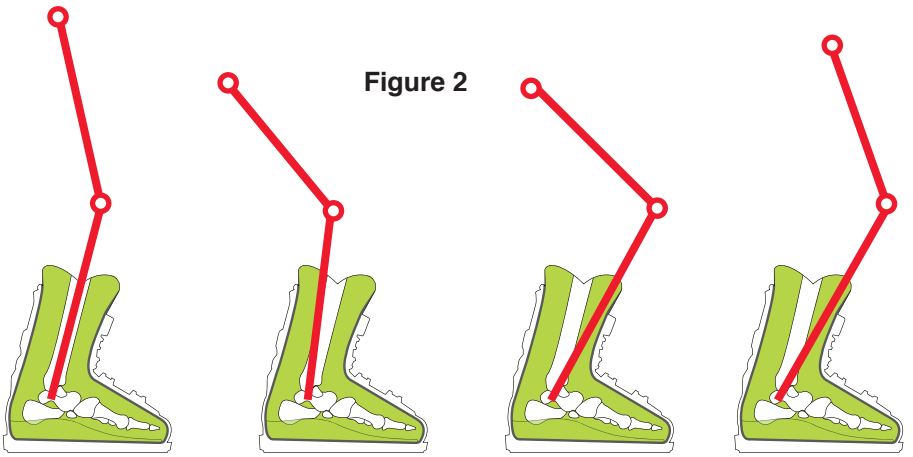


Figure 2

A. A neutral stance; the foot is balanced.
B. The hips are back to compensate for lack of dorsiflexion in the ankle.
C. Stance is low with hips back to compensate for excessive dorsiflexion.
D. The hips are too far forward to compensate for excessive dorsiflexion.

5

6

for an individual client (photo 5). It accommodates the shape of the bottom of the person's foot and balances the foot from side to side. Custom footbeds provide comfort and stabilize the foot within the lower to enhance performance. The footbed supports the foot in a neutral position and allows it to act like a balanced tripod: the three points of contact are located at the center of the heel and behind the first and fifth toes (at the metatarsal heads). The footbed distributes pressure across the foot so that both the big-toe side and little-toe side can be accessed (weighted) to edge the ski.

Within the lower, the combination of balance from side to side (custom footbed) and front to back (boot board ramp angle) create the suspension that allows a skier to adjust the blending of skills with subtle movements and to develop a light touch on the snow. Just as the components of the lower create suspension, the cuff creates the transmission as the lower and cuff work together to transfer pressure to the skis.

The cuff shaft adjustment provides a means to tilt the cuff sideways so that it


7


8


9

Photos by Ellen Post Foster

matches the angle at which the lower leg leaves the lower (photo 6). If the skier's legs are not centered in the cuff shafts, he or she will be forced to compensate physically to attain a neutral stance. This can lead to discomfort and compromise performance. Notice in photo 7 that the skier's legs are tight against the inside of the cuffs. The cuffs need to be moved inward to match the angles of the legs. In comparison, the skier's legs in photo 8 are centered in the cuffs.

After the previous steps are taken to support the foot in a neutral position and to align the cuff of the boot with the natural angle of the skier's leg, overall alignment should be assessed to determine if canting is necessary (photo 9). Canting involves modifying the boot sole angle to improve the skier's alignment. If a bootfitter determines that the center mark of a skier's knee mass does not line up with the center mark (mold line) of the ski boot while standing on a level surface, then canting should be considered. Although the aim is for both marks to line up, some skiers prefer to be slightly inside (negative alignment) or outside (positive alignment) this mark. In a knock-kneed stance, the center of the skier's knee mass falls considerably to the inside of the center line of the boot. This stance is referred to as under-edged because the ski remains relatively flat in a turn. The under-edged skier must move farther to the inside of a turn than a neutrally aligned skier in order to attain the same edge angle. In contrast, a bowlegged stance aligns the center of the skier's knee mass noticeably to the outside of the center line of the boot. This creates an over-edged stance whereas movement toward the inside of a turn results in more edge than is necessary. Over-edged skiers cannot achieve a strongly aligned position from the hip to the foot because the edge engages before the knee is in alignment. While some skiers opt for this strongly positive set-up for carving on hard snow, it hinders their ability to soften the edge when skidded turns are warranted for other conditions. Most skiers prefer a neutral alignment, which provides more options for versatility in turn size and shape, and for skiing varied terrain and snow conditions.

Canting should not be done to the footbed or boot board inside the boot because it will take the foot out of a neutrally supported position. Depending on the degree of cant planed into the sole of the boot, modification to the toe and heel lugs may be necessary to maintain DIN standards. No matter how insignificant any adjustment appears to be, there are consequences elsewhere for the skier system. A rule to keep in mind is that modifications made to the outside of the boot, such as adjusting the cuff or planing the sole of the boot, affect the joints above the boot. Any adjustments pertaining to the ankle joint or foot are made inside the boot.

STANCE AND ALIGNMENT

As an instructor, it can be difficult to determine whether stance, alignment, or fit issues hinder a skier's ability. If after instruction, your student cannot change a movement pattern given his or her overall athleticism, limitations due to equipment should be considered. The following guideline will help determine if a student will benefit from the expertise of a qualified bootfitter.

The best maneuver to assess a skier's stance and alignment is a slow-speed, steered turn since steering blends rotary and edging skills to create a skidded turn that has a smooth, round-shaped arc. This turn is basic to all levels of skiing, and it can be performed whether your students are on rental, carving, or powder skis. At slow speeds, it is easier to recognize incorrect movement patterns that may be the result of the function or fit of the skier's boots.

In general, notice if your student stands comfortably tall over the feet with joints flexed fairly evenly. Or, does he or she sit back, lean too far forward, or stand in a low position that requires muscular exertion? Look to see if fore/aft balance is maintained while the skier extends to flatten the skis at the start of the turn, and flexes to increase the edge, continuing the turn through completion. If in balance, your student should be able to simultaneously turn the skis and tip them onto edges. The rotary movement should come from the legs turning and not from the upper body. Throughout the turn, notice if the edge angle is similar on both skis (the objective), or if the angles are largely different. Observe if there is a knock-kneed or bowlegged appearance to your student's stance. Look for symmetry in the turns: a significantly weaker turn in one direction is cause to question the student's alignment.

This visual assessment can be augmented with questions such as, "Are your feet sliding forward or moving sideways in your boots?" and, "Where on the bottom of your feet do you feel the most pressure?" The responses may

confirm your observations and indicate that the fit and/or construction of the boots are interfering with your student's ability to ski competently or improve.

Whether you are questioning your student's ski boots or wondering about your own, be aware of the human factor. Even a small adjustment that is tailored for an individual's physique can greatly improve performance and comfort. Why focus on ski boot fitting? It could be the answer to skiing more challenging terrain, refining skills to surpass the next level of certification, or just enjoying the glissade. 32°

Greg Hoffmann is the founder of Ski Boot Fitting Inc. (www.skibootfitting.com), located in Lionshead, Vail Village, and at the Ski Enhancement Center at the summit of Vail in Colorado. A board-certified Pedorthist and a senior instructor with MasterFit University, Hoffmann has been fitting boots since 1979.

Ellen Post Foster works as a bootfitter for Ski Boot Fitting, Inc. She was a member of the PSIA Alpine Team from 1980 to 1988 and is the author of Skiing and the Art of Carving.

Co-author Greg Hoffmann

Ellen Post Foster

Help Students Turn the Corner with Small Steps

By **TOM MARSHALL**; photos by **JULIE SHIPMAN**

The phrase "what goes up must come down" is as true for cross-country skiing as it is for the law of gravity. ¶ It's hard to deny that some of the most exciting moments to be found on groomed nordic trails happen on the downward-sloping sections of a cross-country ski course. These descents, though, can also be tense and nerve-racking if the skier doesn't understand the moves needed to maintain control throughout downhill turns. The key to both embracing the speed and excitement of turns on skinny skis is mastering the art of cornering.

For students of the nordic disciplines, I've found the following tips useful in helping others learn how to negotiate downhill turns in the trail (a.k.a., corners) more easily. In the process of gaining corner control, you can help skiers increase their level of fun because they'll have the skills they need to maintain speed and an upright position on the trail, no matter what they encounter.

TEAM TIP

STEPPING INTO IT

If your student comes from an alpine or telemark skiing background, the first thing to do is remind him or her that cross-country skis are not like the other skis they're probably used to. The obvious difference is that nordic skis are significantly narrower, lighter, and in many cases longer than the majority of skis used in other disciplines. The biggest difference, however, is that nordic track skis (classic and skate skis) generally have minimal sidecut and no metal edges.

A common mistake new nordic skiers make is to attempt a turn by tipping the outside ski on edge, pressuring that edge, and then . . . nothing happens! Nothing, that is, except perhaps a continued skid directly out of what should have been a turn. Pressuring the outside edge of a cross-country ski is a bit like trying to slice bread with a knife made of Jell-O. The action is an instinctive move for alpine skiers, and lack of response when it comes to the skis can be a big surprise for beginner nords.

Dave Lawrence, of the PSIA Nordic Team, steps it up.

To offer an alternative to pressuring the ski to make a turn, your task as an instructor is to encourage a nordic novice to change direction by stepping in the direction he or she wants to travel. The best method for doing this is to encourage the student to move forward on the skis, and then begin to shift direction by taking very small "steps" through a turn. With each small step the skier should feel the pivot point at a spot somewhere between the back of the boot and the

Get over $300 of FREE Gear! *really...*

...When you buy a Sunglass kit*

To Find This Deal & Dealers Go To:

www.e-rudy.com

GET ALL THIS GEAR FREE!

Free $75 Team Bag

Free $11 Lanyard

Free $125 Slinger Helmet
(winter helmet upgrade available)

Free $25 T-Shirt

Free $65 Lens Set
(see web site for available colors)

RUDY PROJECT
Technically Cool

*Kit includes a $150 MSRP Sunglass + a $25 MSRP Hat | Program and free items subject to change without notice

HELMET DEAL

52.5% Off All Rudy Project Helmets
including our new Kunet & Sterling

Kunet Snow Helmet | $200 MSRP
Your Price $95

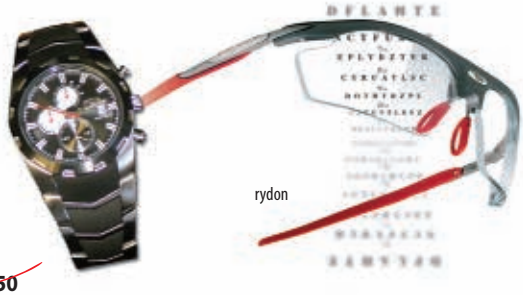
Sterling | $225 MSRP
Your Price $106.87

*Use Promo Code: **snowpros***
on www.e-rudy.com

RX / PRESCRIPTION DEAL

Free Rudy Watch With Any Rudy Rx
from a dealer using our FreeForm Tek™ Digital Technology

Rx



~~MSRP $250~~
Yours FREE with Rx

download coupon at:
www.e-rudy.com/coupons.php

POLAR 3FX Polarized lens upgrades available

madeinitaly
1985-2010

tail of the ski. (The actual point of contact between the rear of the ski and the snow typically depends on the angle of descent as the skier enters the corner. The steeper the trail, the farther back the pivot point moves toward the tails of the skis. Conversely, on a relatively flat corner the skier should feel the pivot point closer to the heels of his or her boots.)

One way to get someone to visualize short steps through a turn is to introduce them to the concept of the "wagon wheel." Ask your students to stand in place with their feet centered on the axis of a large imaginary wheel, then have them step around in a circle with their steps creating relatively equal "slices of pie" radiating out from the wheel's center. Upon completing the circle, the skier should have made steps in the snow that resemble the spokes of a wagon wheel.

Practicing wagon wheels can help students get a feel for stepping around a corner. While they hopefully won't be making a full 360-degree turn on a corner, the circular movement from the pivot point will likely create the feel of stepping to negotiate each corner encountered along the trail.

The skid can help to reduce speed and therefore help the skier hold onto some control when entering the turn.

