

32 DEGREES

THE JOURNAL OF PROFESSIONAL SNOWSPORTS INSTRUCTION | *fall* 2013

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PGS. 24, 30, 32, 36



Special Section!

Boon for Beginners

The Long Reach of
Terrain-based Teaching

PGS. 18, 78, 88, 94, 112

Teaching Tip

Strategize with the Slice,
Shape, and Slash

PG. 84



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 Pep Fugas takes the lion's share of early March powder. Whistler backcountry, British Columbia, Canada. BLAKE JORGENSON

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Cover Shot:

PSIA-AASI members Karen Nelson and Barbara Barsetti were all smiles at 2013 National Academy, which featured cutting-edge education, great camaraderie, and, oh yeah, plenty of powder. Photo by Sherri Harkin.



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COMMITTED

“Whether it is the seven-day work week through the winter; late nights getting caught up; or the miles upon miles I put on my bike in the summer to stay healthy, this job and sport are worth every ounce of energy and time I commit to it.”

— **Mike Hafer** PSIA Alpine Team

“Skiing is all about the little things. Having the passion and commitment to make sure everything is perfect, so that when you head out you can focus on helping others find that same passion.” — **Jonathan Ballou** PSIA Alpine Team

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What's New? A Lot of Cool Features for PSIA-AASI Snow Pros!

By Eric Sheckleton, PSIA-AASI Chairman of the Board

While I enjoyed some great time with my amazing family in Montana this summer, I took time to visit TheSnowPros.org and was immediately struck by all the benefits PSIA-AASI offers me even—and sometimes especially—when I am not on snow.

I've always been proud to be a member. Like you, I enjoy sharing my passion for skiing and snowboarding, advancing our world-class teaching techniques, and being tied into an international network of professional, like-minded people. It's amazing to see that now those connections, as well as all my member benefits, are just a click away through my computer, smartphone, or tablet.

As I write this, more than 5,400 members interact daily on the PSIA-AASI Facebook page. Did you know that from Monday to Friday, TheSnowPros.org posts fresh updates on the breaking news, latest benefits, and professional development strategies that are most important to ski and snowboard instructors? And twice a month the PSIA-AASI e-newsletter pro-

vide a one-stop roundup of all those top stories, with division-specific news as well.

homepage and, in an instant, all those professional advantages are immediately available.

Instant Interaction

Because summer is when I typically get to look back at all of the accomplishments of the previous winter—and prepare for all the opportunities the new winter offers—it took me a moment to realize just how many technological advancements PSIA-AASI implemented to benefit members this year. Here are just a few of the new, simpler ways to save time and make your member experience better. And there's more to come!

■ **Single sign-in.** Since I frequently visit TheSnowPros.org to complete multiple tasks—from shopping for

■ **Ongoing input sought.** The website's homepage now features frequent polls that seek—and provide instant tabulation of—member input on a variety of industry and instruction-specific topics.

■ **Daily industry and benefits news.** For anyone who hasn't noticed, the homepage has also undergone a positively startling transformation in the past year. At least five days a week, there is fresh news for and about professional ski and snowboard instructors. It's literally a private news service for snow pros, and every day I find new information I can use.

■ **Social media blooms.** Being on Facebook has also become immensely more enjoyable for me since so many of you have liked the PSIA-AASI FB page, plus there are lots of new updates, ideas, and instructional innovations being posted to be discussed and shared. While that is the extent of my own social networking abilities, those more interested in the social community will enjoy PSIA-AASI on Twitter, and on Instagram, seamlessly incorporating the professional experience with all the other updates, photos, and news.

Did you know that from Monday to Friday, TheSnowPros.org posts fresh updates on the breaking news, latest benefits, and professional development strategies?

vides a one-stop roundup of all those top stories, with division-specific news as well.

Even more important, the moment I want to take advantage of any of my snow pro-specific benefits, register for an event, watch some video, schedule a clinic, or update my profile, I just log on to the

top-of-the-line discounted equipment to registering for events—the ability to sign in just once and access all of those features saves me valuable time and allows me to quickly complete any online work I have to do (leaving me free to get outside and play).

Above all, what's been most impressive to me is how all of these upgraded features make it so much easier to focus on what I like most about being a member of PSIA-AASI—spending time with all of you, and getting more people excited about spending time on snow. I'm looking forward to a fantastic winter, and to seeing as many of you as possible somewhere on the trails. It's nice to know we can *always* stay in touch online at TheSnowPros.org. I hope this is a fantastic winter for all of you. ☺

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Thoughts From a Rookie Ski Instructor

BY DAVE BELIN

“**W**hy am I doing this?” I was probably not the only person pondering that question during a frigid, windy morning lineup my first season.

With the wind blowing so hard I could barely stand up, I noticed no one else stepped forward to teach either. So our ski school supervisor pulled out the hours log to see who was due, and (of course) called my name. As a part-time rookie instructor, I was getting to do lots of freeskiing, but, frankly, wasn't teaching many lessons. My thoughts about quitting were put on hold as I headed to the Children's Center, head bowed against

the wind, to teach a children's group lesson.

Let me back up a little. I'm 42 years old and have a full-time job, a wife, and two young sons; serve on two local boards; and have a long “honey-do” list like any other husband. I was getting up early on the weekends to drive to the mountain, not spending time with my family, and my paychecks were embarrassingly small. So you may see why I was second-guessing that decision to become a ski instructor.

Little did I know, that icy day would end up being a turning point in my career as a ski instructor. The sun came out despite the wind and it turned out to be a great

children's group lesson. That particular group of kids had been on skis before, so we practiced some gliding wedges, side-stepping, and basic turns before lunch. At Colorado's Eldora Mountain Resort, where I teach, lunch is served in the Children's Center and the instructor is responsible for actually serving the food. Going back to the kitchen multiple times for more ketchup, more water, more mac and cheese, and more juice made me feel like the harried waiter I had been right after college. I was so busy getting food for the kids that I barely had time to scarf down a couple of dino-nuggets before heading back to the snow.

WHAT PSIA-AASI HAS DONE FOR ME

BY PEGGY CONNOR, MD



COURTESY OF PEGGY CONNOR

In 2005 I found myself in a period of transition. As a doctor who works with breast cancer patients, I'd recently attended the funeral of a patient—a young woman who still had a son in junior high school—and realized I was burned out. I needed a break from the daily cancer battle.

Because I'd taught skiing to emotionally disabled youth during my pre-med years, I started teaching again as a “second profession” . . . as an escape. Hired as a “rookie” instructor at California's Northstar, I benefited greatly from a staff that worked very hard with me. I was such a renegade Texan and, looking back on it, a poor skier. I'm so thankful they saw my potential and believed in me.

Skiing has always been a passion for me and once I started teaching again I quickly decided I wanted to get multiple certifications and spend as much time as I could in the mountains. I now know that decision saved my soul and revived my spirit.

This is what I've learned. Since rejoining the ski instructor ranks, I have become much healthier—emotionally, physically, and mentally. I have met some of the finest folks, many of whom have become lifelong friends.

I've skied with some of the best trainers in the world, and seen our industry achieve a great deal of positive growth and changes. How fortunate we are to be part of it.

I've developed relationships with students from all over the country and from parts of the world I've never even heard of! It is a privilege to be a part of such a dynamic organization that brings all kinds of people together. One great example of this is my own daughter, who met one of our nation's Wounded Warriors at Northstar when I was teaching. They are now married. He's a true hero and I'm forever grateful to him and those like him who sacrifice their well-being to protect our country. Now we all are enjoying snowsports because of that move I made eight years ago to “save my soul.”

Since joining the team of professional ski and snowboard instructors at PSIA-AASI, I feel like I am a better person. I've learned there is a lot more to skiing and snowboarding than just the ride. I hope I can continue to work as a ski instructor, and practice “preventive sports medicine” for as long as I'm alive. **32°**

Dr. Peggy Connor is a breast cancer screening specialist based in Houston, Texas. A Level I alpine instructor specializing in children's and senior instruction, Connor spends much of her winter teaching at Northstar in Tahoe and now devotes renewed energy to patients between high seasons.



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YOUR SPACE

What I remember most from that day is being hyper-focused on remembering the kids' names and keeping them all together and in my sights. I certainly had some practice with this while teaching my own kids, but having seven unknown students to keep track of is very different from corralling two of your own familiar offspring.

That day was filled with endless counting of girls in purple and pink and boys in blue and black. Not losing a student is clearly a critical part of being a successful ski instructor, so I was beyond relieved when I returned each child to his or her parents safely at the end of the day. I remember the sense of satisfaction and calm that I felt knowing that I had tried something new and done it well. I was surprised at how much physical and mental energy that first lesson took. That night I slept better than I had in a long time.



ELIZABETH MILLER

Level I alpine instructor Dave Belin loves introducing children to what he hopes will be a lifetime of fantastic skiing experiences.

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For more information on the program and the peace of mind it can provide, log on to the member center at www.TheSnowPros.org.



I know I did something right during that lesson, because after that I was assigned to teach for the Children's Center every weekend until the end of the season. At first I was intimidated by all the procedures and commotion, but I grew to enjoy the energy and the challenge. As a part-timer, it took me a few weeks to learn the rhythms of the Children's Center: how to answer parents' questions, ways to get the kids warmed up to me and to skiing, when to break for lunch, and, most importantly, when and where to stop for bathroom breaks. I was fortunate to learn a lot of these tips from other instructors who were happy to share their experiences with me.

The Leap to Teach

In the past few years, my wife and I would watch the calendar flip to March, regretting that we had only skied a handful of days. One reason I decided to teach this past winter was to get my family on the mountain more. I believe it's important to spend time as a family doing fun activities like skiing. With me working at the ski area, I figured all of us could get out on the hill more often.

The tricky part about teaching, I learned, is that I don't get to ski with my family that often. But we have since settled into a good routine where we meet up to ski a few runs together at the end of the day, then relax in the lodge, telling stories of our respective days over hot chocolate. It's our own special version of après ski.

Another reason I wanted to teach skiing comes from a business standpoint. Ski areas need more customers, now and in the future, if we want to continue to use them for recreation. The kids learning to ski and ride today are tomorrow's lift ticket- and season pass-buying customers. As enjoyable as it is to have the hill to yourself, it isn't good for business. The future of a healthy ski industry is dependent on introducing new people to the sport and to making sure they come back season after season. I'm hopeful that I was able to turn a few kids on to the sport of skiing and that they will continue to participate in the future.

