

news d'Nord

from the PSIA
Nordic Team
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News d'Nord is a fabrication of the PSIA Nordic Team. Divisions are welcome to reprint partial or complete articles from here at will (with credit) in newsletters. Contributions are welcome. Please submit to scott.mcgee@snowkingmountainresort.com

A New Manual, A New Technical Model & Updated Standards

by David Lawrence

Watch This

Train your eye, improve your technique and let your mind absorb world class nordic skiing!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnJS4p8I-9o&list=PL5253D3648FDB6763>

Get Your Gear

Remember to visit the PSIA website for awesome gear and steep pro discounts on much more than just Nordic ski gear. Check the site often because companies in the PSIA supplier pool changes often. You'll need your username and password to get access:

<https://www.thesnowpros.org/Login/tabid/340/Default.aspx?returnurl=%2fproofferstest.aspx>

The Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) National Office invited all divisions to send representatives to Copper Mountain, Colorado to review, address and agree on the minimum standards of teaching, skiing and technical knowledge for instructors and coaches pursuing a Level I, II or III certification.

Here's a quick overview of what we did, and your first glimpse of the new XC Technical Model!

Current Standards – The current standards that are in place now will remain our national standards for one more year. Any new standards need to be proposed then approved by the PSIA board of directors. The first deadline for that is December 15, 2013, hence this outreach to the divisions. [Click here to download a copy of the proposed standards.](#)

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU: We need the divisions to review, test, explore, kick and prod the standard's matrix content and structure and let us (the PSIA National XC Team

Check Out These Movement Analysis Apps!

We've got two movement analysis video recording apps for you to check out, download and learn how to use this season. Trust us, these apps are powerful and can forever alter how you see skiing!

[Ubersense & Coaches Eye](#)

know what you think. Please provide David Lawrence (david@leaveboringbehind.com) a write-up of your recommendations or thoughts by December 15, 2013.

NEW! Cross Country (XC) Technical Model and XC Skills Concept

Concept - The new XC Technical Model incorporates past and present models from PSIA and the United States Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA) with current XC technical knowledge. The new XC Technical Model organizes XC skills, movements, stance, timing and power with an overarching outcome "continuous forward motion". The new XC Technical Model unifies the PSIA skills concept and USSA's performance model with our XC certification standards, movement analysis tools, teaching progressions and manual organization. [Click here to see the new model.](#)

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU: The multidivisional panel kicked, pushed, pulled, tore down and reconstructed the XC Technical model numerous times during the conference; we present the attached model for your division to do the same and let us (the PSIA National XC Team) know what you think. Please provide David Lawrence (david@leaveboringbehind.com) a write-up of your recommendations or thoughts by December 15, 2013.

NEW! PSIA XC Technical Manual - Rewriting the XC Technical Manual is underway and almost done. Steve Hindman, former PSIA team member, author and industry legend, has been pounding away on the keyboard writing the bulk of the manual. Taking what Steve wrote, we are organizing the new XC Technical Manual to support the new XC Technical Model and XC Skills Concept. The new manual will present a unified structure from start to finish, beginning with a fundamental athletic stance, then introduce and explain the skills concept, next follows fundamental movements blended together with timing and power. Together, they explain the core of XC skiing "continuous forward motion". The new manual will then describe the maneuvers and techniques of XC skiing (think V1, V2, diagonal stride, etc). The rest of the manual covers biomechanics, physics, teaching progressions, movement analysis, teaching strategies and multi-week progressions.

For more clarity, please contact any member of the Cross Country PSIA Fall Conference Committee: Scott McGee (Inner Rocky

Mountain), David Lawrence (Northwest), Ross Matlock (Rocky Mountain), Patti Banks (Rocky Mountain), Brenda Winkler (Northern Rocky Mountain), Paul Peterson (Western) or Dan Clausen (Central).