ON EDGE

In order for skiers to hold onto or build speed while taking corners, they must use edging. As mentioned, nordic skis don't have metal edges. But nordic boards do have "edges," per se, and they need to be employed through a turn. Due to the added speed during a descent, it's not enough to simply use a flat-footed "stepping" of the skis that you would use on a flat surface of a trail. While cornering, the outside ski must be tipped onto its big-toe side, a movement that typically has a natural feel to it as your body matches the turn. To complement the outside ski, the inside ski tips onto the little-toe side. The movement of the inside ski, though, has a more challenging feel than tipping the outside ski and often takes some focused practice to master.

The little-toe/inside-ski edging uses the same concept as corresponding edges, and the focus of the following exercise is to maintain awareness of stepping onto that edge. Even experienced skiers can still have trouble with the inside ski through a turn. Taking your student to a wide and easy corner on a gentle slope, you can have him or her practice focusing on stepping the outside ski first. The little-toe-side edge will be used more in stepping around a steeper corner, and not so much for taking flatter (less steep) corners.

SKIDDING: THE LAST RESORT

You can also explain to students that there are some clear advantages to

stepping around a corner instead of making a skidded parallel, or wedge, turn. First, a stepped turn won't scrub your speed, which is particularly helpful if the corner is on the flats following a downhill. Nordic skiing requires plenty of energy, and maintaining as much momentum as possible can help prevent unnecessary or wasted motion.

The second advantage to stepping around a corner is that it prevents wax loss and saves the skier time in terms of avoiding a re-prepping of the skis. (Such wax loss mainly applies to classic skiing where students can easily scrape off kick/grip wax if they drag their skis across the snow.)

Skidding sideways around a turn can scrape off kick wax, and will thereby make the next uphill even more challenging to climb. Skidding around icy corners is particularly hard on a wax job during conditions that call for klister.

It doesn't hurt to emphasize that setting up for the corner is just as important as stepping through the turn. The goal is to help students understand that the importance of making the radius of the turn around the corner as wide as possible by using the entire width of the track. Such a move is akin to driving along a winding two-lane road, where crossing over the centerline on the descent provides the option of reduced braking.

To set up for the corner, encourage students to begin the turn on the outside of the turn, stepping toward the inside of the corner at its middle, and finish up at its outside. When there is an "S" curve, skiers need to remember to re-set the whole body, including feet and skis (I'm talking about the skiers' lines here), to the new outside of the second turn so that they can maintain their speed throughout.

Some trail conditions can make cornering a dicey affair, and each situation requires special preparation. Challenges occur when the trail is very steep and fast, too narrow, or too icy to step through the entire turn. If the trail is a combination of very steep, fast, and narrow, the skier will need to enter the turn with a parallel skid on the outside of the corner and begin stepping as soon as possible. Because stepping through the finish of a turn can help a skier maintain momentum, entering a corner with a skid is preferable to skidding at its end.

The skid can help to reduce speed and therefore help the skier hold onto some control when entering the turn. A skid can also set up the skis to face the proper direction for the turn. So, if the skier is going to skid, he or she needs to be proactive and make that skid first—not as a last resort at the end of the corner.

CONCLUSION

When stepping onto skinny and lightweight nordic skis, even small downhill turns can be fun and exciting . . . if the skier maintains some control over his or her skis. The key to helping students stay upright and moving forward is to remind them that they need to quickly assess the turn in terms of space and speed, take lots of small steps, and get the inside ski up on its little-toe edge. 32°

Tom Marshall is a PSIA Nordic Team member who teaches at Big Sky, Montana. He regularly skis cross-country at Montana's Lone Mountain Ranch, and is also a PSIA-NRM alpine and telemark examiner.

Stepping Stones: Two Paths Across the River to Telemark

By **URMAS FRANOSCH**; photos by **WEST VANE**

Like crossing a river by hopping from stone to stone, we can teach a maneuver such as a telemark turn by using a series of activities that progress in difficulty, gradually building the student's skill level and culminating in the performance of the desired maneuver. ¶ Just as stones in a river rarely fall in a regularly spaced straight line, the instructional tasks and exercises we use aren't usually arranged in a linear fashion either. As instructors, we start out by picking the stones with the lichens worn off from repeated footsteps, only venturing onto the mossier ones after numerous trips across the river. In other words, we use the ones that reliably work for most people first, and then venture on to those that experience and judgment have proven effective in select situations.

What follows are two tried and true pathways I've used for introducing telemark skiing to two students with distinct backgrounds and learning preferences. While each of the activities employed will be of some value to most students, I draw back the curtain to reveal what factors lead me to pair certain activities with the specific characteristics of each student. I hope to give the aspiring instructor a couple of effective lesson plans, and provide the more seasoned instructor with a bag of tricks from which to mix and match activities for various students.

Please note that the time frame of these lessons has been greatly compressed. Students typically require multiple days, interspersed with free ski/practice days, to work through the progressions presented here. It may take a half day or longer for a student to grasp just one step; mastery of that step will take longer. Students should perform each step confidently and consistently before moving forward. If one step seems too hard, move back to an easier activity to help prevent student frustration. For more information on stepping stones, see chapter 3 in the PSIA *Nordic Technical Manual.*

TWO STUDENTS

Two experienced skiers want to learn to ski telemark. One is a cross-country skier, the other an alpine skier. Marie is 25 years old, works winters at a nordic center, and enjoys classic and skate skiing and racing regularly. She is quite fit and is interested in telemark skiing because her love of summer backpacking motivates her to want to ski in the winter wilderness. Marie has good balance and coordination on skis, but she's not used to

Flexing the leg joints evenly for a balanced telemark stance. Sandy (in red) is underflexing the front foot, while Marie (in blue) underflexes the rear. Notice how this affects the fore/aft position of their hips.


DALE
NORWAY
www.daleofnorway.com
ROSSIGNOL
PSIA
50
YEARS
1961
2011

making turns on steep slopes. The light, narrow skis with which she is familiar are designed more for efficient travel than for downhill turning tactics.

Sandy is 48 years old and lives in a mountain community where she has been alpine skiing for several decades. She attends masters racing workshops and would like to learn telemark skiing to improve her racing ability, as well as to experience something new and fresh on the ski hill. She is healthy and active, but not a super athlete. The elegance and gracefulness of telemark skiing appeals to her, and she would like to flow down the hill with heels free, making intermediate groomers fun again.

MARIE S LESSON

Marie arrives at the ski school meeting area, where we chat for a minute, getting acquainted. I suggest that she put her skis on right there. To connect with something she knows, while getting used to the new equipment, we stride across the flats to the beginner lift. Her stride looks comfortable and well balanced; she appears to have the skills required for the gradual terrain served by this lift. Marie says she feels okay about using the lift, so we ride up.

Starting downhill and doing wedge turns, she says she feels comfortable and is surprised at how easily the heavier telemark skis turn, even though the boots feel clunky. (Wedge turns teach good turn shape because they prevent the skis from being laterally displaced.) In a flatter area, we make some step turns to allow her to feel the edges working in the snow.

After the first run or two, Marie is ready to make some parallel turns. On cross-country skis, she makes parallel turns to slow down on a narrow track by throwing the skis sideways and skidding. (Cross-country racers routinely use parallel turns when the speed becomes too great for step turning. The turn shape is quite different from that used by telemark skiers, however. The skis are pivoted abruptly, causing a lot of skidding relative to the amount of direction change.)

On the broad beginner slope, we practice "patience turns," emphasizing a round turn shape: I ask her to create a

Shuffling with sink and rise will help Sandy find a longer lead and more flexed front ankle.

gap under the arch of her downhill foot as she stands tall, thereby tilting the ankle and leg and flattening the ski. As the ski tips drift downhill, I have her count to three to make sure she doesn't rush through the fall line. Because of her athletic background, Marie is pretty aware of sensations, so I ask her to feel the pressure under her feet move from the big-toe/little-toe sides in one turn to the opposite sides in the next turn. As we practice parallel turns, she follows me in order to mimic my turn shape. When we stop she tells me, "When I try to follow your path, I go slower than you do. I have to ski straighter to keep up."

"That's because you are forcing your skis to turn, which causes you to skid and scrub off speed," I tell her. "Try to push off with your uphill leg and relax the downhill one, which will allow gravity to pull you toward the turn. Your turns will be rounder, and you'll find that you can control your speed with turn shape rather than skidding."

After a while, Marie seems ready to cut to the chase, so we find a flat place where we can practice the telemark stance while stationary. I ask her to start from a tall stance and then "collapse" her ankles before spreading her feet fore and aft as she sinks down into a telemark

Shuffling without sink and rise will help Marie weight both feet more evenly. Notice her hips centered more over the front, than the back foot.

position. Once again, I ask her to pay attention to the sensations in her feet to feel the correct stance (whole-foot pressure in the front foot, and pressure on the undersides of the toes or ball of the foot in back). As her feet move farther apart fore and aft, Marie notices that she loses contact with the boot cuff in front, and can no longer wiggle the toes in the back boot. These sensations alert her when the lead is becoming too long.

Knowing Marie's experience with the diagonal stride, we try alternating from one telemark position to the other by shuffling the feet, first while stationary and then in a straight run. Rather than getting shorter and taller, we stay in a level position while shuffling. This keeps the weight more even on both feet. Classic skiers generally have a strong weight transfer, so we make sure that her feet move continuously and an equal distance back and forth.

Staying on easy groomed terrain, we use shuffles, as we did step turns earlier, to turn into, out of, and across the fall line (garlands). Eventually we will connect shuffles across the hill with parallel turns, with the goal of skiing larger and larger segments of the turn while shuffling. We can then reduce the number of shuffles per turn until we shuffle only once.

Shuffling while turning teaches the student how to make turning (rotary) movements while changing the lead. This addresses the tendency to change lead and then turn in sequence, rather than simultaneously. As the student becomes more proficient, the rate can be slowed to the point where one shuffle occurs continuously through a single turn. Now we're making telemark turns!

A round, controlled, progressive turn shape is a priority for Marie. Although her rotary skills are strong, her edging skills need refinement. Pressure control also needs work; she needs to weight both feet equally. Students at Marie's skill level often overturn at the end of the turn, a situation that can be remedied by having the student put more weight on the back foot. Or the student can adopt a more countered position, which can be taught in a traverse, uphill christie, or sideslip.

SANDY S LESSON

Sandy arrives at the meeting area, and we get to know each other while I help her put the skis on. We shuffle over to the lift and ride up. Since she's an accomplished alpine skier, we opt to begin on an easy intermediate run. To start with something familiar, we make parallel turns, just like she would while alpine skiing, but with exaggerated ankle flexion and extension.

Sandy is pleasantly surprised that the skis work just like her alpine boards, but says she's concerned about falling forward now that her heels are free. To keep her ankles from stiffening, I remind her to feel the pressure alternating between her shins and her calves. After a few runs we find a flat area and practice the telemark stance, just as I did with Marie.

Because Sandy is used to using her edges on the hill, we alternate alpine and telemark stances in a traverse. From a shallow traverse, we sink into a telemark stance with the downhill leg leading and then rise, bringing the feet next to each other, and then repeat. With Sandy's more casual athletic background and more subtle alpine skiing movements, I'm concerned that she could be too static.

Telemark skiing engages the whole body in vigorous movements; for example,

Following behind Sandy, I prompt her when to change the lead.

the exaggerated lead change is the signature of an accomplished telemark skier. To become a good telemark skier, Sandy must avoid limiting or restricting these movements. I encourage her to exaggerate the flexing and extending movements she learned as an alpine skier.

When Sandy drops into the telemark, her skis turn too far up the hill because creating the lead makes her hips rotate. To fix this, I tie her poles across her hips—with one pole resting against the small of her back and the other in front, essentially spanning her hip bones—and ask her to hold them steady with her forearms. This teaches her to maintain the directional orientation of her hips regardless of the fore-aft position of her feet.