Why We Keep Teaching

Being a ski instructor is rewarding, challenging, at times frustrating, but always

worth it in the end. Teaching skiing and snowboarding is a lot of work, both physically and mentally, for not a lot of pay. Sometimes I wonder why people do it. The only answer I come up with is that people love sharing that passion for skiing and snowboarding with others.

Now when I ask myself why I decided to teach skiing, I know the answer and it's in the outcomes. I learned about motivation, flexibility, lesson progression, learning styles, entertaining kids, work procedures, working with parents, and keeping things in perspective. Happily, at the end of my first season teaching, I passed my PSIA-AASI Level I certification. I'll be returning to Eldora to teach again and I'll no longer be asking myself why I do it. 32°

Dave Belin is an alpine and telemark ski instructor at Eldora Mountain Resort in Colorado. He is also the director of consulting services at RRC Associates in Boulder, Colorado.

Editor's note: This article is adapted from a longer essay that appeared in the January 31, 2013, edition of Boulder Weekly.

The graphic is split into two main sections. The left section shows a snowboarder in mid-air against a white background, with a snowboarder's name 'MIKE BASICH' and 'PSIA-AASI MEMBER DISCOUNTS!' with the website 'thesnowpros.org' below. The right section has a green background with the 'FLOW SNOWBOARDING' logo, a pair of goggles, and a QR code. Handwritten text includes '11x2 6E' and 'WATCH AND WIN! GET THIS TAG OR VISIT FLOW.COM'. A small 'AS SEEN ON TV' logo is also present.

LINEUP

News of Note

K2 and Fischer Return as Official PSIA-AASI Partners



PSIA-AASI is pleased to say, “Welcome back!” to K2 and Fischer, both of which recently returned as official suppliers. Beginning in September, both brands will be extending pro offers to PSIA-AASI members.

K2’s partnership with PSIA-AASI includes alpine skis, the company’s brand-new line of alpine boots, and K2 snowboards and snowboard boots.

“K2 is enthusiastic to rekindle the partnership with PSIA-AASI,” said Jeff Mechura, K2 vice president of global marketing. “K2 has a long and storied history with PSIA-AASI and we look forward to working once again with their great team and membership in the seasons ahead.”

Fischer’s partnership with PSIA-AASI includes alpine skis and alpine boots, as well Fischer nordic skis and boots.

“I’m really excited to be working with PSIA-AASI again,” said Matt Berkowitz, Fischer’s director of alpine marketing and product. “Both organizations share many goals and we have really innovative products that line up perfectly with some of the strongest skiers in the industry. Instructors are an integral part of growing this industry, and I’m excited to see more of them do it with Fischer products on their feet.”

PSIA-AASI members are committed to sharing their passion for skiing and snowboarding with other people, regardless of their ability level. Having strong partners who share that mission is essential.

“We are very excited to be working with K2 and Fischer,” said PSIA-AASI Director of Partnership Marketing William McSherry. “We are honored to have their

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support and we look forward to working together.”

Be sure and read about some of the top new gear from both brands in this issue’s “Gear Preview,” and learn more about special PSIA-AASI member pro pricing on the PSIA-AASI Pro Offers page at TheSnowPros.org.

Horst Abraham Officially Inducted into U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame

PSIA-AASI pioneer Horst Abraham and five other legendary skiers and snowboarders, including Jeremy Bloom, Kirsten Clark, Hans Geier, the late Craig Kelly, and Wayne Wong, were inducted into the U.S. Ski and Snowboarding Hall of Fame on April 13, 2013, in Vail, Colorado.



Abraham, who served as PSIA’s education director in the early 1970s, was among the association’s early innovators responsible for the American Teaching Method (ATM)—which was a game-changer in ski instruction at the time and continues to be an integral part of modern instruction. The ATM focused on the guest and the skills specific to that guest.

In 1983, Abraham wrote *Skiing Right*, which, at the time, became PSIA’s official instructional manual. He has also written articles on instruction for PSIA-AASI publications as well as *SKI* and *Skiing* magazines. Abraham, who is putting the final touches on a new book, *Coaching Right*, is the recipient of the PSIA Educational Excellence Award and a



SHERRI HARKIN

2010 inductee into the Colorado Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame.

National Freestyle Standards Approved

The National Freestyle Standards were approved at the bi-annual ASEA Board of Directors meeting in Lakewood, Colorado, on February 4, 2013. Encompassing the detailed work of representatives from all PSIA-AASI’s nine divisions, as well as representatives from the snowboard and alpine disciplines, the *Freestyle Specialist Standards* now serve as the foundation for the latest nationally-recognized credential: Freestyle Specialist 1, 2, and 3 (FS1, FS2, FS3).

“This has been a long time coming,” said PSIA-AASI Snowboard Team Coach Lane Clegg. “When I accepted the position as team coach, my major goals were to bring the divisions closer together in terms of our exam and accreditation requirements. It makes sense for the industry to have a more unified group in terms of standards so that our PSIA-AASI members are credited with the same achievement no matter where they passed their exam.”

The Freestyle Specialist credential reflects the knowledge, skills, and abilities an instructor would apply when teaching freestyle both in and out of a terrain park, on a snowboard and/or skis.

As an assessment-based certificate program, the Freestyle Specialist credential is similar in structure to the Children’s Specialist. As a certificate program, these specialist credentials include an education (or clinic) component as well as an assessment (exam) component, which measure a participant’s understanding and application of the concepts and skills in freestyle teaching and coaching.

KEVIN JORDAN

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COURTESY OF THE EICHORNS

A funny thing happened on the way to the Forum. Father and daughter Bill and Sharon Eichorn, both Level I alpine instructors at Vermont's Stratton Mountain Resort, were late getting there because they got caught up reading *32 Degrees* while touring the Roman Colosseum.

They both work in the seasonal children's programs at Stratton. Sharon missed most of the ski season studying abroad in Barcelona, Spain. Knowing that, her dad brought *32 Degrees* with him to share with Sharon when they met to tour Southern Europe.

They will receive a \$25 gift certificate for the PSIA-AASI *Accessories Catalog*. Have your own tale of traveling with *32 Degrees*? Send it and your high-resolution photo proof to 32degrees@thesnowpros.org.



JEB BOYD

In Other News . . .

PSIA-AASI National Academy 2014 is set for April 13–17 at Snowbird, Utah. Mark your calendar, and send an email to education@thesnowpros.org to be notified when registration opens. **Vail Resorts** announced the addition of **EpicMix Academy** to its EpicMix digital lift pass system. Academy will allow instructors at the company's 10 resorts "to certify the attainment of certain skills and ski and ride levels for any of the students in their classes." Students will be able to review

their progress and on-snow achievements online, and can also earn digital pins for improving their skills and track vertical feet skied or ridden. **Colorado Ski Country USA** honored **Ashley Sifers** of Ski Granby Ranch as Instructor of the Year for her work on snow last season. Ashley joined the Ski Granby Ranch team after working with the National Sports Center for the Disabled at Winter Park for nine years.

And the **National Sports Center for the Disabled** (NSCD) announced that **Beth Fox**, operations director for the NSCD, has received the 2013 Cobb Partnership Award established by Chuck Cobb, a former U.S. ambassador to Iceland. Americans eligible for the award have demonstrated a long commitment to fostering U.S. relations with Iceland and to building bridges between the two countries. ☺

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Hitting the gym or heading outside on a longboard, bike, or SUP to cross-train for the upcoming season.



Trying to ride your way into shape once the season begins.



Setting clear goals for this year—from advanced certification to nailing that one new trick.



Heading into the season without a plan for what you want to accomplish.



Getting stoked for ski and snowboard slope-style to debut at the 2014 Winter Olympic Games.



Ignoring all the creativity and fun being generated by freestyle.



Putting in extra effort for each lesson you teach—for every student.



Delivering the same old unenthusiastic lesson and never trying new things.

ALL PHOTOS FROM THINKSTOCK

ROAD TRIP WORTH TAKING

The Hartford Ski Spectacular is considered the nation's premier adaptive winter sports event, drawing more than 850 participants. Conducted by Disabled Sports USA (DSUSA), the event will be held December 2-8, 2013, in Breckenridge, CO. PSIA-AASI certified examiners and clinicians will be teaching instructors the latest in adaptive teaching methods. PSIA-AASI National Adaptive Academy (NAA) is held in conjunction with the Ski Spectacular, bringing national-caliber clinicians and PSIA-AASI Team members together to serve as clinic leaders. Visit www.skispec.org to register.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT



K2

Location: Seattle, WA





Years In the Biz: K2 was founded in 1962 on Vashon Island, WA, and continues to call the Pacific Northwest home.

Website: K2snowboarding.com and K2skis.com. K2's pro purchase program can be accessed via the member log-in at TheSnowPros.org.

Why They Rock: K2 has a deep history with PSIA-AASI, sharing a similar focus of helping people across the country have more fun with skiing and snowboarding. We're very excited to have them supporting the on-snow efforts of PSIA-AASI members this season.

What You May Not Know: After more than 50 years making great skis, K2 is introducing a brand new line of ski boots this season, with both frontside and freeride options. The brand is also introducing a new binding system for backcountry snowboarding.

Locker Room Talk

	Name/Area/ Certification	Member Since/ Division	What's your goal for the coming season?	What advice do you have for new instructors?	What's on your "must-buy" list?	What does being a PSIA-AASI member mean to you?
	Dagmar Eriksson Mt. Bachelor Nordic Center, OR Cross Country II	2012 Northwest	I plan to take my Level III exam, which will make me an even better nordic instructor. I am also training to compete in the Masters World Cup competition.	Keep your eyes and ears open. Watch videos online and listen in when other instructors give a lesson. Be flexible in your teaching and listen to your students. There is no end to learning!	The latest of the greatest Fischer skis.	Being a PSIA-AASI member deepens and acknowledges my competence as a ski instructor.
	Chris Katzenberger Deer Valley Resort, UT Alpine III	1982 Intermountain	Get physically and mentally fit for the season. Spend time in the gym and read up on teaching tactics.	Find a mentor and start putting progressions down in writing on cue cards for use this winter.	Skitrax for my boots. Lots of walking means replacing boot soles or the whole boot.	I love belonging to an organization that promotes snowsports instructors.
	Bob Veit Shawnee Mountain, PA Alpine I	1990 Eastern	Ski at least six new areas, so I can reach my "bucket list" goal of skiing 100 different mountains.	Stick to it and remember it's all about fun for you and your clients.	New boots and SL race skis.	Hanging with people who love what I love.
	Maureen Harrington Wachusett Mountain, MA Alpine II	2003 Eastern	Working hard toward my Level III certification, including personal fitness training and attending clinics to improve my teaching.	Have fun—don't take yourself too seriously.	Powder skis for Colorado.	To me, PSIA represents the following things: Professional Skilled Involved Approachable

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Michael Rogan, PSIA Alpine Team Member 1996-2016

Nordica athlete 1992 - present

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ProFile:

DR. JONATHAN MIRSKY-COHEN RAINBOW RABBI

Level II Snowboard Instructor; Keystone, Colorado

First things first—how did you get the name Rainbow Rabbi?