Buckle Up for Safety! Comfort! & Warmth: Boot Tips for Tele (and Alpine) Pros

By Scotty McGee

Many skiers look at buckling up as a necessary evil, or a nuisance at best, but with some theory and perspective you can treat your feet better, optimize performance and take better care of your toesies. Here are a few things you can focus on to improve your own, and your clients' experience.

Buckle From the Bottom Up

Do you have an order you like to buckle up in? Many bootfitters recommend starting at the toes and working 'up,' to get the foot situated with the first two buckles, and then to pull the heel back with the upper buckles.

Unbuckle at the Bottom

On cold days especially, you can unbuckle before, or in, the lift line, and rebuckle up top. Most buckles let you leave your buckles loose, but engaged, so all you have to do at the top is bend over and push the ends of the buckles down.

Ski Unbuckled

This is the ski version of 'unplugged.' You'll find your gear 'keeps you honest' while you make a warm-up run or two with your boots unbuckled. Any attempt to lever off of the stiff plastic cuffs takes you way out of balance. Tune into the fine motor movements *within* the feet that are so important for balance in skiing, and any sport for that matter. When you buckle up again, you'll relearn the meaning of power steering (and edging!).

Dry Out Your Liners

Use a fan-based, or heat-based boot dryer to optimize foot comfort and warmth, and achieve better performance throughout the next day. If you don't have a boot dryer, you can take your liners out of your boots, your insoles out of your liners and lay them all over a floor vent. Putting boots – shells or liners – near heat is not recommend. Many liners are form fitted and can deform with heat. Another (true) old-wives' tale says to put crumpled newspaper loosely in your boots for some quick and easy drying effect.

Buckle Up When Your Boots are Off

How do you store your boots? During the off-season especially, and between ski days, make sure to buckle your boots. Not too tightly, but enough to maintain their shape. Otherwise, they'll assume a shape that's different than when you wear them – less optimal for comfort and performance.

Adopt these best practices for yourself, and you'll have a better time and ski better. Coach your clients in proper boot and foot care, and they'll not only ski better and more comfortably, but also be more likely to ski (with you) again!

Go Lateral

By Ross Matlock

I had visions of becoming a pro soccer player one day, but coming from a small town in Nowhere Ville, that dream quickly vanished. My passion for the sport, however, still remains. Thirty years on I have found myself coaching our local U12 youth soccer program and reigniting the passion for soccer once again.

My thoughts while coaching always seem to connect to the things I have learned in my ski teaching life. I often draw on people skills and student centered teaching when I'm dealing with parents. The CAP model, used in children's instruction, is valuable when teaching new skills to my U12 boys. Simply starting with a basic skill and creating a lesson or training session based on what I see and the direction needed, are experiences I draw on from ski instruction.

When coaching soccer I have a simple lesson plan outline that follows this progression: warm up, unopposed, interference and opposed. In the same way we might use progressions to teach our students skiing, I am using a similar outline or framework to structure my lesson.

I warm the boys up with exercises that relate to the session I have in mind. For example, if my focus for the session is passing, I have the boys warm up with different passing and running exercises. Warming the boys up both physically and mentally with exercises and fun activities prepares them for the planned session.

In order to simplify learning I create an environment where there is no opposition or tackling involved. This gives the boys an opportunity to master the skill or exercise without any opposition or interference. Distractions create roadblocks for learning new skills and the least amount of external distractions the better when I'm introducing new movements.

Once the skill has been worked on and a level of comfort and mastery has been achieved, I slowly add interference to the exercise or drills. By doing this I am gradually bringing the skill into more of a real situation. I move lateral with my student's skill acquisition using different situations to help with skill mastery. In a passing drill, partners may progress from passing the ball back and forth to each other, into doing the same in a confined space. By confining the space I automatically add interference and now the boys have to look up and not kick their ball into anyone else. It's not opposition, but chaos.

Lastly by adding opposition you create a real situation, with pressure and the need to think fast while making good decisions. In the passing drill you have the partners passing in a confined space, but now 2 defenders are trying to steal the ball from you. Essentially throughout the practice you move from an ideal situation to a real one.