Next, we work on uphill christies, coming to a stop in the telemark stance. We stay with the sinking and rising theme, starting tall near the fall line, with the feet next to each other, and then turning, sinking, and increasing the lead as we come across the hill. To maintain the correct relationship of the feet relative to the phases of the turn, I demonstrate a patient and progressive sinking and spreading through the bottom of the turn, not moving to the telemark position too soon. Because many alpine skiers at this stage tend to slide the inside foot forward prematurely at the end of the turn, I insist that Sandy come to a complete stop in the telemark position. This helps ingrain the correct pattern of reducing the lead at the start of the new turn, rather than at the end of the old one.

With the sinking and rising pretty well established, we can move on to monoteles (or monomarks), where we turn in both directions in a telemark stance, but without changing leads. This is basically a parallel turn, but with the feet in an unusual position (downhill ski leading).

Since alpine skiers typically have difficulty bearing pressure on the ball of the foot, this maneuver helps them maintain a telemark stance through the end of a turn with the downhill ski leading, and strengthen the outside foot when the heel is raised in the opposite position.

This maneuver also teaches skiers to initiate a turn while the downhill ski is still in the lead, counteracting the tendency to change lead prematurely. Finally, this maneuver teaches the student to turn the legs simultaneously, keeping the skis parallel throughout the turn.

"Wow! Turning in that one direction sure is hard!" I hear Sandy say as she skis up.

"That's right. When you start the turn with the downhill ski leading, it's totally opposite from what you're used

Marie follows me to improve her turn shape.

to, isn't it?" I ask. "That turn will happen more easily if you end the previous turn in a more flexed position, or lower. Then rise as you point your skis down the hill."

"Which direction should you be facing when you are the tallest?" I ask.

"Down the hill?" she asks, a little uncertainly.

"Right!" I tell Sandy. "When you're nearing the end of one turn, focus your eyes on the spot in the next turn where you will be facing downhill, and rise as you approach that spot."

After a while, Sandy is linking symmetrical turns with either foot in front. Now we are ready to make turns that begin like a monotele with the downhill ski leading, but then change lead near the fall line. While Sandy practices these turns, I ski behind her, prompting her verbally when to change the lead.

Sandy knows how to turn her skis going downhill, and once she becomes comfortable with the telemark stance, she will be able to make good telemark turns. Transition absorption drills and hopping into the telemark position will help. For Sandy, exaggerating the sinking movement will help her weight the back ski effectively and thereby avoid the "park and ride." Thumping the front foot on the snow while traversing or straight running can help shift more weight to the back foot. But for most alpine skiers, the key to real two-footed telemark skiing lies in learning to sink lower than they are accustomed to doing.

CONCLUSION

The list of possible activities is much more extensive than what I have presented here, and some ideas that were presented could be interchanged between the two students. However, these progressions provide a basic blueprint that allows you to teach more effective lessons while gaining the experience you'll draw upon to modify lesson tactics according to how your students respond. The more you know about your students, the better informed your choices of activities will be. Understanding this ensures that you'll be able to hit the best stones…and not get your feet wet crossing the river. 32°

For more telemark teaching tips, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and check out the "Web Extras" link under the heading for *32 Degrees*.

Urmas Franosch has been teaching telemark skiing at Mammoth Mountain, California, for 20 years. He was a member of the PSIA Nordic Team from 1996 to 2004.

50-50: The Park s Utility Move

By **GREGG DAVIS**

If you were to install a "Trick-o-Meter" on any terrain park rail or box, chances are good that the maneuver getting the most reps is the 50-50, the classic move in which the rider slides forward straight down the rail. Its popularity isn't because it's particularly steezy; in fact a 50-50 is one of the easiest and most basic tricks you can do. ¶ It's a utility move, pure and simple. A 50-50 is one of the first tricks riders learn, the first trick they try on a new rail or box, and a solid choice when warming up for the park. A 50-50 lets you get a feel for the feature, with the fewest negative consequences if something goes wrong. But how well do you know the fundamental parts of a warm-up trick like the 50-50? Do you know how to keep riders from coming off the rail or box early, to the left or right side?

By using PSIA-AASI's ATML™ Method (which breaks tricks down into approach, takeoff, maneuver, and landing) you can explore the different parts of the 50-50 and focus on a few simple body movements that make an easy trick that much easier. And when your students can be heroes early on in the learning curve, they can progress that much faster toward mastery of all the fundamentals. If you find that students are making quick work of

TEAM TIP

Breckenridge (Colorado) instructor Erica Marciniec is in low and relaxed 50-50 form.

Gregg Davis

low beginner rails and boxes, you can introduce varying levels of challenge by means of the subsequent features you use, e.g., rainbow rails, up-and-down rails, or s-boxes.

During their approach and takeoff, your students' turns determine the direction they'll be moving while on the feature. This is the most important part of the whole process. Encourage them to use some skidded set-up turns to line themselves up with the feature, so they don't get spit off the left or right side before they reach the end of the rail.

Getting this angle right, so they're moving perfectly parallel to the feature before they even get on it, will keep them lined up and coming off the end, "cleaning" the feature. Instruct them that as they get closer to the takeoff point, they should choose a spot to stop turning and start gliding on a flat board. And for those who are new to these concepts, be sure to let them know that it's okay to bail and turn away from the feature if they're not feeling the parallel love at their intended takeoff point.

Once they're gliding in the takeoff, coach riders to keep the board as flat as possible and continue with a flat board from the moment they leave the snow—all the way across the feature. It helps a lot to bend the knees and ankles into a low and relaxed position, so they can make slight body movements to maintain their balance while holding the board perfectly flat throughout the maneuver.

Where the eyes look, the body tends to follow so encourage your 50-50 folks to keep their eyes focused on the end of the rail or just past it during the maneuver and on through to the landing. Keeping the legs strong at the end of the rail is important too. That way, whether they're coming off into the air or sliding onto the snow, they'll have a solid platform to land on to "stomp it and ride away clean."

Granted, 50-50s might not rise to the level of "signature move," but riders who perform this trick with consistent ease will find it of great use in setting themselves up for a successful day in the park. 32°

Gregg Davis is a freestyle trainer with Colorado's Breckenridge Ski & Ride School, a freestyle examiner for Rocky Mountain Division, and a member of the AASI Snowboard Team. He coaches skateboarding in the summer and blogs at greggdavis.com.

What s In a Name?

The trick name 5 0-50 comes from skateboarding. On a skateboard, a grind with both axles grinding the edge or rail has 50 percent of the pressure on each axle. So, in imitation of skateboarders, a snowboarder moving parallel to the feature is said to be performing a 50-50, even though he or she doesn t have trucks to slide on. GREGG DAVIS

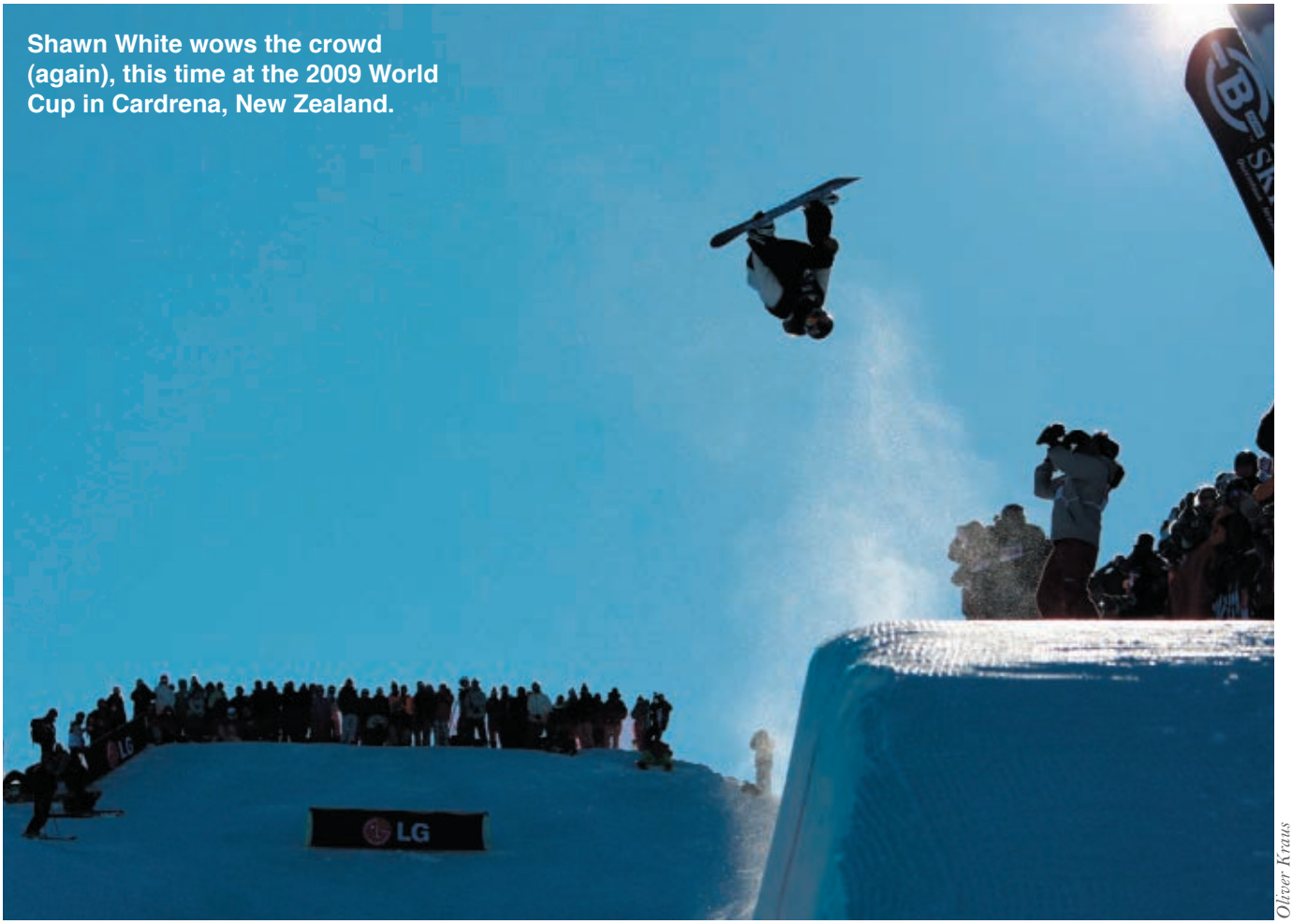
Snowboard Education
Keeps Pace with Freestyle Edge

By **MIKE HORN**

The measures snowboarders will take to get an edge up on the competition are limitless. Especially with the very recent hype we saw coming into an Olympic year like 2010. ¶ For instance, who would have ever imagined a private halfpipe built at the base of multiple converging avalanche paths in Silverton, Colorado? Red Bull built one for Shaun White nearly a year before the Vancouver Games began.

Or how about a set of giant circus-like airbags that act as stunt landing zones for experimental halfpipe snowboarding? That's how Scotty Lago, Kevin Pearce, and the rest of the "Frends" crew learned their double corks—the must-have trick for the halfpipe competition in the 2010 Winter Games.

That same mix of off-axis flips and spins landed Olympic hopeful Pearce in



Shawn White wows the crowd (again), this time at the 2009 World Cup in Cardrena, New Zealand.

Oliver Kraus


INTEGRATE
Smith is excited to continue our relationship as the Official Eyewear and Helmet supplier to the PSIA and AASI, giving you access to our gear at incredible discounts. To get the best sunglasses, goggles and helmets on the market, just log on to www.thesnowpros.org, go to the Members Services section, click on Pro Offers, head to the Smith link and enjoy!
SAGE CATTABRIGA-ALOSA. I/O GOGGLE & VANTAGE HELMET
WE MAKE THE GREAT DAYS BETTER. SMITHOPTICS.COM
SmithOptics

the hospital with a severe brain injury this past New Year's Eve. This only proves what instructors have always known—that the methods of learning and development are nearly as extreme as the tricks themselves. And the more that high-profile mega athletes like White keep pushing the envelope, the more aspiring snowboarders are going to want to make those moves their own.