After I was ordained in 1993 at the First Romanian-American Congregation in New York City, the first time I was called Rainbow Rabbi was during “Jerusalem Camp” at a National Rainbow Gathering (see welcomehere.org) where a friend said, “Hey Rainbow Rabbi, time to say communal prayers.” Many snowsports professionals also go to Rainbow Gatherings, and now some of my colleagues call me the “Rainbow Rabbi.” It’s interesting to note the rainbow is a symbol for a bridge to the next world in Southwestern Native American folklore, as well as a symbol of the Noachidic covenant in the Bible.

What aspects of being outdoors might a person of any background find “spiritual?”

In my view, the most important way individuals can find aspects of spirituality in nature is through the power of the breath. If more people could take the time to harness the power of breathing in nature, they would be metaphorically (and

sometimes literally) taking the time to “smell the roses.” Proper outdoor breathing can improve circulation, brain function, and stamina. When our brain functions efficiently with healthy breathing, it becomes easier to feel the spiritual, especially when we are exercising in nature. I always use diaphragmatic breathing techniques during high-altitude exercise to prevent fatigue. As a bonus, I find this helps me reel in the unique and spiritual scents of the trees and plants.

You’ve spent a lot of time studying. What degrees do you hold, and how do they complement your life and the kind of snowboard lesson you give on the hill?

After attending more than 15 colleges and universities in the United States, and studying abroad at Rabbinical Seminary in Israel, I find the certifications/degrees of most significance to my everyday life are the PSIA-AASI National Academy Certificate, my Freestyle Specialist Certificate, passing the written portion of Rocky Mountain Division’s exam for Level

III Snowboard, and my Smicha ordination (conferred by three rabbis, ages 53, 73, and 113).

Music is also important to your life. What instruments do you play, and how do your musical skills and learning process apply to sports?

I love music, and I’m a vocalist as well as an avid mandolin and guitar player. I learned to ski, snowboard, and read music at a young age. After becoming a Level II snowboard instructor, I realized how I could apply my life experience with music and snowsports. Clients who are musical-style learners tend to find it easier to develop their “T.I.D.” skills (timing, intensity, and duration) in turns by using musical rhythm.

You’re also passionate about the environment. What are you doing to help keep the mountains clean, and what do you think we could all do better?

My family had a positive environmental role in my upbringing by showing me through example how to “pack it in and pack it out” when using the outdoors for recreation. Even though I avidly recycle, I think the human race needs to improve their recycling.

Any books you’d like to recommend to fellow snow pros?

PSIA-AASI’s *Park and Pipe Instructor’s Guide* is a must-read for all snowsports instructors, certified and uncertified. I would also recommend Alberto Ruz Buenfil’s *Rainbow Nation Without Borders: Toward An Ecotopian Millenium*, and Aryeh Kaplan’s *Meditation and Kabbalah* for anyone interested in helping create world peace and generating good energy through outdoor recreation.

What are your personal goals for the coming year?

Two of the most important goals are to teach for Vail at Keystone for the ninth year, and to continue volunteering as clergy for the CU/Boulder Jewish Community during all Jewish holidays.

Where are your favorite places to be when you aren’t on snow?

Daytime: hiking, mountaineering, climbing on the Rock.

Nighttime: curled up with a good book and my three St. Bernard dogs. ☺

SHERRI HARKIN



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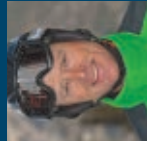
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What's In Your Quiver?

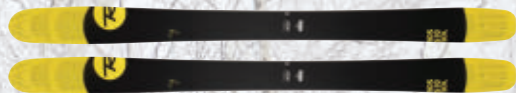
PSIA-AASI Nordic Team Member Ross Matlock

Home area: Crested Butte, Colorado
Way backcountry destination: Tokachi, Japan



Skis

There's a fine line between weight and size as the key for my backcountry ski selection, but with the **Rosignol Soul 7** at 180 cm I don't have to choose one over the other. The new "air tip" technology reduces weight without compromising ski performance, and the "power turn rocker" promotes ease of turning in deep snow.



Bindings

Free-pivot binding technology is a must for backcountry uphill travel in the telemark world. The **22 Designs Axi Telemark** binding has the free-pivot uphill option and three stiffness settings for a more active or less active feel. Made in the Tetons, this binding is bomber!



Goggles

Vision is everything when skiing deep snow, and a well-vented goggle like the **Boilé Quasar** gives me vision without the fog. I never hike uphill with my goggles on, so I opt for **Boilé Diablo** sunglasses for the trek uphill.



Handwarmers

When the hands are cold and getting feeling back becomes challenging, **Grabber Handwarmers** can save the day. Take them as part of a first aid or repair kit.



Down Jacket

Due to the dry nature of our snow, I generally ski in a Patagonia down jacket, and there are several to choose from. They provide warmth and the snow-shedding qualities I require for those frosty days.



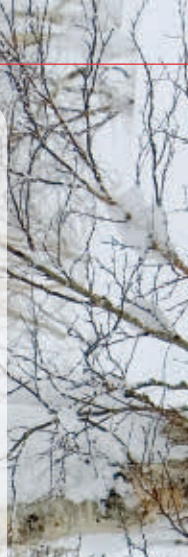
Beacon, Shove, Probe

I'd never leave home without these. **Ortovox** covers it all and my **S1 Beacon** is quick, easy to use, and can be upgraded with new software. The digital screen provides the location and approximate distance of the buried victim and a flagging capability for multiple burials. Your shovel needs to be strong and light. The **Kodiak shovel** combined with the **240 Carbon Probe** will have you properly equipped in case you run into trouble.

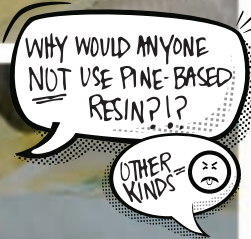


Gloves

I always carry three sets of gloves in the backcountry; an uphill set, a downhill set, and a spare set. My uphill gloves are usually lighter, like the **Hestra Windstopper**, while my descending glove is the **Hestra Heil**. On the ascent I usually heat up, and if my gloves were wet they'd likely freeze during the transition between skinning and skiing—making the descent a painful experience. Keeping my hands dry and warm is a priority, and a spare set of gloves for you or a partner can keep a backcountry day from turning south.



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PITCH PERFECT PARK FOR NEW SKIERS

TERRAIN-BASED TEACHING
REMOVES FEAR FROM FIRST-DAY LESSONS

BY KELLY COFFEY

Great skiing is about moving forward, embracing gravity, and playing with the mountain. Yet fear makes so many beginners tense their muscles, brace their bodies away from the direction they're sliding, and fight against the mountain.

What if you could remove fear from your beginner students? How much easier would it be to get them to relax their bodies, make the desired movements, and successfully control their direction and speed? How much quicker would they progress?

That's the idea behind terrain-based teaching (TBT), the process of using terrain features—both natural and manmade—to develop basic skiing skills in students. When applied by a skilled instructor, TBT offers a learning environment that lowers the fear and raises the fun. These features give instant kinesthetic feedback to first-time skiers, helping them dial in the proper stance and movements to learn their first turns faster.



SHERRI HARKIN

▼ BACKGROUND

The basic concept behind TBT is not new: creative instructors have always been using sidewalls, rollers, and even grooming imperfections to help students learn to turn and balance. Modern-day TBT has essentially formalized this process. Pioneered by the Burton Snowboard Academy at California's Northstar, this approach transforms otherwise flat beginner areas with manmade features like rollers, return walls, banked turns, and spines.

Northstar's success has made more and more resorts across the country take notice. New Jersey's Mountain Creek, as well as Vail and Breckenridge in Colorado are just a few of many mountains that committed beginner areas to terrain-based teaching for both skiers and snowboarders.

The rollers, banks, and spines of TBT are designed to slow, turn, and stop students. Even when skiers and riders don't yet know how to stop themselves, the visual of these features reassures them that they won't careen into the parking lot, which reduces their fear and body tension. This environment keeps students away from defensive postures, allowing them to make the same offensive movements that experts make. The emphasis is on "learn to go before you learn to slow."

▼ STARTING THE DAY

As with any first-time lesson, you still need to start the day with a strong foundation in boot work and other flatland exercises. Make sure your students understand a functional skiing stance, as well as how to make the desired movements for flexing/extending, tipping, and leg steering. You will reinforce those movements once your students start playing with the TBT features.

Terrain-based beginner areas are designed slightly differently at each mountain. The following exercises are designed for three of the more common features found in terrain-based learning areas.

FORE/AFT PRESSURE CONTROL: ROLLERS TO RETURN WALL

A typical terrain-based feature consists of two or three rollers that lead into a small return wall. Students make straight runs over the rollers into the return wall, where they stall out and slide backwards to a stop. The rollers and return wall are built in such a way that students end up sliding at slow, comfortable speeds the whole way.

The roller-and-return-wall feature is great for teaching fore/aft pressure control. Students learn to make subtle adjustments in their ankles, knees, hips, spine, and arms to maintain their center of mass over their feet while going over the rollers, onto the return wall, and sliding backwards. They also learn to keep a functionally tight core as the terrain disrupts their balance.

For a great variation to the straight-run approach, incorporate a slingshot with jumping. In other words, for students who've grown comfortable with this feature you can gently push or "slingshot" them at the start to have them slide faster over the rollers and higher up the return wall. You can also challenge students with tasks like "jump at the top of the rollers," or "step from ski to ski throughout the run."

LEG STEERING: BANKED TURNS

Banked turns are made from small mounds staggered down the fall line that encourage slight left and right direction changes of the skis. Students slide straight toward the first mound, which redirects the skis to the next mound, then the next. This path finishes off either at the same return wall or a flat run-out that stops the skiers.

Banked turns offer an excellent means to teach leg steering. Because the forces move the skis left and right, this feature helps students understand that the skis turn best when the movements come from the snow up. Students feel their legs turning under a

HOW TO SELL TERRAIN-BASED TEACHING TO RESORT MANAGERS

Don't yet have terrain-based teaching at your mountain? That's understandable, because these terrain features don't build themselves. They require resources: manpower, money, and beginner-area real estate. All those resources could be used for other purposes. The key is to convince your resort's decision makers that TBT is the best use of those resources. Here are some timely tips for selling the concept to your resort managers.