In a very similar way we can use the same basic progression of warm up, unopposed, interference and opposed to teach our ski lessons. We can create lesson plans by borrowing ideas and outlines from other sports. By adding to our bag of tools we become better instructors. For example if we are teaching a skate lesson our

lesson may start without skis on or even poles in our hands. In the warm, up we take the extra ‘stuff’ away and may focus on adopting a good body position. The warm up is directly related to what we will be doing for the next couple of hours.

If we can progress to “un opposed” terrain or terrain that students don’t have to fight we create a similar non-threatening environment. The terrain could be flat, well groomed and large in area where our students can move freely without distractions. This allows our students to work on skills and movements without the interference of those outside forces.

In our skate lesson we may add interference next by adding the poles to the skating movements or perhaps move to a hill and skate in undulating terrain. A downhill track with a turn provides the interference of a corner that we are now required to skate around. We slowly add external distractions to the skill being learned to allow the student to adapt to a variety of situations while still focusing on their newly acquired skill.

Finally our skate lesson comes to the opposed section of our outline. Now we not only add the poles but look at the different strokes that may be available to us in order to skate varied terrain. A hilly section may require us to combine several different strokes as well as transitions between strokes. We now have uphills, downhills, corners and flats to deal with. It’s like adding the defensive players in our soccer scenario, we are adding to the complexity of the lesson as we move through each level.

As an instructor try and draw from similar situations in order to enhance your style and approach to teaching skiing. Go lateral with your view in order to become a more well-rounded instructor. The bigger bag of tricks we have, the better instructor we can be. Look to other sports and activities to broaden your outlook on teaching skiing and don’t be afraid to borrow the ideas of other physical activities to give you a different outlook. It’s all movement!!

Fall Conference 2013, Tele Edition

by Jim Shaw

On October 24-27 representatives from all divisions were invited to meet at Copper Mtn, Colorado to discuss, review and/or revise the Telemark National Certification Standards. Attending the conference at Copper were Mickey Stone (PSIA-E), Tom Marshall (PSIA-NRM), Ann Schorling (PSIA-IM), Urmas Franosch (PSIA-W), Greg Dixon (PSIA-NW) and Jim Shaw (PSIA-RM) along with Scotty McGee and Paul Peterson representing the Nation EAC. An incredibly knowledgeable group of individuals with an amazing amount of experience in the ski instruction profession.

It was proposed in advance to focus on the National Certification Standards in the areas of teaching and technical knowledge. The previous Conference (2012) had focused on the skiing aspects.

The group began discussing, sharing and clarifying what the different divisions do during certification events to provide candidates opportunities to demonstrate their skills and examiners opportunities to assess those skills. For the most part practices in the represented divisions are more similar than different. The same is true for what the divisions expect from candidates. One of the more significant outcomes from the Conference was the sharing of practices from many divisions. This allows each of us (and our divisions) to compare this with our own division and hopefully find ways to continually evolve and improve certification services for our membership.

Armed with the understandings we had learned about each of our divisions we looked at the current National Certification Standards and how our current practices compared to these standards. We found that the current National standards in the areas of teaching and technical knowledge, for the most part, effectively described the current certification standards of the represented divisions. The changes that we decided on were mostly in the areas of wording. The belief seems to be that the standards could be clarified further and that the wording could become more specific. In other words, good news! We agreed with the standards as a team and really wanted only to improve wording and become more clear and understandable in what is written.

The changes to wording have been submitted to the National office. These should be presented to the board for approval in January. The

National Standards wording will not change for the 2013-14 season but should be in place for the 2014-15 season.

Thanks to everyone who has been involved! If you have comments or input we would always love the input. Send it to me, Jim Shaw at jshaw@rkymtnhi.com and I will be sure it is shared with all involved.

Have a great season and remember to tell everyone; you might as well telemark now or you'll just be another year older when you do!!