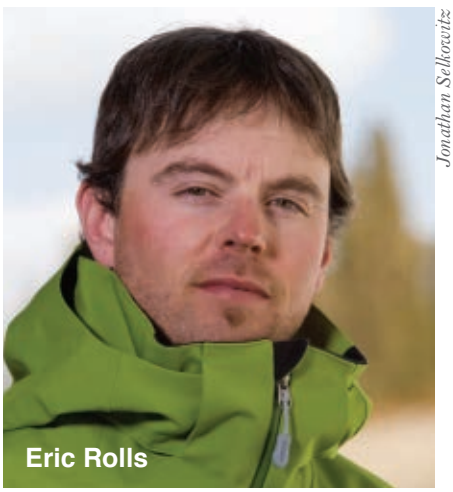
Clearly, times have changed. There was a time when riders aspired to hang as low to the snow as possible in a classic perfect-arc Euro carve. Now the goal is to sky high off the snow or grind an intricate combination of moves on the rail or box. Of course, this is a trend instructors saw long before the 2010 Games, and much of snowboard education has shifted away from focusing on the "perfect turn" and carving skills first and foremost, in order to meet the freestyle demand.


Jonathan Selkowitz

Dave Lynch


Julie Shipman

Earl Saline


Jonathan Selkowitz

Eric Rolls

AN EDUCATIONAL SHIFT

The perfect-turn mentality was due, in part, to the influence of skiing on early snowboard education, as well as a focus on alpine snowboard racing. Sure, parallel giant slalom is still an Olympic sport, but halfpipe, slopestyle, and even boardercross have surpassed it in popularity. And the perfect turn is no longer many students' primary goal, because in freestyle snowboarding turning is a means to an end—whether that "end" is getting above the wall in the halfpipe or boardsliding boxes and rails. A number of programs have embraced this change, and, as an association, PSIA-AASI has been right there in the thick of the bear hug.

According to Earl Saline, education manager for PSIA-AASI and a former member of the association's Snowboard Team, when PSIA first took on snowboarding it was focused on alpine riding, carving, and racing. That snowboarding in its infancy had strong ties to alpine skiing is perhaps best represented by the title given PSIA's first official publication for snowboard instructors, 1993's *Snowboard Skiing*.

> **"You cannot progress when you are in the hospital."**

"It was written by and guided by a lot of the key alpine guys at the time, and some of the first guys pushing the snowboard side, like Juris Vagners and Mike Shaw," Saline recalls.

The approach to creating new educational materials has gotten exponentially more comprehensive over time—witness the creation of the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI) in 1997, the release of AASI's *Snowboard Manual* in 1998, and a steady stream of ever-improving instructor resources thereafter. In materials such as *Snowboard Movement Analysis Handbook* (2003), *Children's Ski and Snowboard Movement Guide* (2005), the *Focus on Riding* DVD (2005), *Park and Pipe Instructor's Guide* (2005), and the *Snowboard Instructor's Guide* (2007), it was clear that snowboarding—and its instruction in the United States—was no longer bound by its alpine and carving roots. The period of snowboarding growth between 1993 and 2007 saw significant instructional advances, including the introduction of the "Y Model" (with its emphasis on the nuances of terrain and tactics encompassed by alpine/carving and freestyle and freeride styles of riding) and the ATML Method (which helps instructors break down freestyle tricks into approach, takeoff, maneuver, and landing segments). And there's more goodness to come, especially with the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA), U.S.A. Snowboard Association (USASA), and AASI collaborating on teaching and coaching techniques.

Stu Rea, director, co-founder and head coach for the Team Utah Snowboard Team, as well as a national-level coach with USSA and USASA, says this more holistic approach to instruction has mirrored the energy and direction of snowboarding at America's mountains.

"The mainstream shift to this style of teaching and skill development was introduced in the early and mid 2000s," says Rea, "when snowboarding went mainstream, both in the sporting world and media, also about the same time parks and pipes were being used to lure new snowsport enthusiasts to the resorts."

To adapt with the sport, AASI's *Snowboard Instructor's Guide* placed more emphasis on freestyle.

INTEGRATE

Smith is excited to continue our relationship as the Official Eyewear and Helmet supplier to the PSIA and AASI, giving you access to our gear at incredible discounts. To get the best sunglasses, goggles and helmets on the market, just log on to www.thesnowpros.org, go to the Members Services section, click on Promotions Offers, head to the Smith link and enjoy!

SHAYNE POSPISIL I/O GOGGLE AND MAZE HELMET

WE MAKE THE GREAT DAYS BETTER. SMITHOPTICS.COM

SmithOptics

"The industry definitely forced us to change," Saline confirms. "It's less about going 'left and right', and more about how many times can you spin. We've had to focus more on the fundamentals of riding that can be used wherever people choose to see themselves in snowboarding.

"Where we see growth now is in incorporating freestyle elements right from the beginning," Saline adds. "The focus is on having fun and using the 'fun' stuff to learn, versus telling students 'you have to do this first'."

Gretchen Bleiler grabs the spotlight in a World Cup Run.

Oliver Kraus

THE PERFECT MIX

Jon Casson, program director and head boardercross coach of the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club (SSWSC) Snowboard Team, agrees with Saline. He says that for snowboard instruction to keep up with the constantly evolving trends, lessons have to maintain a steady mix of fundamentals, freestyle, and fun.

"Snowboard instruction was 'fundamental skill-based' for a long time," says Casson. "I think this was the result of the ski schools and ski resorts attempting to put snowboarding into the same instructional model as skiing. In the late '90s, for example, American Ski Company rebranded their ski schools as 'Perfect Turn,' but that didn't really fit with the essence of snowboarding. Snowboarders weren't necessarily interested in the perfect turn—they were interested in the versatility of the snowboard, the different ways it could move, and using the whole mountain as a playground."

Casson says the instructors wanted to teach freestyle as much as customers want to learn it. "It's hard to say what came first—the demand from customers at the lesson level or the desire of the instructors to start teaching freestyle skills," he says. "Personally, I came to snowboard instructing with a long background as a skateboarder. I happened to get into teaching just as the terrain park trend was really starting to take hold."

It was as that crossover momentum from cement to snow continued to build, AASI Snowboard Team member Eric Rolls says that instructors really began using freestyle as an important component of their lessons.

"For years we used freestyle as the 'carrot' for kids to learn the basics first so they could learn some freestyle," Rolls says. "Many parts of the beginner lesson can be taught in ways that incorporate freestyle building blocks. And of course many of the instructors want to dork around with freestyle in their lessons because it's fun for them too."

THE BIG AIR BUILDERS

To be sure, teaching freestyle is not for everyone. Freestyle instructors and coaches need a special skill set—and not just the ability to throw complex tricks in the park. The same mentality that drives snowboarders toward freestyle can also push them to defy the establishment, or just teaching in general. It takes a special breed to pass that passion onto others, especially in such a unique setting.

David Lynch, a member of the AASI Snowboard Team and snowboard examiner for PSIA-AASI's Eastern Division also happens to be a snowboard coach at Gould Academy, in Maine. Lynch says it's challenging to find instructors with adequate skills to teach park and pipe, particularly at a level where higher-risk tricks are part of the curriculum.

"I think that it is very difficult," says Lynch. "The person needs a few traits that I don't think occur concurrently for most people. They need to have some guts to try and learn the tricks/skills they desire to teach. Then they also need to have the knowledge to understand what it was that they learned."

And that's just the beginning.

"Then they have to have the patience to slow down and work with an individual—who is usually less talented, and less gutsy than the teacher—on the trick/skill being learned," adds Lynch. "Finally, and probably most importantly, they need the ability to communicate with the student well."

Many instructors are strong in some of these areas but not in others. These skills, Lynch says, take time to master.

"There are a lot of young bucks who have the skills and the knowledge, but lack the patience and or communication skills," he says. "There are a lot of older people who have the latter two but do not have the prior two skills."

The talented few work at high-level programs like Gould Academy, SSWSC, Oregon's High Cascade Snowboard Camp, and Colorado's Woodward at Copper. These facilities have the skilled instructors and equipment to teach freestyle skills beyond throwing a 360.

At Gould, "Our coaches are highly qualified and have been around the industry for decades," according to Lynch. "Most have competed for years, and have coached even longer. We have the skills and patience to bring an athlete through any trick they desire to learn."

On-snow, Gould features jumps and rails of varying sizes to offer the appropriate size and level of difficulty for

each individual, skill, and snow condition. Off the snow, the academy has a trampoline and foam pit riders can use to work on new moves in a relatively risk-free environment, and an indoor skate park where they can dial in balance, foot-speed, and timing.

OFF-SEASON SHARPENING

Year-round training has also become a key element of high-end freestyle instruction, at SSWSC and beyond. Snowboarding professionally is not a seasonal pursuit for anyone who wants to win.

Casson says, "That is where the progression of the sport is moving on the higher end—year-round training; sports science, including fitness, nutrition, and conditioning; video review/analysis; off-snow training; then finally incorporating these elements into on-snow training with foam pits, airbags, etc."

When Kevin Pearce got injured while practicing the double cork in the halfpipe pre-Olympics, a bright light was shone on freestyle and the acrobatics required to compete at a high level. Some in the popular media said the sport was getting too risky, too "extreme."

"Unfortunately, Kevin Pearce's injury prior to the Olympics allowed some misinformed people in the media to declare that snowboarding and 'extreme' sports, in general, were too dangerous," says Casson. "They stated that young athletes were pushing too far with little training solely for the money, fame, and glory that events like the X Games provided. What they overlooked is that Kevin Pearce and others like him are highly trained athletes with years of practice allowing them to perform these complex maneuvers. Furthermore, most of these athletes have practiced these tricks hundreds of times into foam pits, on trampolines, or into water under the supervision of professional coaches before attempting them on snow."

With facilities and programs that teach at such a high level, it's really tough to gauge how fast and how far freestyle snowboarding will progress. In relative terms, the sport is still in its infancy and innovation is the norm rather than the exception. Athletes will continue to jump higher and spin more complex tricks, and they will need coaches to educate them—and help protect them from injury.

Lynch believes as the tricks increase in complexity, the role of a coach will increase dramatically.

"Learning to boardslide is something that most people believe they can figure out without too many falls, but double and triple corks are a different story," he says. "The individual who has the guts and determination to try these tricks may not have the ability, or the years of experience, to recognize when, where, and how to work on those tricks in a safer manner.

"You cannot progress when you are in the hospital," he continues. "The athlete who can stay healthy is the one who will win in the long run. Coaches help athletes balance on this line." 32°

Mike Horn lives, rides, and writes in Crested Butte, Colorado. He bought his first snowboard setup—a Burton Craig Kelly Air with Burton Freestyle bindings—from the local thrift store for $15. It was all downhill from there. Mike is cofounder of the StokeLab Digital Media Project (www.stokelb.com), rider in chief for Backcountry Magazine, and an editor at the Crested Butte News.

A Four-Stage Action Plan for Taking Beginners to the Park

By **JEFF BRIER**; photos by **MARK SAUERS**

Snowsports students hitting the terrain park for the first time often find it an eye-opening and intimidating experience. What's commonplace for those of us who spend our "office hours" on the hill—people boosting huge airs out of the pipe, riders aggressively attacking wild-looking jib features, folks flailing over kickers, even just the language and style itself—is often a strange new world for our students. A lot of insecurity and fear creeps in, ranging from thoughts of not being cool enough for the park crowd to worries about being injured during the lesson.

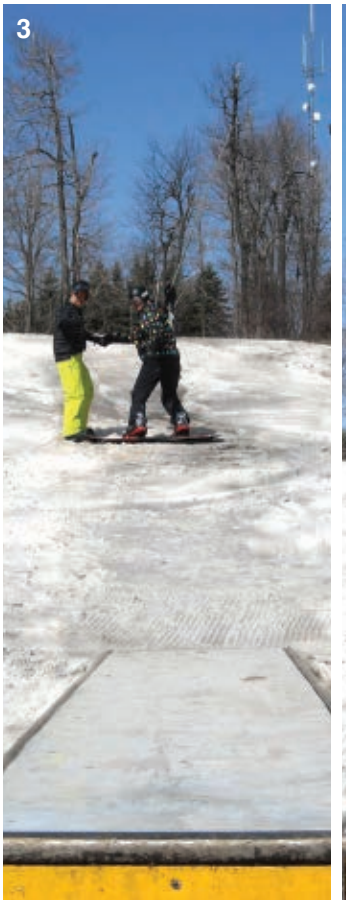
As snowsports instructors, it's our job to safely introduce folks to the freestyle world that we know and enjoy so that they, too, can experience all the varied features and terrain the mountain has to offer. This article offers suggestions on etiquette and safety, a template for creating lesson progressions, and a sample action plan that will help make your first-timer's park experience fun and successful.