HIGHLIGHT THE 'WHY'

TBT evangelists emphasize the opportunity for increased guest satisfaction scores, more repeat sales, and stronger beginner conversion rates. That's not just wishful thinking. New Jersey's Mountain Creek earned real results and won the National Ski Area Association's 2013 Conversion Cup by reinventing its beginner experience, including adopting terrain-based teaching for all beginner ski and snowboard lessons. In California, Northstar increased repeat sales with its snowboard lessons through the terrain-based Burton Snowboard Academy. These are two strong examples of how terrain-based teaching has developed that sought-after track record of success.

BRING UP THE 'HOW'

There *are* challenges that come with adopting terrain-based teaching: picking the right location, daily snow maintenance, instructor training, and earning buy-in from the staff. Think about how you can be part of the solution.

To successfully build and maintain a terrain-based teaching area, more than just the ski school needs to be involved. Before the first TBT features are built, your mountain should set up a solid communication channel between the ski school supervisors and the groomers who will maintain the features.

Those groomers need to be able to receive specific feedback and accurately make the daily changes to the features. Each resort does this differently. Your mountain will need to figure out what works best there. — *Kelly Coffey*



SHERRI HARKIN

▼ stable pelvis and upper body. Once comfortable with the feature, students can be more active with their leg steering, making more defined turns in this course.

▼ For a variation on this theme, have students perform a “1,000 steps” drill to continuously make small steps as they turn. This helps them learn to steer their legs while developing foot-to-foot balance at the same time.

▼ DIAL IN THE WEAKER-SIDE TURN: SPINE

▼ A spine is a one- or two-foot high ridge built straight down the fall line. This is a versatile feature that allows skiers to make multiple

turns using its side, or even make turns up and over the ridge. The spine is the perfect place to go when the skier is making single turns on one side, but struggling with the other side.

With the task of linking four to five turns alongside the spine, students use the side of the spine to help start the turn on their weaker side. They then make a full turn on their good side to redirect themselves back toward the feature, where they again use the side of the spine to help start the next weaker-side turn.

Using spines will help students learn how to control speed and direction using turn shape. They get mileage making the movements to turn their skis, developing ownership of leg steering and an understanding of why they turn.

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For students who are comfortable linking both left and right turns, a nice variation is to make turns over the top of the spine, transitioning between turns at the top of the ridge as if it were a mogul. This is a great drill that challenges students' balance while giving them mileage in linking turns. It's a great "challenge with the task, not the terrain" drill to do before students move beyond the beginner area to their first green trail.

PARK ETIQUETTE

TBT beginner areas have a natural terrain park vibe. With the right audience, you can use this to your advantage by tying some park etiquette into your beginner lessons. These park etiquette strategies also help you manage your class in a busy beginner area.

For example, have your students call "dropping in!" before they slide down a feature. Explain that this is what freestyle skiers and riders do before going off of the big jumps. Also teach your students to wait to drop in until everyone has cleared out of the landing zone—that is, the spot on the TBT feature where students come to a stop.

CREATIVITY

The preceding examples are simple drills to try on some of the more common TBT features. But the best part of terrain-based

teaching is the creativity that you as the instructor can inject into your own lessons.

TBT areas are inherently creative environments. Infinite variations exist for using these features, each targeting skiing skills in slightly different ways. Talk with your supervisors, trainers, and peers about different ways to use these features.

One of the benefits of terrain-based teaching is that students feel the forces that encourage them to make the desired movements that experts make. However, you can't be a passive spectator. As the instructor, you still need to guide your students and coach to their level of understanding. There will be times when your students put themselves in a centered stance, when they turn their legs under a stable upper body. Be sure to identify those times and make sure your students recognize the sensations that come with those desired movements.

Expert skiers play with the mountain. Those playful sensations are what keep us coming back day after day. By embracing terrain-based teaching, you can infuse that playing-with-the-mountain mentality into your beginner students. ☺

Kelly Coffey is a freestyle specialist for the PSIA-AASI Alpine Team and the training manager for Colorado's Breckenridge Ski and Ride School. Follow his national team adventures on Twitter @KellyRCoffey.

HOW SNOWBOARDERS USE TERRAIN-BASED TEACHING

We have snowboarding to thank for today's terrain-based teaching push. Instead of the traditional sideslip-based progression, TBT snowboard lessons allow instructors to take their students directly to straight runs and linking turns.

Snowboarders can use TBT features much the same way that skiers do. As with skiing, the features are shaped to control the rider's speed and direction, allowing him or her to focus on the proper movements without fear of losing control. First-time snowboarders begin their lessons strapped into both bindings. The instructor helps them learn fore/aft pressure control through flatland drills and rocking back and forth in a mini halfpipe. From there, they do straight runs on the rollers to the return wall, where they refine their balance and fore/aft pressure control. Then it's onto the banked turns, which help students steer their boards and link their first turns.

TBT features have obvious ties to terrain park jumps and halfpipes. Since freestyle is such an ingrained part of snowboarding, skilled instructors take advantage of this connection. These instructors highlight to their students that they're doing a halfpipe, quarterpipe, and other freestyle features . . . all on day one. — Kelly Coffey



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SHERRI HARKIN

HIGHER LEARNING

PSIA-AASI NATIONAL ACADEMY 2013 HITS NEW HEIGHTS

BY PETER KRAY

PSIA-AASI National Academy 2013 set a new benchmark for continuing education and on-snow networking in Snowbird, Utah, this past April. Combining both ski and snowboard clinics, absolutely incredible snowfall, as well as the inaugural launch of InterTele 2013—an international telemark event that began just as National Academy was wrapping up—the annual get together has become the single most important date on the snow pro calendar.

“Great times were had. We had a whole season of snow and weather conditions in just five days,” said PSIA-AASI Snowboard Team member Scott Anfang, who was as excited about leading deep-powder clinics as he was about bringing even more comprehensive snowboard content to National Academy in the future. “I’m looking forward to this being an even better snowboard event next season.”

With a strong curriculum already prepared, it certainly helped that Snowbird, which had received a whopping 404 inches of snow

before National Academy even started, got more than 20 inches of new snow during the week the instructors were there. The result was four days of face shots, deep lines, and a once-in-a-lifetime chance to work on your powder technique with some of the greatest instructors in the world. When the clouds broke and the sky went big blue on the last day, it just didn’t seem like you could have scripted it any better.

“This is why I love skiing,” said Zoe Mavis of Big Sky, Montana, one of three hard-charging women (along with Montana instructor Heidi Maier and PSIA-AASI Northern Rocky Mountain Division President Shannon Griffin) who joined clinic leader and PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Robin Barnes in a group that dubbed itself “Team Condition.” The group spent the week working on an increasingly difficult progression of technique and body movement across the hill.

POWDER TO THE PEOPLE

In super-charged clinics created by and for professional ski and snowboard instructors, the level of knowledge and expertise that's shared in every group on snow is one of the things that make National Academy so special. Whether it's working on core positioning in the deep powder off the tram, carving on the groomed boulevards off Gadzoom, or challenging the "conditions du jour" with the snowboard crew, the prime focus of the week is on improving every attendee's riding skills, and their teaching as well.

"I like skiing a big mountain with some of the best instructors in the country," said Tim Brown, an alpine instructor from Beaver Creek, Colorado, who was skiing with PSIA-AASI Alpine Team members Mike Hafer and Jonathan Ballou, as well as former team member Jim Schanzenbaker, working on skidding turns and using less of an edge in the powder.

With all of the attendees, the PSIA-AASI Alpine and Snowboard Team members leading the clinics, the InterTele free-heelers, and several equipment partners, there were close to 300 skiers and snowboarders at National Academy by the end of the week. All of which led to a nonstop exchange of information and inspiration from the slopes to the chairs.

"What I like the most is how much energy there is here, how everybody in this sport has a real passion for it, and how everyone wants to pass that knowledge down," said Mary Ann Kostusiak, a first-time National Academy attendee from Holimount, New York, who added that the supportive environment had her challenging herself on the hill. "I've definitely been skiing some stuff I probably wouldn't ski with my friends," she said.

With snowboard clinics added to the National Academy mix, there was also a sense that the event is now positioned to provide even more of a forum on how people learn and share—no matter what their choice of on-snow tool.

"The best part of National Academy is networking on snow and enjoying the positive attitude of certified PSIA-AASI coaches," said snowboard instructor Jonathan Mirsky-Cohen of Breckenridge, Colorado. "And the Snowbird rocks that you can get airborne on are epic as well."

THE INSIGHT INDOORS

There were also some fantastic indoor presentations and general sessions. From learning the fundamentals of boot alignment to dialing in on movement analysis, attendees were treated to some valuable insight in the afternoons. And the evening sessions, focusing in three separate nights on the evolution of equipment, technique, and teaching (see page 32) were invaluable in helping everyone understand how far our sports have come, and where they are going to go.

After one of the biggest days of the week, when all the deep powder had taken its happy toll, PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Jeb Boyd's "Ages and Stages: The Aging Athlete" presentation seemed especially appropriate. Even with the wide diversity of age groups in the Cliff Lodge ballroom, when Boyd asked who the aging athlete is, the resounding answer was "It's all of us."



SHERRI HARKIN



PETER KRAY

Top: National Academy attendee Paul Bowman enjoys the prevailing conditions—powder—and lots of it. Above, left to right: The only time Zoe Mavis, Heidi Maier, and Shannon Griffin let up on their hard-charging command of the mountain was on the chairlift.

Using the CAP model as a guideline, Boyd stressed that cognitive, affective and physical concerns are relevant to every age of skier and rider. "The CAP model is not just for kids," Boyd said. "How we think, how we behave, and how we move are something we need to take into consideration with ourselves and with every student we see."

In his presentation—which is available through the "Events & Programs" page at TheSnowPros.org—Boyd also stressed the universal relevance of good skiing and riding fundamentals. Having a balanced center of mass, steering your legs from under a stable upper body, and applying progressive edge angles are ideals for every age and level of skier and rider.

"The ability to efficiently perform those tasks is what changes with age," Boyd said, "and is something we need to be aware of when we are teaching skills."



Robin Barnes and Karen Nelson



Jonathan Mirsky-Cohen

PHOTOS BY SHERRI HARKIN

THE WINTER SKI & RIDE APP

PSIA-AASI teamed up with Nokia and Microsoft app developer (and PSIA-AASI member) Kevin Ashley to be the sole provider of exclusive content for the new Winter Ski & Ride app.

"We're thrilled to enter into this groundbreaking relationship to create a first-of-its-kind app for PSIA-AASI," said Mark Dorsey, PSIA-AASI's executive director and CEO. "Connecting with industry leaders Microsoft and Nokia—as well as app developer Kevin Ashley—allows us to provide a new resource that will help our more than 31,400 members better serve their guests. When our members are at work, they can use Winter Ski & Ride—which is endorsed as an official app of PSIA-AASI—to easily share and show content to their students. In addition, this app will help the public learn about the basics of skiing and snowboarding and drive awareness about the benefits of lessons."

ADDED VALUES

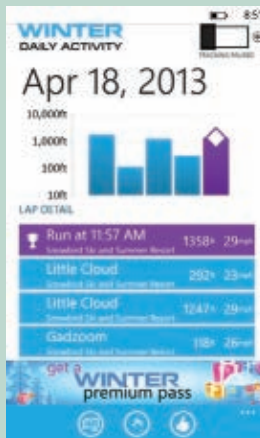
In addition to all of the emphasis on improving skills and expanding each attendee's personal resources, National Academy also provides a unique opportunity to get a first look at some of next season's top gear, or get a smoking deal on accessories or apparel.

Several of the fantastic partners who are so excited to work with PSIA-AASI members hosted a mini tradeshow in the evenings, where they offered special pricing to attendees. While outside during the day, partner ski and snowboard manufacturers also brought plenty of new boards to demo on the hill.

This year, Nokia joined the party, unveiling a new Winter Ski & Ride app—developed in cooperation with PSIA-AASI member and Microsoft app developer Kevin Ashley—which features instructional content, vertical updates, and real-time snow reports (see sidebar). All told, it was a fun-filled, professionally fulfilling week at the 'Bird, with anticipation already building for the next National Academy this coming April.

"Getting to ride with people from all over the country, with all sorts of different tips, was a great opportunity," said Walt Luke III, a snowboard instructor from Vail, Colorado. "From the level of instruction to the weather to the people in general, it's been awesome. The people are great to be around, and the mountain is spectacular." ❄️

Peter Kray is the lead content officer for PSIA-AASI, focusing on emerging ski and snowboarding trends and on-snow innovations. Kray skis, telemarks, and snowboards out of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is co-founder of the Gear Institute (gearinstitute.com), a website founded to professionalize the testing of outdoor equipment.



SHERRI HARKIN

With the Winter Ski & Ride app—which runs on Windows phones and Windows devices and is available through the Windows store—you can:

- » Access invaluable lesson content from PSIA-AASI-certified ski and snowboard instructors.
- » Use the activity tracker to see detailed run analytics, including distance, speed, vertical feet, and more.
- » Get PSIA-AASI's unique "Tip of the Day."
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— Peter Kray

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Great conditions and lively on-slope clinics and camaraderie marked National Academy 2013. For more photos from this epic education event, check out the PSIA-AASI Facebook page. Were you there? Be sure to tag the photos you're in!





NATIONAL ACADEMY 2013



PHOTOS BY SHERRI HARKIN AND GRANT NAKAMURA



A FREE HEEL FEST *for* THE AGES

InterTele Debuts at Snowbird
By Tim Sattelmeier



"My favorite part was getting a chance to ski awesome snow conditions with tele'rs from various parts of the world. To ski and stop and talk for a bit and ski some more. —Glenn Lee

BRIAN DAKDEN

The PSIA-AASI Nordic Team wasn't about to let alpine ski and snowboard instructors have all the fun at Snowbird, Utah, this past April. So to coincide with National Academy, the team hosted the first "InterTele" on April 17–21. Styled after Interski, the international snowsports instructor's congress held every four years, InterTele brought nearly 50 telemark skiers from around the globe to the Wasatch for a week of skiing, sharing, and on-snow networking. According to PSIA-AASI Nordic Team Coach Scott McGee, the event was created to foster an international dialogue between free-heel professionals.

"We wanted to give the membership access to the nordic team—as well as to some of the talent beyond our borders—and create the environment for collegial sharing that we find so exciting and stimulating at Interski," said McGee.

Genuine Utah light and dry powder blessed the slopes during the event, inviting many attendees to ski until they could barely walk. On the first day, having finished our afternoon session just before the lifts closed, I personally caught the last tram and found a dozen other InterTele participants also catching one more trip up to Hidden Peak. At the close of every day, I would end up going up for one more run with a group of like-minded free heelers.

Just up Little Cottonwood Canyon, Alta was closed during the week but reopened on Friday for one last weekend so we took the show next door and found a whole resort of fresh tracks.

Around mid-morning at Alta, three or four of us noticed the ski patrol about to drop the Yellow Trail gate to the Backside. We decided to wait, and five minutes later we had grown to a happy crowd of more than 20 free heelers. First tracks in Glory Hole were a great reward.

Back at Snowbird, McGee gave the primary resort host plenty of credit as well. "Snowbird was an incredible host and provided a near-perfect venue for the event, with great facilities, two days of powder, and two days of bluebird. Everybody got jazzed," said McGee.

ON-SNOW SESSIONS

In my very first on-snow session of the event, Glenn Lee, the technical committee chair for the Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors, led us through a presentation he called "Telemark Skiing—The Canadian Approach." The other members in the session represented the international flavor of the event, and along with a Norwegian, two Japanese instructors, and another Canadian, I was excited to be one of the few Americans in the group.

The discussion of the Canadian approach covered the basics of how our neighbors to the north break down the movements of skiing and structure their lessons. Most of the terminology was not too dissimilar from PSIA's, but the presentation naturally led to an open-ended chat about the similarities and differences in how we think about skiing.

I have had a little exposure to this sort of cross-pollination when working with alpine instructors from various parts of the world, but never before with telemark. Not having been to an Interski myself, this small but enthusiastic group opened up a world of differences. For example, having learned just a little about the Canadian approach, I discovered that they use the term "pivoting" where we might use "steering" and instead use steering as a more general concept encompassing pivoting, pressure control, and perhaps edging. Next year, I will certainly be thinking about steering in a different light.

Probably the most eye-opening presentation was from Ty Upson, the coach of the U.S. Telemark National Team. We were also lucky enough to be joined by his friend, Michel Bonny, who coaches the Swiss Snowsports Telemark Team and the Swiss National Team FIS World Cup Team.

During the presentation, we tried what we came to call the Superman Drill. In this exercise, Upson asked us to reach both of our hands above our heads and try to lean our bodies out over our lead skis until we were almost certain we would fall (I did end up hinging down and kissing my ski tips once). After almost 20 years of trying to center myself between my skis with plenty of weight on my back foot, I was now trying for utter commitment over the front ski with nothing less than whole-body inclination at the beginning of the turn.

The risk was all worth it, however, when I felt my front ski bend early, right



PSIA-AASI Nordic Team Coach Scott McGee (at center in orange jacket) loved how the on-snow demos came together as impromptu teams planned, created, and bonded over a syncro run. In addition, the progressive parties encouraged networking, culturally relevant exchange, and fun.

BRIAN OAKDEN

at the beginning of a turn, and then settle into the g-forces as the skis came around. I have long been a fan of the often under-appreciated level of power that can be achieved in telemark, and this session perfectly illustrated how to achieve it.

An afternoon session with PSIA-AASI Nordic Team member Jim Shaw covered the topic of “Fore/Aft Lead Change Timing.” Shaw did a great job of leading a discussion about the when, where, how, and why we go about lead change. We discussed in detail the timing of the change in terms of position on the arc, speed of exchange, and range of exchange, and how the terrain, conditions, and your goals might affect your approach. Watching Shaw have a go at explaining the “tele-moonwalk” to our Norwegian participant was priceless.

To add to the all-star cast of clinicians, Ned Ryerson, an American pioneer of telemark instruction offered a session titled “Introducing Children to Telemark.” He had more than few quips for us, like “Smile and look where you are going,” but I will especially remember his mantra for keeping your head up: “It’s not how you look, it’s how you look!”

INDOOR SESSIONS

Indoor presentations allowed other elements to shine. Petra Hilleberg, a telemark clinician from Northwest Division, who often works with an indoor component to her teaching, demonstrated several simple devices for isolating and developing stance and alignment subtleties. Participant Patti

Banks, an education staff and committee member from Rocky Mountain Division was impressed. “Petra’s presentation was great,” said Banks. She showed how important the details of alignment are. It was very creative, unique, and different. I liked her toys.”

I would have liked to participate in more of the presentations but the week ended too soon.

In the evenings, various delegations hosted informal progressive parties. The Japanese delegation, for instance, taught us how to roll our own sushi. The Norwegian delegate shared salmon and aquavit. The crew from PSIA-AASI’s Central Division hosted a salad event, and I saw at least one belt buckle used as a bottle opener.

A committee to plan the next Intertele has already been established, with Scott McGee (United States), Richard Hocking (Austria), Michel Bonny (Switzerland), Larissa Pitton (Canada), Azusa Uehara (Japan), and Kjetil Birkeland Moe (Norway) taking part. Look for an announcement next February about the location of the 2015 Intertele.

To quote one of our French Canadian participants, “It was the best trip of my life, this was better than. . . how you say? . . . after you get married?” 32°

Tim Sattelmeier is a Level III nordic downhill and alpine instructor with Utah’s Park City Mountain Resort. He also cohosts a radio show called “Ski Talk” on KPCW and is currently enjoying having his own two boys teach him how to ski.

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BY PETER KRAY

ACADEMY INSIGHTS:

THE EVOLUTION OF EQUIPMENT,
TECHNIQUE, AND TEACHING

At PSIA-AASI National Academy 2013 at Snowbird, Utah, the evening's general sessions presented a compelling look at not just how far our sports have come, but where we are going in the future.

Former PSIA Alpine Team member and coach Mike Porter's "Equipment Innovation" presentation opened the week, exploring the evolution of skis and snowboards as well as what impact that evolution may have on what people expect from their lesson. With all the snow that kept blanketing the mountain during National Academy, Porter said the most obvious evolution in equipment is how it's enabled people to ski longer, especially in powder and deep snow conditions.

"Thirty years ago a day like this would have been a good day at the bar," Porter said of the near-whiteout conditions. "You'd go out and ski three runs, and then you'd come in."

From the introduction of metal skis to plastic boots to sidecut to rocker—and especially snowboarding, the Big Bang of design that forever changed how we see and ski the mountain—Porter said the past three decades have resulted in more innovation than was seen in the previous century. The one thing that has remained constant is the difference in what people consider "good skiing."

"Back when I first got certified, you could choose to be certified in French technique, Swiss technique, or Arlberg technique, and if you wanted to really be different you could choose American technique," said Porter. "And now with some of the specialization in equipment design and the way some skiers want to straightline or slarve, it can be just as surprising when you ask a student how they want to ski."