SAFETY, GROUP HANDLING

Whether they admit it or not, freestyle newbies are sometimes a little fearful, so it's a good bet that safety is at the top of their list of priorities. And we all know it's at the top of yours! Establish the safety theme early on—from the moment you first lay eyes on your students' gear.

Take the time to check your students' equipment—particularly the boot-and-binding setup—to see if it supports a freestyle focus and that rider's anatomy. To do this, have each rider strap in and perform a few flatland hops or balance tricks. If the rider has difficulty with these simple moves, you might want to recommend that the rider change stance angles (e.g., opt for a more duck-footed stance), widen or reduce stance width, or shift to a more centered stance overall along the board, tip-to-tail. These initial flatland hops and balance tricks also give riders a chance to warm up while getting a feel for how the board responds.

Your students rely on your expertise with regard to the terrain park environment, so be sure to provide tips on etiquette. Discuss the general flow of the park, where riders should stand in



reference to the features, and the riding characteristics of each jump or jib (e.g., whether a feature's landing zone feels short and how much speed to carry during an approach). Consider, for example, photos 1 and 2. While a terrain feature might seem a tailor-made spot on which to sit and discuss strategy (photo 1), this is sure to bother other park users. Make sure students know what constitutes a safe gathering or resting spot (photo 2).

Always recommend an appropriate starting point for students, whether they're attempting a trick for the first time or just taking a routine warm-up jump. Riders who are new to the park have no idea how to judge speed, snow conditions, and appropriate takeoff points. In addition, experienced riders may be new to your park, so they also need to know the lay of the land. Teachers who share these types of suggestions help ensure safety for their students—and dramatically improve their success rates.

Speeds achieved from a long run-in will be overwhelming and unnecessary for a first attempt on a jib feature (photo 3). Instead, have students start with only enough room to straighten out the board and hit the ramp, while you provide the momentum needed to clear the entire feature (photo 4). This, essentially, puts the first try in slow motion so they have time to feel, see, and coordinate all the new sensations with a reduced chance for disaster.

By spotting your students, you give them a chance to get the "look at what I'm doing" stuff out of their system.

During your students' first jib attempts, consider standing nearby to "spot them"—that is, hold their hands and provide guidance as they slowly approach the feature. (Area protocols vary; ask your snowsports school director whether your resort advocates spotting students in the park.) As a spotter, you can provide immediate feedback and indicate when the rider may need to jump off the feature (for example, if the edge angle or rider's upper/lower body alignment is less than ideal).

When making their initial attempts at a terrain park feature, students have a tendency to look down—at their feet, board, or jib feature. This is a physiological response to learning the new task; they have to look! By spotting your students, you give them a chance to get the "look at what I'm doing" stuff out of their system.

Instead of asking riders to look up on their very first try, let them take a few runs while looking at their boards as you spot and direct them on the feature (photos 5, 6). Once your students become more comfortable on the feature,

you can emphasize the need to look at the end of the jib or landing zone.

By the way, a great ally in helping create a positive experience for your client is the terrain park crew. They're often the best source for up-to-date information about terrain/feature conditions (photo 7). If you don't have a chance to ride the park on a consistent basis, it's a good idea to communicate with the park staff daily.

One of the often overlooked safety concerns is fatigue. Many clients don't realize how quickly they're losing strength or becoming dehydrated, especially if they have come from sea level and are now riding at altitude. Park sessions can be so fun—and intense—that students just keep riding and riding. While practice is good (and encouraged), remember to give riders rest and/or water breaks at consistent intervals throughout the session. Sloppy riding (after previous effective skills have been consistently demonstrated); heavy, labored breathing; confusion or slow reaction to dialogue; and headaches are all cues that your students need to take a break and replenish fluids.

TEACHING THEMES

A few suggestions for a successful beginner terrain park session have to do with the actual teaching content. For starters, refer to the class as a "session" to introduce the cool/fun element of the environment right from the beginning. Refer to practice time as part of your "freestyle session" rather than "doing a drill" or another weightier description.

As you'll see within the "Session Action Plan," one key recommendation is to have students practice and develop skills outside the park first, then apply the movements to features in the park. In general, I follow a theme of "new task, old terrain; old task, new terrain." In other words, when introducing something new, take students to terrain they're comfortable on. Conversely, if you're working on tasks or skills they seem to have mastered, take them to more challenging terrain.

Finally, play with the boards; actually get down on the snow or jib and move the


5


6


7


8

student's board around (photo 8). This gives students the chance to experience what's going on at the snow/jib/board level, which helps them understand the board performance concepts of the trick or skill before they buckle in.

And, of course, check your client's understanding of the new information. You may need to demonstrate the ideas again or provide further explanation to help the student grasp the concepts. Be sure your riders really "get it" before moving to the next stage.

FOUR-STAGE PLAN

It's vital to address all the necessary skills for each portion of the trick you're teaching the rider. A jib session that doesn't cover how to line up, approach, and jump onto the feature will most likely guarantee an unsuccessful attempt for your student. PSIA-AASI's ATML Model provides a framework for performing movement analysis by observing four specific portions of any freestyle move—the approach, takeoff, maneuver, and landing.

A mistake or fault in your client's trick can usually be traced back to an error earlier in the ATML chain of events. A rider's ability to stomp the landing is directly related to how balanced and stable he or she was in the air (maneuver), which is dependent on the center-of-mass projection/line and how smooth the person was at the lip on takeoff. This, of course, is determined by the rider's speed, line, and edge control when approaching the kicker. (For more on the ATML Model, see PSIA-AASI's *Park and Pipe Instructor's Guide*.)

This may seem like a lot of information to communicate to a beginner, but which part of that chain do you want to leave out? Each is equally as important and linked to the next. The Four-Stage Plan that follows is a template I use to create freestyle progressions that concisely communicate all the necessary elements of a trick and allow students to gradually build skills to successfully perform the new trick or maneuver.

You will be introducing basic fundamental movements for the trick at the "Static" level. Static exercises are often done first without a board, then with the board on—and are almost always performed on flat terrain (photo 9).

BUG Series

Designed & engineered by POC Sweden

USED AND PREFERRED BY
TANNER HALL*/TJ SCHILLER*/AURÉLIEN DUCROZ
ANDERS BACKE/BLAKE NYMAN

POC is a Swedish company with a strong mission to do the best we can to possibly save lives and to reduce the consequenses of accidents for gravity sports athletes. **www.pocsports.com**

poc
HELMETS & ARMOR

*HELMETS ONLY

Depending on the maneuver being learned, several different options are added into the mix at the "Simple" level. You can add sliding motion across the fall line. Students can also do walk throughs with and without a board and/or over a fake feature, such as a line drawn in the snow or a bamboo pole (photos 10, 11).

Simple exercises are also often performed on flat terrain. The walk throughs offer a great way for riders to coordinate all aspects of the ATML chain without fear of a feature being too challenging or having too much speed to think things through.

At the "complex" level you'll be introducing fall line motion and using mock and/or real "baby" features (e.g., rollers, surface-level jibs, etc.) for the practice routine. You may start outside the park once again, but should be spending most of the practice time at this level in the terrain park. It's helpful to repeat tasks from the simple level before upping the ante, so go ahead and repeat a walk-through exercise before having riders strap in and perform the newly learned moves in the more intimidating setting.

This is the student's first experience over real features, and as you can tell by photo 12, spotting once again is extremely important. At the complex level, you'll often be providing momentum for initial efforts over jib features.

The last stage is to "Integrate (into riding)," the result of progressive practice during the complex stage. The riders will be making their first real solo attempts over features and should be gradually building up speed and confidence, which are part of demonstrating mastery of their movements. As with the complex step, plan for lots of practice time.


9


10


11


12

Here are a few other things to keep in mind when using the Four-Stage Plan to create a progression:

- Each level may have a few different exercises that can and should be used before progressing to the next stage.
- Always use a "board-off" exercise first.
- For jib sessions, jumping onto the board is a great intermediary step before jumping onto a feature.
- Introduce one skill/movement at a time.

FOUR-STAGE PLAN

The four stages used in creating a progression through this template are:

1) Static 2) Simple 3) Complex 4) Integrate (into riding)


proven performance
for every skier
4 LEVELS TO CHOOSE FROM
Giving a simple and solid advantage to you, your students and world class skiers.
skier: Doug Pierini - PSIA Demo Team photo: Jonathan Selkowitz
send thank you for great advice about getting a BOOSTER STRAP!
BOOSTER
DYNAMIC POWER STRAPS
BOOSTERSTRAP.COM
US SKI TEAM OFFICIAL SUPPLIER
PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA OFFICIAL SUPPLIER
CANADA
Take advantage of special pricing at www.psia.org

- Even if there is a blend of skills/movements required for the specific trick being taught.
- It's easier for your students to deal with one theme at a time.
- Give the riders plenty of opportunity for practice at each level.

It's easy to dismiss doing more than one walk through because the concept seems so simple, but, remember, the student is trying to coordinate all of the ATML elements for the new trick.

There's no need to rush students through all of the stages—allow them to build their skills gradually. That said, recognize that you might not have to go through every stage, or cover each detail described in the action plans with every student. The rider's performance during a particular stage and/or previous athletic background will dictate what stage should be used next or how long to stay at a stage throughout the session.

With the amount of practice time and effort students are exerting, watch for fatigue/dehydration—especially at the complex and integrate stages.

SESSION ACTION PLAN

The following freestyle action plan—for performing a 50-50—follows the Four-Stage Plan format and is a good example of how to develop a progression using this method. Where applicable I've interjected notes and/or listed key movement concepts being taught in the progression. For another sample action plan, log on to www.TheSnowPros.org and look for "Web Extras" in the *32 Degrees* section. There you'll find a session action plan for teaching beginners how to get straight air off a kicker. Fundamental skills and movements for the 50-50 (and the straight airs outlined in Web Extras) are as follows:

- Flat-base/slightly-edged straight run
- Hop, pull up legs
- Flat base landing/absorb landing
- CM control/projection
- Alignment
- Leg flexion/extension

JIBS (50-50)

A successful 50-50 might go something like this: On the approach, the student makes a flat-base straight run (can also opt for being slightly on edge), moving straight at the jib. The rider hops and pulls up the legs just as the front foot meets the edge of the jib or the end of the ramp while keeping an upright spine. (Why the hop-and-leg-pull at this early stage of jib learning? Most features outside the beginner park are "gap to," meaning there's a gap the rider flies over before landing on the feature. Instead of teaching someone to ride on at first, and then later abandon that to learn the real skill of hitting a jib, or gap, I choose to teach them from the get-go what they'll use for the rest of their jibbing career. This "teaching for transfer" approach empowers them to move onto other features and areas of the mountain on their own.)

The rider would then land flat-based on the feature with the CM (hips, knees) gently shifted toward the front foot, absorbing the landing with knee/ankle/hip flexion. Holding this form, the rider slides along the length of the jib. As the front foot reaches the end of the feature, your student hops gently and pulls the legs/board up off the box/rail and then extends to absorb the landing, once again meeting the snow with a flat board and the slight forward-shifted CM until stable, riding away stoked.

It's the coach's duty to develop a progression that will give the student a framework to safely and successfully learn all aspects of the new maneuver.

STATIC:

- Have riders practice hopping straight up and landing flatfooted without the board.
- Next, have them practice hopping forward slightly and landing flatfooted without the board.
- Encourage an upright spine/upper body and keeping the CM centered between the feet to start.
- Introduce landing with a slight knee/ankle roll toward the front foot (CM moves parallel with the board toward the front foot).
- Have riders practice hopping slightly forward if possible, and landing flatfooted without the board with the new CM arrangement.
- Now have students practice the same exercise with the board on.