Along with the advent of fat skis, rocker, and backcountry touring, Porter said modern media is also exposing our potential customers to a whole new array of potential ways to ride the mountain. "The internet drives the majority of images that young people see today, and influence what they see as skilled skiing," Porter said.

And where World Cup racing used to define the apex of skill and technique, there are now the X Games, the Dew Tour, big air events, and a mini industry of big-mountain athletes who are redefining how off-piste terrain is being ridden. With all the existing and emerging techniques and styles, Porter said, "We are in a period of individual expression for all ages."

He added that innovation is also opening up the possibilities for reaching beginners and intermediates, particularly with the equipment that gives novices the ability to smear and butter their turns, easing them into the more skill-intensive act of carving. Mixed with the emergence of terrain-based teaching, instructors have several new tools to help them speed their students up the mountain.

As for how to best teach to all the different types of equipment and ski and snowboard styles, Porter closed his presentation with this message: "Our challenge as teachers is to be knowledgeable and able to demonstrate to our guests their options in performance and styles. Meeting the needs of our guests and matching them with the equipment that can best suit their needs and ability is key."



SHERRI HARKIN

LESSONS IN SKILL, TECHNIQUE, AND SKILLFULNESS

Ron Kipp, the alpine sport education manager for the United States Ski & Snowboard Association, has a unique perspective on how the sport of skiing's top athletes develop and capitalize on good technique.

Again and again he has seen the likes of Bode Miller and Lindsey Vonn put themselves in seemingly disastrous situations, only to recover and win the race.

"Technique is important, but it is the ability to manage the skis' interaction with the snow that ultimately determines the success of the athlete," said Kipp. "And for Bode, it's getting the job done and winning the race that is most important."

Kipp's National Academy presentation, "The Evolution of Technique," focused on how skiers and ski instructors have adapted their style over the years to get the most out of their equipment. From the heavy shoulder rotation of French ski pioneer Emile Allais to the almost eerily quiet upper body movement of young American phenom Mikeala Shiffrin, Kipp presented a mini history of skill, technique, and skillfulness.

"The great part of reading those old books is that the physics don't change," Kipp said, referring to a veritable library of seminal ski instruction books such as Georges Joubert's *How to Ski the New French Way* and Warren Witherell's *How the Racers Ski*. "If you look at the photos of Allais, he was adapting to the equipment he had. He was swinging his arms that way to create the momentum to turn the skis."

He said that kind of technique is something you can still often see in beginning to intermediate skiers, where the internal rotation of the legs is mimicked by the internal rotation of the upper body. Kipp added, "They need that extra body English in order to make that turn."

Skill, he said, is really based on how well you can edge, pressure, or rotate the ski, which provides the basis for PSIA-AASI's Skills Concept, with its emphasis on balance, edging, rotary movement, and pressure control. Whereas technique, or "the stuff we see," is based on a physical strategy to create a biomechanical advantage for balance.

Skillfulness defines that sometimes intangible way it all comes together, especially in the superior athlete, or what Kipp defines as, "A mastery of redundant degrees of freedom."

"It consists of the ability to bring about some end result with maximum certainty and minimum outlay of energy, or time and energy," Kipp said.

Putting all three together is essential criteria for great skiing, he said. "If we want good skiing, we can get away with skill and technique," Kipp said. "But you need all three to be great."

GET ON BOARD THE TERRAIN TRAIN

After presentations on the "Evolution of Equipment" and the "Evolution of Technique," it was time to look at where *teaching* is beginning to go. In a presentation titled "The Evolution of Instruction," PSIA-AASI Alpine Team and Snowboard Team members who spent the week leading clinics sat down to discuss a future that more and more involves terrain-based teaching.

"Terrain-based teaching is a hot topic right now, and something many areas are experiencing success with, especially with beginners," said PSIA-AASI Alpine Team Coach Rob Sogard. "So we wanted to look at that in more detail."

Alpine Team member Mike Hafer, who calls California's Northstar home, said in some cases it was actually "grooming mistakes" that led to his first terrain-based breakthroughs. Little edges or uneven breaks in a snowcat track created places where students would intuitively make a turn or perform the movement an instructor had been coaching them to do.

"Students would hit those little edges and suddenly make a turn," Hafer said. "It showed how you could take flat terrain and build in features that help people learn to make the movements and balance on the equipment all on their own."

PSIA-AASI Snowboard Team Coach Lane Clegg said the concept is sparking a new wave of creativity in relation to beginner terrain, with a focus on how to make features that facilitate learning for different demographics and disciplines as well.

"In snowboarding, where we are facing this drop-off in participation, it is giving us a tool to reach younger students," Clegg said. "Companies like Burton and others are creating areas with all sorts of features—or Riglets—and little retractable leashes attached to the front of the board so you can tow the kids around the hill."

Hafer said that for the programs to be effective, there has to be constant communication between mountain operations and the ski and snowboard school. "We have meetings with the grooming

THE TERRAIN'S THE THING

For more on terrain-based teaching, see the feature article in this issue by PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Kelly Coffey, as well as articles by PSIA-AASI Adaptive Team Coach Kim Seevers, PSIA-AASI Nordic Team Coach J. Scott McGee, Alpine Team member Jeb Boyd, Snowboard Team member Eric Rolls, and Alpine Team Freestyle Specialist Ryan Christofferson.

department every day," he said, "just so we all always know that we share the same goals."

But Sogard said the appreciation for the new teaching opportunities has to start in the school. "Whether you have the resources at home to groom or not, it's really about having a philosophy to let people learn at their own pace," he said. "It's about having a philosophy of setting up a teaching environment where people can work freely and start to discover skills on their own."

Sogard pointed to children's bus programs in particular, saying the first week is often the least productive because everyone is just waiting in line to get set up with their gear. Having a small area where they can slide around in their boots and learn to balance on some features, he said, could better prepare them for learning on their skis and boards.

"When it comes to the idea of bringing in different ways to teach skills, you often don't even need to build a park," Sogard said. "You often just need a different attitude."

Alpine Team member David Oliver said terrain-based teaching represents a sea change in how instruction begins. "Right now we have to teach students how to stop before we teach them how to go," Oliver said. "If we are working with terrain that naturally slows them down, we can start the lesson by teaching them how to go."

Alpine Team member David Lyon agreed. "Skiing is a game, and we have to free our minds to think like that," he said. "When people come to the mountain we need to help them look at the mountain and understand it's a game, and to keep the game going at every level."

Which, according to Alpine Team member Robin Barnes, represents the bigger picture of where terrain-based teaching can help point the way to how lessons are taught at every level.

"Sometimes we can tend to be biased and look at round, forward-facing turns as the only correct way to ski," said Barnes. "We also have to keep our minds open to the fact that, for skiers and snowboarders today, that's not the only way to go down the hill." ❧

Peter Kray is the lead content officer for PSIA-AASI, focusing on emerging ski and snowboarding trends and on-snow innovations. Kray skis, telemarks, and snowboards out of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is co-founder of the Gear Institute (gearinstitute.com), a website founded to professionalize the testing of outdoor equipment.




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bolle



ALPINE TEAM'S JONATHAN BALLOU BREAKS DOWN MOVEMENT ANALYSIS

BY PETER KRAY, PSIA-AASI LEAD CONTENT OFFICER

PSIA Alpine Team Coach Rob Sogard and PSIA Alpine Team member Jonathan Ballou presented a timely session on movement analysis to a full room of eager instructors at National Academy 2013 in Snowbird, Utah. They not only broke down the key elements to a successful movement analysis (MA) session, but also gave the instructors the tools—and freedom—to create a successful MA template of their own. Ballou explains it further for *32 Degrees*.

SHERI HARKIN

32°: You say that movement analysis doesn't necessarily need to have a specific approach, but that it does need a process. Can you elaborate on that?

Jonathan Ballou: The term “analysis” means “to break into component parts.” The purpose of analysis of a skier is to better understand what he or she is currently doing so we can either copy good mechanics for our own development (personal development), or enhance the skier's performance (teaching). Given that there are specific outcomes to movement analysis in skiing there needs to be some structure.

That said, there are as many different ways to structure an approach to movement analysis as there are instructors. You could structure your observation from the ground up (look at the ski first), top down (look at the body first), or anything in between. You might first communicate to the student a desired outcome, or start by describing what the student is currently doing. Any of these approaches—and many more—can be successful as long as they achieve the outcomes listed above.

32°: What are the necessary components to a movement analysis process?

JB: To be able to break a skier's movements down into their component parts, an instructor or coach must be able to observe and describe what is currently happening.

Once skiing has been observed and described, and therefore analyzed, the instructor needs to do something with that information. This would be a prescription, or sometimes called a prescription for change.

We can simply say that any model for movement analysis should contain the following components:

- » Observe
- » Describe
- » Prescribe

32°: You say good movement analysis begins with an ability to observe—observe what?

JB: To observe efficiently it is helpful to know what you're looking for. Having a strong understanding of basic skiing mechanics and technique helps the instructor focus their observation on the aspects of a skier's movement that are truly important, rather than superficial stylistic affectations (useless gesticulations). Understanding the task that is being performed is very helpful because it creates an expectation of what “should” be seen. This also helps instructors narrow their observation to what is or will be important.

Description has a few components as well. Since one of the elements of movement analysis in ski instruction is an emphasis on components, descriptions should be as objective as possible. Explanation of movements is generally clearer when the instructor describes what is currently happening, not what *isn't* currently happening. Description should generally contain the following in as concise a manner as possible and in no particular order.

- » What the skis or board are doing on the snow
- » How the body moved to make this happen or react to what the skis or board did

Having both of these components, provided they are accurate, will generally create an understandable cause-and-effect relationship. This is crucial—to change the effect that was observed, the cause must be addressed.

32°: And what are the essential elements of the prescription process?

JB: The prescription process is relatively simple. Through the observation and description process, the instructor has created a cause-and-effect relationship. The prescription is simply what will

change, the new ski performance and body performance or cause-and-effect relationship and how the student will get there. How the student will get there depends on the activities in the lesson that will bring about this mechanical change, or simply the lesson plan.

32°: Throughout all of this, what are the simple truths you need to communicate to the student about movement analysis?

JB: Any mechanical change an instructor wishes for their student needs to have relevance to what the student is currently intending to do, and how the student would like to develop their skiing or riding.

This requires that the instructor have a clear understanding of the motivations of their student and their understanding of skiing. This also requires that the instructor understand the fundamentals of skiing that permeate almost all tasks and intents. Some examples of this are:

- » An athletic stance that promotes balance toward the center of the ski and allows for movement in any direction
- » Balance is directed from outside ski to outside ski
- » Tipping and turning movements originate in the legs under a stable upper body

32°: Anything else?

JB: While an understanding of a skier's intent and desires was implied in some of these questions, the primary topic of



SHERRI HARKIN

Alpine Team member Jonathan Ballou offers insights to National Academy attendee Derek Althof (in green jacket).

conversation was on analysis of movement, both of the skis and the body. This is a part—a very important part—of analyzing a skier. Analyzing and assessing the motivation and understanding the needs of a student is equally important to understanding what is needed to improve their skiing.

Understanding a student's intent and desires defines what direction we will guide them and how we will communicate the relevant technical knowledge. **32°**

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2013–14 SNOW PRO GEAR PREVIEW

Turning an Instruction-specific Spotlight on the Skis and Boards That Will Make the Scene this Season

There are some key signs that winter is coming; that first frost in the yard and that first time the peaks are dusted with a fine sugar of powder that quickly disappears. The evenings starting earlier and that angle of sunlight appearing like magic across the hills. And especially that day you bring home your new pair of skis or new snowboard, which you lovingly lean like a piece of art against the wall. You can feel the anticipation building. They could be the best ride of your life. This could be the best season of all!

Thank goodness PSIA-AASI's hardgoods partners are committed to providing you and your students with the finest ski and snowboard equipment for increasing overall enjoyment, ability, and enthusiasm on snow. (They also make that equipment available at special offers just for snow pros, which you can easily take advantage of by logging on to the Pro Offers section of the PSIA-AASI homepage at TheSnowPros.org.)

Each year we ask our hardgoods partners to highlight three categories of equipment they feel are especially relevant to professional ski and snowboard instructors. Specifically, we ask:

1. What performance skis and snowboards do you recommend for **snow pros** to teach on, knowing that they are apt to hit everything from hardpack to powder to moguls, and teach everyone from beginners to intermediates to experts on any given day?



PHOTOS BY SHERRI HARKIN

2. What skis and snowboards have you designed for **aspirational beginners and intermediates** to help give them more control and confidence to improve more rapidly?
3. What **specialty** skis and snowboards do you recommend for freestylers or powder hounds who want that special ride for their epic park-and-pipe or steep-and-deep day?

They gave us their answers, as well as the reasons they are so committed to working with PSIA-AASI members to make it easier for instructors to do their job on the hill. The result is this 2013–14 Snow Pro Gear Preview, created just for you.

Guide to Measurements

Dimensions = tip/waist/tail in millimeters (although some ski manufacturers measure five points from tip to tail)

Lengths = centimeters

Radius = meters (referring to a ski's ideal turn radius as a result its sidecut, that is, the shape determined by the tip, waist, and tail width)

Snowboards lengths are typically given in centimeters, with rider preferences based on favored terrain and use (e.g., a short board may be preferred in the terrain park). The "(wide)" reference denotes a wider waist width geared to riders with big feet.

HESTRA



< LEATHER WOOL MERINO
Skier: Scott McGee / PSIA Nordic Team Coach

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POWER 800 Suspension IQ TP 12

The POWER 800 features full-suspension technology with an integrated dampening and binding system that provides maximum on-snow stability with excellent rebound. Its carbon-fiber interface with camber results in a high-performance ski that is very easy to handle and gives back energy. Built directly into the binding system is a bi-directional, floating piston oil damping system that significantly reduces vibration. The combination of the two systems makes up IQ POWER. You may be tempted to enter a USSA race with these bad boys.

MSRP: \$1,200

Dimensions (mm): 120/72/104

Lengths (cm): 160, 167, 174, 181

Radius (m): 18 at 174 cm

Magnum 8.0 Ti

Given the success of Flipcore Technology in our Free Mountain line, we recognized that the advantages of this technology could also benefit our highest performing all-mountain skis, and be ideal for advanced to expert-level skiers who are looking to challenge the entire mountain. Our goal? Improving the performance while making the skis even easier and more fun to use. The "Ti" stands for titanium, and this ski has two sheets of metal in it for stability and power. At 80 millimeters in the waist, and incorporating a full wood core and sidewalls, the Magnum is the perfect choice to rip up the groomed runs in the morning and then venture off-piste in the afternoon.

MSRP: \$850

Dimensions (mm): 122/80/107

Lengths (cm): 158, 165, 172, 179

Radius (m): 17 at 172 cm

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Viva 7.7 Ti Suspension IQ P11

The Viva 7.7 IQ is an excellent performing, multi-condition ski that utilizes Blizzard's women's-specific lightweight core and a forward standing position, which results in an extraordinary skiing experience for all women. The 77-millimeter waist width makes this model exceptionally versatile in both soft and hard snow. The blend of women's-specific design traits with the IQ system, Sidewall construction, and Powerframe technology guarantees a fun ski that easily initiates turns at any speed and has incredible edge grip on ice and hardpacked snow. You might say the Viva 7.7 IQ is the little black dress of skis.

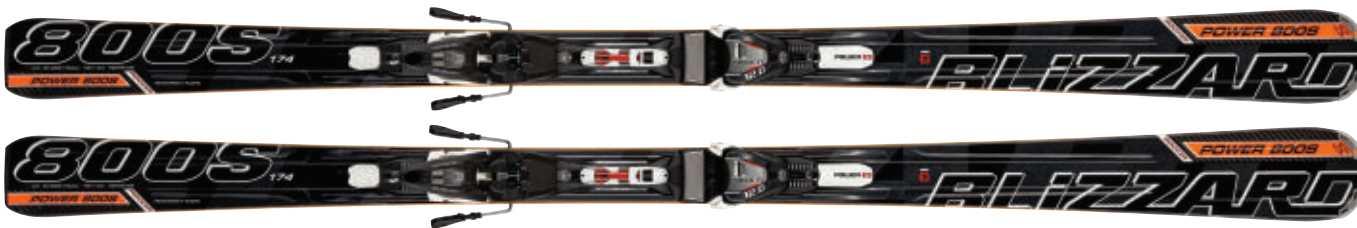
MSRP: \$700

Dimensions (mm): 121/77/103

Lengths (cm): 146, 153, 160, 167

Radius (m): 16 at 160 cm

Snow Pro



POWER 800 SUSPENSION IQ TP 12



MAGNUM 8.0 TI

Magnum 7.7 Ti Suspension IQ P11

A fun, lively, high-performance ski, the Magnum 7.7 IQ has 5 millimeters of slight early rise in the tip. A great choice to up your game and tackle any conditions.

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Dimensions (mm): 123/77/105

Lengths (cm): 153, 160, 167

Radius (m): 17 at 167 cm

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MSRP: \$850

Dimensions (mm): 133/98/118

Lengths (cm): 166, 173, 180, 187

Radius (m): 21 at 180 cm

Cochise

Made for all-terrain ninjas who are looking to tear up the entire mountain, the Cochise, featuring Flipcore technology, is extremely easy to handle, fun to ski, and will keep you on the hill until the last chair. At 108 millimeters underfoot with two sheets of Titanal, the award-winning Cochise can handle anything you throw at it. Proven performance, proven fun.

MSRP: \$900

Dimensions (mm): 135/108/123

Lengths (cm): 170, 177, 185, 193

Radius (m): 28.5 at 185 cm

Aspirational

Specialty



VIVA 7.7 TI
SUSPENSION IQ P11

MAGNUM 7.7 TI
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Burton continues to push the limits, offering what we believe are the best programs and products in the industry to ensure the continued growth and success of snowboarding. Burton's "Experience Snowboarding" program offers more than 190 Learn to Ride centers at resorts around the world, dozens of Riglet parks (including a new Disney-Pixar's *Toy Story*-themed Riglet park at Jay Peak, Vermont), and a variety of the best beginner and progression boards, boots, bindings, helmets, and more.

Here's a selection of Burton Winter '14 boards that are made for every kind of snowboarder—from the all-mountain instructor or park kid to women and beginners—presented by Product Manager Christopher Fidler.

SNOW PRO BOARDS

Custom

It's no shock that, as one of the longest-running models in our line, the Custom is one of the most versatile boards out there. It can handle any condition, from backcountry powder riding to competition halfpipes, making it a great choice for instructors who encounter a wide range of terrain. We offer the Custom in a Camber version for the rider looking for a little more precision and control, and we have a Flying V version for the rider who wants a looser and more playful rocker feeling.

MSRP: \$549.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

148 (245 WW), 151 (248 WW), 154 (252 WW), 156 (253 WW), 158 (254 WW), 158 WIDE (258 WW), 160 (255 WW), 162 WIDE (260 WW), 163 (257 WW), 165 WIDE (262 WW), 169 WIDE (264 WW)

Feelgood

On the women's side, the Feelgood is our most versatile board, making it comfortable in virtually any terrain. With a slightly directional shape and a sturdier flex, the Feelgood can handle anything from hard-charging to mellow cruising. The Feelgood is offered in both Flying V and Camber, so riders can select the ride that matches their needs.

MSRP: \$549.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

140 (236 WW), 144 (240 WW), 149 (241 WW), 152 (243 WW), 155 (245 WW)

Process

The Process is also a great, versatile deck that works well in a number of different riding conditions. With its softer flex and fully twin shape, it's geared more toward freestyle riders. The soft flex makes the Process super maneuverable, but it can also easily handle high speeds.

MSRP: \$419.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

152 MID (249 WW), 155 MID (251 WW), 157 MID (252 WW), 159 MID (255 WW), 162 MID (257 WW)

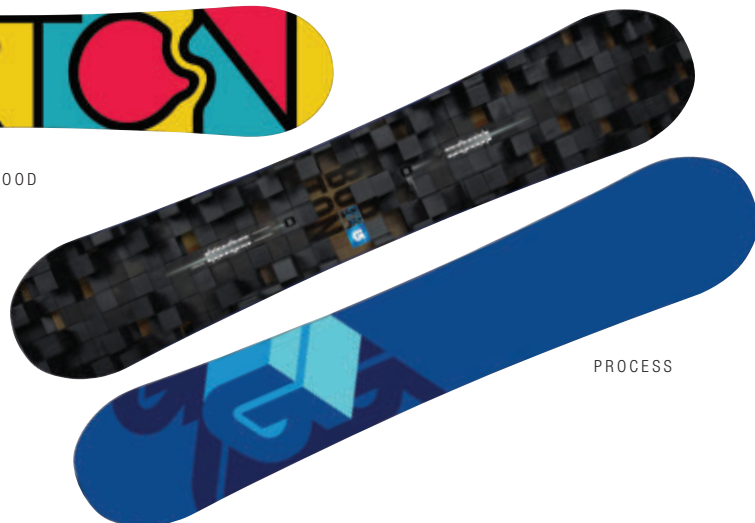
Snow Pro



FEELGOOD



CUSTOM



PROCESS

ASPIRATIONAL BOARDS

Clash and Feather

We have two models, the Clash and the Feather, that are designed to help riders progress. They have slightly directional shapes, a small amount of taper that makes turning easier, and cruise-control technology that reduces catchiness at the contact points. These are perfect for the rider who is looking for a great learning board.