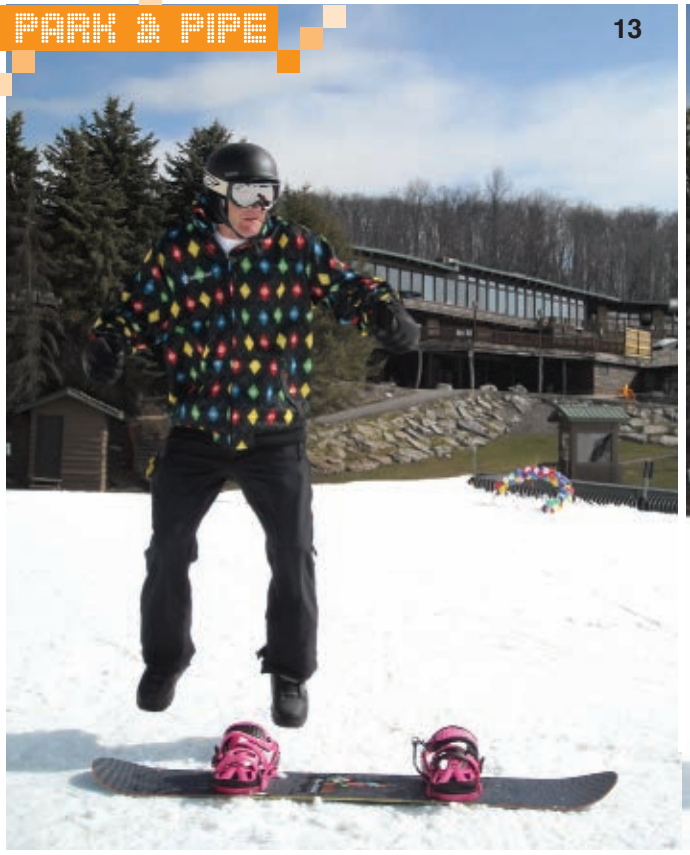
SIMPLE:

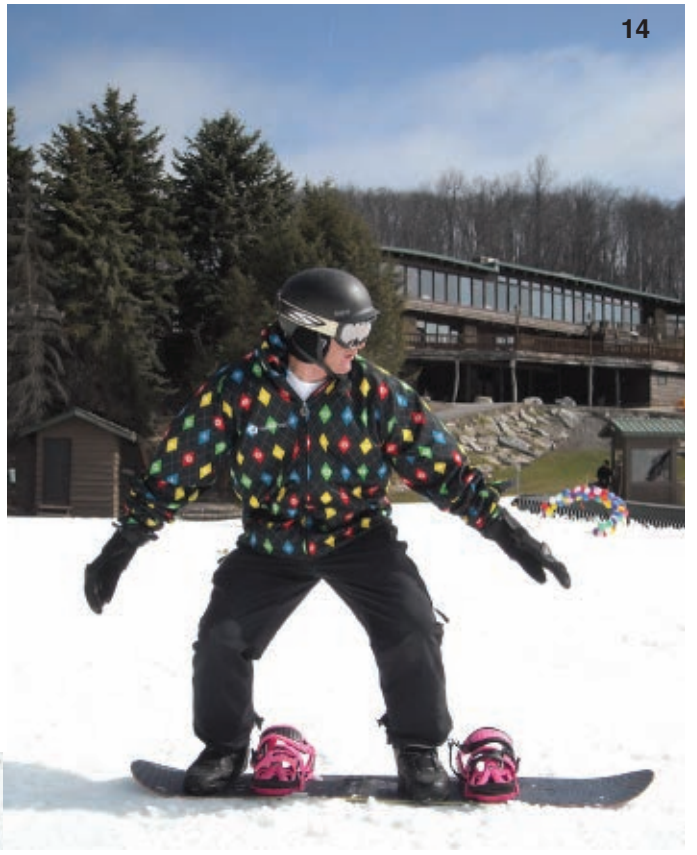
- Have students practice a walk through over a line drawn in the snow or a bamboo pole buried to snow level (refer back to photo 10).
- Coach riders to hop or shuffle along to mimic the approach, hop onto the jib; absorb the landing while flatfooted (line or pole centered under the arch of each foot); shuffle along the length of the feature; and hop, extend, and absorb the landing (once again flatfooted).
- Encourage the riders to shuffle/hop and land with the feet as far apart as they would be if on the board.
- Then move on to the same exercise performed with the board on.

You may have to provide momentum for the rider if on completely flat terrain. If starting on the flats, progress to a subtle slope for continued practice and add the slight CM shift to the mix.

COMPLEX:

- Have students practice more "board on" 50-50s over the mock feature directly


13


14

down the fall line on a moderate slope (refer back to photos 5 and 6).

- In one last practice drill, have riders jump onto the board to get comfortable with landing on a slippery surface, which simulates the sensations of landing on the jib. Practice this drill on flat terrain (photos 13, 14).

Proceed to the terrain park if you've started at a different location as it's time to introduce the real jib feature.

- Begin with a spotted walk through up the ramp and over the length of the feature (refer back to photo 12).
- Next, help each boarder negotiate up to the ramp of the beginner jib and pull him or her up to the point where the front foot is even with the end of the ramp or the beginning of the jib, standing aligned with the board parallel to the jib (refer back to photo 6).
- Spot your client as he or she practices jumping off the ramp and landing with a flat board and shifting the CM slightly forward.

You'll most likely again have to provide the momentum for students to slide along the jib. Once they're comfortable with the takeoff, landing, and sliding on the jib, move their starting point to slightly uphill from the ramp.

- Spot your client and provide initial momentum from the new starting point, coaching the rider through the jump up and landing on the jib.

Riders should have some momentum to slide along the jib and sometimes the whole length of the feature, but once again you may have to help them make it to the end. At this point, your student's success and comfort level will determine whether you stay at this starting point or move to higher above the feature.

INTEGRATE (INTO RIDING):

The farther above the jib you begin, the less you'll be providing "hands on" spotting and the more the rider's own momentum will take him or her over the length of the feature. Walk along beside students to provide "nearby" spotting and timely feedback during these first solo attempts.

CONCLUSION

Freestyle sessions can be some of the most fun, exciting, and, yes, intimidating learning experiences on the mountain. The terrain park environment adds specific challenges to the usual safety and class handling responsibilities not commonly found on the beginner hill or other slopes. It's the coach's duty to develop a progression that will give the student a framework to safely and successfully learn all aspects of the new maneuver.

The goal is to incorporate each element of the ATML Model—approach, takeoff, maneuver, and landing—by means of an action plan that incorporates static, simple, complex, and integrate (into riding) stages of performance. Students use skills built up along each stage to get to the point where they can appropriately combine all the necessary movements to perform the trick.

This framework is successful and adaptable for use with all beginner park students. It is also an effective method for training more experienced park riders and in all-mountain specific learning settings. 32°

Jeff Brier is an AASI-certified Level III snowboard instructor and PSIA-certified Level 1 nordic instructor. The snowboard technical director at Pennsylvania's Seven Springs Mountain Resort, he also serves as a clinic leader/trainer and coach for USASA/Chevy Revolution Tour competitors.

You reign at Subaru.

Save up to $3,300 on a new Subaru. Thanks to your PSIA-AASI membership, you'll get nothing less than the royal treatment when you buy or lease any new, unused Subaru at special VIP pricing. That could mean a savings of $1,300 - $3,300 off MSRP* (depending on model and accessories) plus any applicable incentives. Before you visit the dealer, login at **www.TheSnowPros.org** and click on "Pro Offers" for all the details. If you have questions, you can also call the PSIA-AASI member services specialists at 303.987.9390. Subaru and PSIA-AASI—the kingdom is yours, your majesty.

2011 Outback 2.5i Limited

2011 Impreza WRX STI 5-door

2011 Forester 2.5X Premium

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS

SUBARU

COACH'S CORNER

Mental Attitude and Stance

By Erik Leirfallom

The concept of stance requires some creative thinking when it involves teaching adaptive skiers, whether they're standing or sitting. Addressing stance in lessons goes beyond talking to your student about the way he or she stands or sits on the ski or skis. Ultimately, stance is about the need to ski with the mind as much as the body.

If an instructor fails to address a student's mental attitude while he or she is trying to learn new techniques or transfer movements into new terrain, it's possible to create movements that will hamper future development and that are hard to shake. Consider, for example, teaching a timid skier how to create a turn on a sit-ski. If you take that skier to a place where he or she doesn't feel safe or comfortable, your attempt to teach a balanced, proactive stance could instead actually create both mental and physical setbacks for the student. Additional lessons could be required simply to reverse negative practices such as bracing, braking, or using a reactive, defensive stance while skiing. A student's prime instinct to protect him- or herself will affect the way the individual performs and how he or she uses various parts of the body during on-hill movement.

Instructors need to look to human nature to help teach each lesson, and it's important to keep in mind the one common thread that can help determine success in all learning: mental attitude. Another word for this attitude is stance. While you can describe the concept of stance as "the way we stand or sit on our ski(s)," it's important to remember that the word also crosses over into the realm of motivation, opinion, and emotion. One definition of stance in *Webster's Dictionary* is this: "intellectual or emotional attitude."

Although many instructors tend to teach components of its physical aspects, stance is not a concept that should be thought of as static or posed. On a steep run, for instance, it's important to teach students to stay forward. On the flats you teach adaptive skiers to keep their hands up or their outriggers forward. While these physical aspects of stance are important, such directions can at times be counterproductive if the student is out of balance for another reason: that is, he or she may be scared, or even bored. Stance can frequently provide a vivid reflection of what's going on in the student's mind. You need to be able to read the mental stance exhibited when a skier feels out of his or her element.

Stance is also an ever-changing and dynamic concept that's constantly affected by environment. Think of the focused stance of a predator such as a lion or a wolf as it hunts its prey. Another example is the soccer player's overall presence while waiting at midfield for the ball.

In terms of examples close at hand, household pets can teach us a lot about stance. Take some time to watch a dog as it carries its body through every mood or situation. If your canine is anything like mine (particularly if it's got some retriever in its bloodline), a toy in your hand is a signal that the object's about to be tossed. My dog typically crouches at the sight of the toy, and flex his joints with weight forward (mostly on the front paws) in anticipation of leaping. When my dog is scared, his weight shifts back, he gets low to the ground, and turns his vital organs away from the

S tance is about the need to ski with the mind as much as the body.

Courtesy of Erik Leirfallom

point of perceived danger. All of these are prime examples of how stance can result from mental attitude.

STANCE AS ACTION

In relation to skiing, stance needs to be considered and studied as an action. People in general tend to think of stance as static positioning, but when it comes to skiing, stance is a verb. It's dynamic, always changing, and constantly modifying itself to the state of the surrounding environment in order reflect personal attitude. If you ask someone to show you an athletic stance (which is what's most commonly taught in skiing), I'm willing to bet that your average skier will stand in place like a sculpture, possibly taking a position akin to a basketball player waiting for a rebound.

Such a posture is learned positioning that describes the need to stand or sit while anticipating action. The stance describes only one way to arrange the body and the components of manipulating stance, and includes the mental and emotional components of the athletic moment.

Many coaches or instructors tend to promote such a stance as the holy grail of standing on a sliding ski. What they fail to talk about, though, is how that position needs to change for different situations. For example, it's vital to explain why each joint is bent, why the center of mass is where it is, and how such structure benefits the skier on the hill. It's important to provide an explanation regarding what happens to the stance when the skier's attitude changes and how the body compensates for psychological changes.

In terms of psychologically reflecting a response to environment, it's common to visualize dysfunctional tension in a student where a joint is over- or under-flexed—things that can cause overall imbalance in one direction or another. For example, a standing skier in a defensive position will move his or her weight to the heels, with ankles straight and knees over-flexed. To compensate for such a stance, the skier will likely have to bend at the waist to stay upright. Students in sit-skis will sit up very straight when they're scared. The skier's shoulders and elbows will be back, and to compensate for such positioning hands and arms will be held away from the body in order to fight for balance.

An effective stance–both physical and mental–is key to solid performance.

Courtesy of Erik Leirfallom

Fear often puts a student's balance to the aft, or away from danger. For skiers of all levels, common stance issues such as these start with the upper body, and descends in a kinetic chain that forces other parts of the anatomy to compensate for the imbalance above.

Positive self-talk can be one of the most powerful tools to ease the mind.

MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

When teaching or coaching, it's easy to spend a lot of time trying to adjust and tighten bolts that have been loosened by a student's fear or confusion. When it comes to stance, the brain can be stronger than the body.

In order to help a skier achieve maximum adjustment, it's important to provide the individual with techniques that can allow him or her to mentally adapt. Basic sports psychology suggests that the use of positive self-talk, visualization, and even simply mentally swapping the task at hand with a skill that the individual already does well. This latter technique can help the student quiet his or her mind to bring thought patterns around to a constructive mindset.

Because many people have a hard time engaging in positive self-talk, the best way to alleviate negative thinking among your students is to help them *recognize* negative self-talk. You can get students to practice recognizing their thought processes by engaging them in a quick lesson that encourages them to stare at or think about something that excites them positively or negatively. The act of focusing the mind or the eyes on an object that stirs intense emotion will likely engage the brain in such a way that the pictures conjured by the mind's eye will provide a rush of adrenaline.

Start out by asking students to describe an object of focus. If the object is negative, you as the instructor need to try and find some "positive" aspects of the object. Get your students to talk about the upside of their choice, and ask them to point out things that could help them perform well in this environment. Most importantly, get them to talk about the positive aspects out loud. Positive self-talk can be one of the most powerful tools to ease the mind.

Another powerful mind-tool is the art of visualization, or the act of using the mind's eye to picture accomplishment. If the student is nervous, ask him or her to picture themselves accomplishing the task ahead with success. Encourage the individual to witness

that success well as if he or she were looking on as an observer. Such a vision provides the student with an opportunity to witness the performance through his or her own eyes. What is important is that when doing this the student "feels" what it is like to perform well, how to make adjustments when necessary, where challenges might occur, and, most importantly, what it will feel like to get to the bottom of the hill at the end of a flawless performance.

As an instructor, it's important to decide if the student is standing or sitting on their skis in a certain way because he or she truly doesn't know how to move, or if the stance is merely a result of the mind telling the skier to do something different. For example, if the student's turns are defensive or passive, he or she will move to a stance that could provide protection. Theoretically, the body already knows all of the necessary movements, and it's the job of coaches and teachers to help put those movements in a particular order to do something along the lines of creating an efficient turn or accomplishing the task at hand.

Because skiing can be counter-intuitive, skiers often work from the brain down instead of starting moves from the feet up. If the skier begins each movement from the upper body, turns will be less efficient in terms of making the equipment work. It's the ski instructor's job to help students reorder their movements by giving them a good foundation, i.e., a good mental "stance."

Coaches and instructors alike need to start with an evaluation of the student's thought processes. In most cases, the first thing that needs to be addressed is the skier's mental stance. Why is he or she moving that way? Why is the skier holding an edge too long? Is it hesitation? Over-anxiousness? Exhaustion? Fear?

If you see that a skier is scared or tired, don't simply focus on the physical. Dig into his or her mental state, and start the lesson there. Address the student's comfort level by starting with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. By addressing the individual's concept of skiing, you can create a higher level of success faster, and have a happier and less-frustrated student in the end.

Just as personal philosophies and motivations are built on a foundation of strong ideas and facts, achieving a full understanding of your student's stance means you must look at the way the skier mentally approaches the terrain as the foundation for how he or she will stand or sit on a ski or skis. 32°

Erik Leirfallom is a full-time coach for the U.S. Adaptive Alpine Ski Team. For the last 15 years, he has taught, trained instructors, and coached in such locales as Colorado's Purgatory and Durango Mountain Resort and Mt. Hood,Oregon. Currently a resident of Frisco, Colorado, he is an alpine examiner for PSIA-RM and a certified USSA coach.

Get in shape!!

SKIER'S EDGE®

Skier's Edge®

…the most decorated performance machine in the world.

IN 25 YEARS:

- **155** Olympic Alpine Ski Medals
- **7** Super Bowl Titles
- **25** FIS World Cup Globes
- **1** FIFA World Cup
- **6** World Series
- **151** FIS World Cup Titles
- **3** Junior National Championships
- **8** PGA Tour Wins
- **1** Champions League Soccer Title
- **8** World Powder 8 Championships
- **4** PGA Senior Tour Championships
- **1,029** Skier's Edge Masters National Championship Medals
- **4** Snowboard National Championships
- **1** Stanley Cup
- **8** Extreme Ski World Championships
- **31** APT Tennis World Tour Titles
- **2** Aerials & Moguls National Championship Titles
- **14** Special Olympic Medals
- **9** World Volleyball Titles
- **2** PGA Champions Tour Titles
- **6** FIS Masters World Globes
- **1** NCAA Pole Vaulting Championship
- **33** Disabled World & US Ski Titles
- **1** Miss Fitness America Title
- Over **9,000** Letters of praise from ski improvement to weight loss!
- Prevented thousands of injuries
- **26,000** National Ski Patrollers can't be wrong!
- **30,600** Professional Ski Instructors can't be wrong!
- We've taken over **75,000** skiers from the intermediate rut and made them advanced/expert skiers.

Is there any doubt that this can make you a better skier and athlete?

Skiing at Your Best!™

Official Training tool of the PSIA

30-day home trial
Burn up to 1,540 calories/hr
4/2 Year warranty

Official Supplier to the National Ski Patrol

The #1 Technical Ski Conditioner in the World®

Exclusive Official Supplier to the World's Best Ski Teams™

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE BUYER'S GUIDE AND DEMO DVD

800-225-9669 Ext. 173

www.SkiersEdge.com/173

The Skier's Edge Company Park City, Utah • 801-975-8100

COUNTER ROTATION

DID SNOWBOARDING SAVE ALPINE SKIING?

From halfpipes to fat skis to turned uptails, anyone on a chairlift can see the on-snow influence of snowboarding. But would skiing have *disappeared* without those things? That's this issue's Counter-Rotation question: "Should skiers thank snowboarders for saving their sport?"

Jason Newell was likely not thinking about snowboarding at this moment.

"Snowboarders owe skiers for the resorts, because without them we'd all have to hike for our turns. But when snowboards came on the scene, skiing was stagnant, participation was dropping, and innovation was limited to who could come up with a new shade of neon. Better fashion sense, twin shapes, and (arguably) rocker all came from snowboarding. Long story short, hugs for everyone." — *Shaun Cattanach, Resort Programs Manager, Burton*

"Would Thomas Edison thank Nikola Tesla for saving electricity? Probably not, but he may pay homage to Tesla's incredible development and forward thinking." — *Jason Newell, Director of Sports & Partnership Marketing, Rossignol/Dynaster/Lange*

"Sure, skiing has been re-invigorated by the fashion, youth, energy, and technology snowboarding has brought to the industry. But, lest we forget where we came from: Skiers are to snowboarders what Evel Knievel is to Moto X—you can poke fun at the lame outfits but they laid the groundwork for what the sports are today." — *Alejandro (Hano) Blake, Events Director, Taos Ski Valley, NM*

"Absolutely not. Granted our roots are in surfing and snowboarding, but if not for chairlifts, P-tex, and steel edges, it's hard to imagine snowboarding even getting off the ground. On the other hand, if it was still all about straight edges and 220-centimeter skis, then how many people would still be skiing?" — *Mikey Franco, former AASI Snowboard Team member, co-founder Worldwide Tribes*

"For things like parks and pipes, we should thank them, and for getting the attention of people who might not have otherwise come to the mountain. When I think of skiers like the New Canadian Air Force, I'm not sure that could have happened without snowboarding. But the infrastructure of skiing set snowboarding up to accelerate as a sport much more quickly than it ever could have done on its own." — *Mike Aicher, Senior Alpine Category Manager, Salomon USA*

"The biggest thing snowboarding did is open our minds. But skiing kept pushing us to think outside of the box as well—especially in how we see and ski big mountains. I think we owe a big thanks to that whole generation." — *Nick Herrin, PSIA Alpine Team Member, Director of Resort Services, Crested Butte Mountain Resort*

Hookease

The Revolutionary Way
Beginners Learn to Ski

"For generations ski instructors have struggled with the dilemma of assisting their students with the motor movements that hinder development. Hookease is the panacea that instructors have been looking for. Hookease will change the way we teach skiing."

Ron Kipp – Education Manager USSA

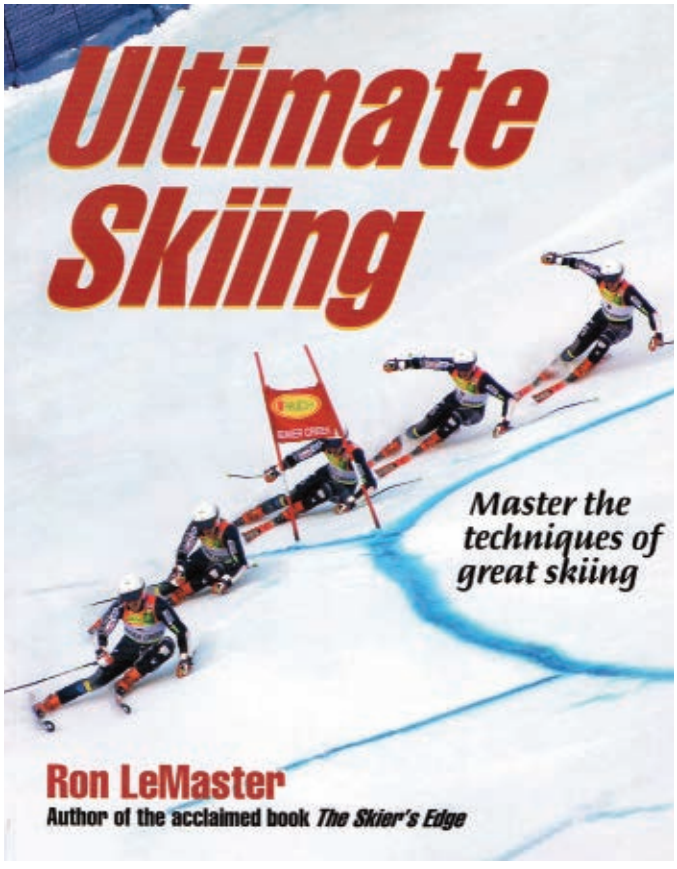
Hookease
hookease.com

ADVANCED SKI TRAINING SYSTEMS

Seeing is Believing in *Ultimate Skiing*

By Kevin Jordan

Ron LeMaster has done it again: he's written another big, indispensable reference work on ski technique. ¶ In addition to his long career as a PSIA-certified ski instructor and coach and his work as a technical advisor to the U.S. Ski Team and the Vail Snowsports School, he's probably best known for authoring two previous popular volumes on ski technique: *The Skier's Edge* and *Skiing: The Nuts and Bolts*. His latest volume, *Ultimate Skiing: Master the Techniques of Great Skiing* is another tool in a growing toolbox of resources for instructors and coaches.



Ron LeMaster. *Ultimate Skiing*. Human Kinetics, 2009. 224 pages

Ultimate Skiing is a fantastic reference for any ski professional. LeMaster is able to look to the World Cup race circuit and distill the techniques of elite skiers into layman's terms. While drawing on the skills and wisdom of some of the best skiers in the world, he manages to break the information down into three basic sections: "Fundamentals: Skiing from the Snow Up," "Techniques: Controlling Your Interaction with the Snow," and "Matching Tactics and Techniques to Real World Skiing."

LeMaster uses his own trademark photomontage sequences and 3-D-style diagrams to illustrate his points. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then some of the photos of the elite World Cup racers could make up numerous additional books. Any skier can get a good feel for the physics and forces involved in skiing when they see them applied in a photo montage of Hermann Maier.

Through his photos and diagrams, LeMaster is able to differentiate between efficient and inefficient ski technique. The few photos that are in black and white effectively represent examples of inefficient ski mechanics or technique. In addition to using photos of ski gods like Maier, LeMaster includes photos of members of PSIA-Rocky Mountain's education staff to demonstrate great skiing. The book also features biographies of past and present World Cup racers such as Janica Kostelic, Anja Paerson, Aksel Lund Svindal, and Ted Ligety.

Along with the professional demonstration and illustration provided in the photo portion of the book, LeMaster drew on experts from the world of ski instruction, racing technique, and biomechanics to make his text as technically accurate as possible. According to the volume's acknowledgment pages, PSIA heavy-hitters are listed among the first resource providers listed, and they include: former PSIA Alpine Team members Megan Harvey and Kurt Fehrenbach; former U.S. Ski Team coach Ron Kipp; and biomechanics guru Juris Vagners.

One of the most interesting teaching tools in the book the concept of the "virtual bump." The term refers to the pressure management that you feel when skiing in a carved turn as it compares to what you experience among moguls. LeMaster describes it thusly: "In a sharply carved turn on a smooth slope, for instance, you will feel light at the top of the turn and heavy at the bottom. This is because the gradient the skis are on changes through the course of the turn in the same way it does when you ski over one bump and into another."

LeMaster goes onto explain that at the start of a turn the minor centrifugal forces you experience work in opposition to the gravitational force, and thus make you feel "light." By the end of a turn, though, both gravity and the centrifugal forces are pointing in the same

direction and make you feel "heavy." His virtual bump theory suggests that this is a sensation similar to the one you experience when you ski into a trough between two bumps, and then ski into the uphill shoulder of another bump at the end of a turn.

Another topic that LeMaster delves into in *Ultimate Skiing* is equipment, namely boots. He devotes an entire chapter to ski boots and the art of getting a correct fit. While bootfitting can be an intimidating process to endure, LeMaster gives readers the necessary information to understand technical concepts such as forward lean, lateral canting, and radial canting. He also takes the time to explain such unusual topics as "toe-out" boots and "customized tongues." Importantly, the text suggests that a skier might not know exactly what the right amount of adjustment is until he or she skis with too little or too much of a particular adjustment.

In the "Matching Tactics and Technique to the Real World" section, the book offers exercises to help skiers master ice, moguls, powder, crud, slush, and steeps. As suggested in the "Real World" of the section's title, LeMaster takes World Cup racer skills puts it into a real world, tangible application for advanced and expert skiers.

Any skier can get a good feel for the physics and forces involved in skiing when they see them applied in a photo montage of Hermann Maier.

Ultimate Skiing is a useful resource for any ski instructor's personal library because LeMaster has the knowledge and experience to make some of the most difficult concepts in skiing easy to understand. He philosophically understands the intangible benefits of the sport as we "ski in places that are beautiful and that many of us would otherwise seldom, if ever, visit. People can learn to ski before they can ride a bike and keep on skiing after they're too old to ride one." That's a powerful reminder regarding what it is about skiing that people love, and books like *Ultimate Skiing* can help those who teach the sport to improve on and enjoy the art of sharing with others. 32°

Kevin Jordan is the Children's Coordinator at Buttermilk Mountain in Aspen, Colorado, and is a trainer for the Ski and Snowboard Schools of Aspen. He also serves as an alpine, children's, and freestyle examiner for PSIA-RM. When he's not on the slopes, Jordan writes for EXAMINER.COM as the "Denver Ski Instruction Examiner."

continued from pg. 32

set to help manage the International Sheepdog Championships at Soldier Hollow in the summer, an event that draws 21,000 spectators.

These two instructors took the skills they honed teaching cross-country lessons and applied them to become successful in event management: strong communication and listening skills, the ability to satisfy the needs of diverse groups of people, and the think-on-your-feet ability to improvise with whatever the situation throws at them.

Their embellished skill sets do more than look good on a resume. According to Peterson, adding event management skills to their repertoire made them into two of his most invaluable year-round employees.

HOW MANY CAREERS DO YOU HAVE?

Winter ends. Every year.

The seasonal nature of the job is one of the main challenges instructors struggle to overcome.

But what does breaking out of your career's seasonal nature look like? You might choose a path like Peterson's, where you seize management opportunities at your resort and within related organizations in the industry. Perhaps you plan to continue receiving paychecks from different companies during the off-season. Or maybe instructing is a part-time passion that balances out your off-snow career. Whatever your situation, you can merge the varied opportunities—and in the best cases, grow them both.

Regardless of how you might describe your ideal path, the projects you create and volunteer for outside your day job of instructing can help bridge the gap between your winter career and your off-season pursuits. "You can improve your luck by tackling creative projects," Peterson said.

Maybe you want to organize employees to tackle a community river clean-up. Or spearhead a committee of instructors to rethink your beginner lesson products. Projects like these will help you develop new skills and highlight those you already have. These are the creative tasks that make you more valuable in both your winter and off-season worlds.

The goal is to turn those separate careers into a unified career where your winter adds value to your off-season work and your off-season work adds value to your winter… no matter how different those two jobs appear on paper.

Become an intrapreneur by developing an eye for the unseen and a nose for opportunity. Hone those abilities, and you might someday look back on a successful career started from a series of small opportunities that you molded into big accomplishments. "I was pretty lucky," Peterson said of his career path, "because a door would creak open a little bit and I would rush through." 32°

Kelly Coffey is a training manager at Colorado's Breckenridge Resort and an alpine freestyle examiner with PSIA-RM. He's on a lifelong quest to figure out how to make a career out of his passions.

PACK HEAT
MOBILE WARMING BY ANSAI

MOBILE WARMING

7.4V BATTERY

- Lightweight li-ion rechargeable battery provides up to 10 hours of warmth
- Three heating panels lined with steel alloy fiber elements

SOFTSHELL JACKET

MEN:#ASJ09M11 / LADIES:#ASJ09W11
$129.99 W/2 BATTERIES

7.4V BATTERY

- Lightweight li-ion rechargeable battery provides up to 10 hours of warmth
- Three heating panels lined with steel alloy fiber elements

SOFTSHELL VEST

MEN:#ASJ09M9 / LADIES:#ASJ09W9
$99.99 W/2 BATTERIES

7.4V BATTERY

- Quick warm-up and even heat distribution

TEXTILE GLOVE

MEN:#ASJ09M05
$129.99

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS
Please contact Customer Service to order yours today. Limit 1 unit per style. Please provide your PSIA membership number at time of order.

MOBILE WARMING
PROFESSIONAL HEATING SYSTEM
WWW.MOBILEWARMINGGEAR.COM

CONTACT
9807 S. 13TH Street Oak Creek, WI 53154
Phone: 414-763-8998 Fax: 414-763-8973
Toll free number: 888-222-0745
E-mail:promo@ansai-usa.com

MAGAZINE INDEX

This index is a partial listing of articles published in 32 Degrees since the magazine s launch in fall 2008. PSIA-AASI members may access full electronic versions of each issue online at www.TheSnowPros.org

Wanted:
F/M, Friendly, skis/
boards, ♥s snow

New School, Old School Snow Days

At Copper it's all about loving people, snowsports and snow days. We are corporate on the inside but free spirited on the outside and our employees love their environment. We provide the best guest experience and allow our new school and old school culture to thrive. During our time off we ski & we ride awesome Copper terrain and enjoy free access to almost all other Colorado resorts.

Always hiring passionate, certified, and entry level ski and snowboard instructors for the 2010/2011 and future seasons. Apply online at: www.coppercolorado.com/jobs or Recruiter@coppercolorado.com

Copper Mountain is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer

copper mountain

AD INDEX

Honk if you love our official suppliers.

Thank you, PSIA-AASI official suppliers.
www.TheSnowPros.org

THROUGH THE **LENS**

As if the powder shot on the cover wasn't enough to get your salivary glands working in advance of the 2010–11 season, we thought we'd close the magazine with another one. This one — by Aspen-based photographer and Level III instructor Cesar Piotto — is of PSIA Nordic Team member Charlie MacArthur floating down The Dumps at Aspen.

IT S YOUR TURN TO **MAKE HEADLINES**

Although Wikileaks may have stirred the media Crockpot this summer, we re searching for your stunning snowsports revelations and insider secrets. Share your hard-earned knowledge and entertain your colleagues. Oh, ignore that helicopter noise overhead they re just the advance security folks for our 50/50 gathering this spring. Kidding. Submit something for one of the following categories:

LESSON LEARNED Regale us with your lightbulb moments or snowsports life lessons learned the hard way.

LAUGH TRACKS Share the hysterical anecdote that made them all bust a gut at apr s.

THROUGH THE LENS Send in a great photo that really captures the essence of snowsports instruction. (Digital pics have to be 300 dpi or more.)

INQUIRING MINDS Chime in with your take on a pressing issue of the day.

Send your submissions to 32Degrees-@thesnowpros.org, with the subject line Last Chair. PSIA-AASI members whose contributions make it onto this page will win a $25 gift certificate to the PSIA-AASI Accessories Catalog.

INQUIRING MINDS

In the spring 2010 issue, we invited readers to share their single most helpful strategy in preparing for a certification exam. Sandra Bohling, an instructor at Tennessee's Ober Gatlinburg, said that **simply staying focused on the goal** was the key to her Level I prep.

"What that meant for me was to choose to do or not do something, based on whether it would help me pass. First was a lesson taken from watching Olympians. I figured that I couldn't do my best if I was injured, so I tried to avoid those situations. I also prepared as much as I had time for with reading the PSIA books, doing some training runs with certified instructors, and teaching as many Level 1-4 lessons as I could get. Then I made sure I got to the exam on time. It worked!"

Congratulations, Sandra! And now for this issue's "Inquiring Minds" question:

What's the most significant "ah-ha" moment you had teaching last season?

LAUGH TRACKS

While it s true that adults do some truly funny and/or dim-witted things on the slopes, it s the kids who say the darndest things. (Hmm, what a great name for a TV show.) While walking across the snow after lunch, from the children s center to the nearest slope, one of my Level 6 five-year-olds paused and placed her skis vertically next to her on the snow.

What s the matter? I asked.

If you carry my skis, I ll carry your poles. she replied.

Having seen her carry her skis during the morning session, I said matter of factly, You carried them this morning. Let s go.

She responded with, But my daddy carries my skis and I carry his poles.

Trying to encourage her, I said, C mon now, you re a good skier; you can do it yourself.

The next words from this cute little kindergarten kid almost floored me. "Can we make a deal? she asked. A smile began to grow on my face. She continued, If you carry one of my skis, I ll carry one of your poles. I stood there stunned, not believing this was happening . . . that a five-year-old was leading the negotiations. Wasn t that my job?

You already know the outcome, right? As we continued to the slope, I wondered if any of the nearby folks wondered why this little girl was carrying a child s ski in one hand and a ski pole taller than her in the other.

Howard Friedman, Hunter Mountain,NY

FIT ON DEMAND

The Air Shell Advantage
- More Performance
- More Comfort
- More Warmth

© FRANK SHINE

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA ®

PSIA ALPINE TEAM
Katie Ertl - Teams Manager
Rob Sogard - Coach

TEAM MEMBERS
Doug Pierini
Bobby Murphy

PSIA Members: For online pro sales go to **thesnowpros.org**

Phoenix 100 Air Shell

PUMP IT UP! Don't let a bad boot fit ruin your perfect day. With Air Shell, you can customize the fit to your foot shape and personal preference. Need better heel hold? Pump up the rear zone. Need a snugger forefoot? Pump up the forefoot zone. **AIR SHELL** - on the fly - anywhere - anytime! **FIT ON DEMAND!**

Also available in the Phoenix 90 Air Shell and women's Viva P100 Air Shell and Viva P80 Air Shell.

TECNICA

TECNICAUSA.COM

THE PRICE PSIA-AASI MEMBERS PAY FOR PATAGONIA.

Your PSIA-AASI membership makes it easy to go big and save big when you shop the Patagonia Online Pro Program. **1.** Log on to the Member Center at www.TheSnowPros.org. **2.** Click on Pro Offers. **3.** Click on the Patagonia logo. You can also check out the PSIA-AASI *Accessories Catalog* for Patagonia apparel selected especially for instructors. Either way, you'll find some of the nicest outdoor gear, available to you as a professional courtesy through the Patagonia Pro Purchase Program.

patagonia®