MSRP: \$349.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

Clash: 139 (240 WW), 145 (244 WW), 151 (247 WW), 155 (250 WW), 157 WIDE (258 WW), 158 (252 WW), 160 (254 WW), 160 WIDE (260 WW), 164 WIDE (262 WW)
Feather: 140 (232 WW), 144 (236 WW), 149 (238 WW), 152 (239 WW), 155 (245 WW)

Process and Déjà Vu Flying V

For riders who are looking for a board they can grow into and get a little bit more performance out of, the Process Flying V and Déjà Vu Flying V are perfect. Their shapes are versatile enough for a wide range of different terrain, and their Flying V bend shapes offer the precision and grip of camber with the forgiveness and fun of rocker.

MSRP: \$419.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

Process: 152 MID (249 WW), 155 MID (251 WW), 157 MID (252 WW), 159 MID (255 WW), 162 MID (257 WW)
Déjà Vu Flying V: 138 (235 WW), 141 (237 WW), 146 (240 WW), 149 (242 WW), 152 (244 WW)

All Burton, All the Time

For a total Burton immersion experience, go to burton.com.

SPECIALTY BOARDS

Cloudsplitter

If you are looking for a backcountry/powder board, check out our Family Tree lineup—a special collection of freeride shapes that we design each year with our team riders. The goal of the Family Tree line is to push the limits of new freeride-oriented shapes by continually exploring new concepts. This year we have a number of new shapes that are all geared toward different freeride styles and all types of terrain. The Cloudsplitter is perfect for super deep and fast conditions.

MSRP: \$649.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

158.3 (250 WW)

Custom X

From a halfpipe standpoint, the Custom X is one of our most notorious shapes. Its stiffer flex, directional shape, and super light construction make it perfect for very precise halfpipe riding—the majority of our team competing in halfpipe have been riding the Custom X for years. And we just launched a new technology we call Highlights on the Custom X, which is a new composite matrix designed to reduce the overall weight of the board and increase response, or snap.

MSRP: \$649.95

Lengths (cm) & Waist Widths (mm):

152 (244 WW), 156 (248 WW), 158 (249 WW), 159 WIDE (259 WW), 160 (250 WW), 162 WIDE (260 WW), 164 (252 WW), 164 WIDE (261 WW)

Aspirational



CLASH

FEATHER



PROCESS

DÉJÀ VU FLYING V

Specialty



CLOUDSPLITTER

CUSTOM X

SNOW PRO GEAR *Preview*



dynastar.com

Dynastar's award-winning Cham, Cham HM, and all-new Cham W skis redefine "freeride" versatility. Winner of numerous gear review awards, Cham-series skis excel in demanding terrain and snow conditions and are available in both Titanal laminate (Cham) and ultra-lightweight sandwich constructions (Cham HM, Cham W). The all-new Chrome series is designed for committed frontside skiers, while the all-new Neva series delivers comfortable and intuitive all-mountain performance for aspiring women skiers.

SNOW PRO SKIS

Chrome 74

The all-new Chrome 74 combines race-level power with accessible carving performance. Its subtle early rise tip rocker eases turn initiation while classic camber through the rest of the ski delivers explosive power, stability, and edge grip for confident hard-snow performance.

MSRP: \$1,000 (PX 12 binding included)

Dimensions (mm): 124/74/104

Lengths (cm): 165, 172, 178, 184

Radius (m): 16

Cham 97

Winner of *Outside's* "2013 Gear of the Year" award with a "5 out of 5" rating, the Cham 97 delivers high-performance freeride versatility that excels in the most demanding terrain and snow conditions. This ski's combination of long tip rocker, five-point sidecut, real-deal Titanal sandwich construction, and flat pintail delivers all-mountain power, maneuverability, and float that redefines "freeride."

MSRP: \$800

Dimensions (mm): 118/133/97/113/94

Lengths (cm): 166, 172, 178, 184

Radius (m): 16

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Outland 80 XT

The Outland 80 XT is the ultimate blend of powerful, on-trail performance and "crossover" off-trail versatility for students. All-Mountain Rocker, 3D wood core construction, and lightweight Super Fiber laminate deliver easier turn initiation, vibration-free stability, and full-length edge grip for enhanced carving on groomers with effortless off-trail maneuverability.

MSRP: \$750 (NX 12 binding included)

Dimensions (mm): 126/80/110

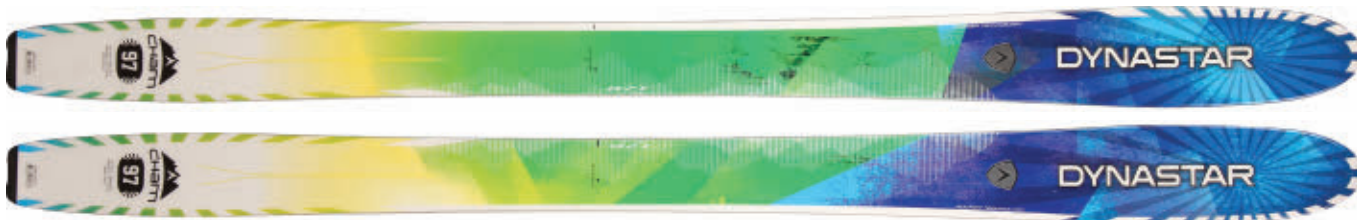
Lengths (cm): 158, 165, 172, 178, 184

Radius (m): 15

Snow Pro



CHROME 74



CHAM 97



Boot Up

The Lange RX 130 combines racing-inspired power and precision with out-of-the-box fit for all mountain performance. MSRP: \$800



SPECIALTY SKIS

Neva 78

The all-new Neva 78 features innovative women-specific technology, delivering more comfortable and intuitive all-mountain performance. The new Infinity Sidecut, Natural Stance, a lightweight wood core, and moderate tip and tail rocker combine to create a more natural, effortless feel with increased comfort and less fatigue.

MSRP: \$600 (flat, pictured); \$700 (Xpress Exclusive 11 binding included)

Dimensions (mm): 125/78/115

Lengths (cm): 145, 152, 159, 164, 170

Radius (m): 13

Cham HM 107

The award-winning Cham HM 107 features a lighter weight high-performance construction, delivering more nimble and accessible performance for all-mountain adventures or backcountry tours. Cham HM's combination of long tip rocker, five-point sidecut, and a paulownia wood core delivers incredible power, maneuverability, and float while offering a 25 percent weight reduction from the standard Cham construction.

MSRP: \$800

Dimensions (mm): 130/137/107/122/98

Lengths (cm): 166, 175, 184, 190

Radius (m): 20

Cham W 107

Built in the heart of Chamonix, France, the all-new Cham W 107 delivers high-performance freeride versatility for excelling in the most demanding terrain and snow conditions. Cham W's combination of long tip rocker, five-point sidecut, and a paulownia wood core delivers incredible power, maneuverability, and float with a 25 percent weight reduction for enhanced agility, control, and ease of use.

MSRP: \$800

Dimensions (mm): 130/137/107/122/98

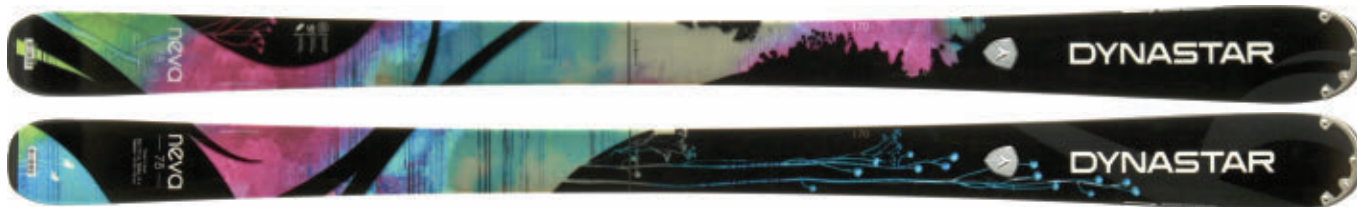
Lengths (cm): 157, 166, 175, 184

Radius (m): 15

Aspirational

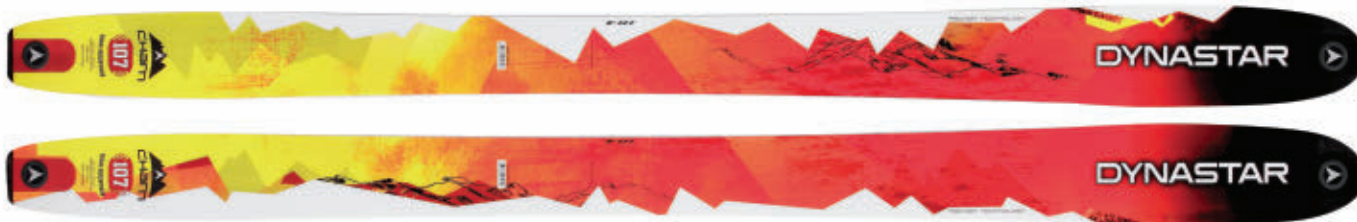


OUTLAND 80 XT



NEVA 78 (FLAT)

Specialty



CHAM HM 107



CHAM W 107

NEVER LET BEING COLD HOLD YOU BACK



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Introducing Champion Vapor: a new
Quick Drying Technology that helps maintain
optimal body temperature. Evaporates moisture
faster as your body heat rises, so you feel warmer in
cold weather, and helps cool you when overheated.

Go to www.thesnowpros.org
and click on **PRO OFFERS**



*We apologize for making you look at one more action shot of a faceless skier, but wouldn't you rather we spend our energy on product design, quality, and innovation?

Elan makes skis. You make turns. Together, we create skiers. We are committed to developing and producing the highest-quality skis on the market and getting them on the feet of folks like you who are devoted to the sport and its growth. Since 1945, Elan has been setting innovative trends on the ski slopes, and was given the German Plus X Award for “Most Innovative Brand 2012.” We will continue our pursuit of “perfecting the turn” and we know you will do the same. Together, we’ll put smiles on the faces of skiers everywhere.

SNOW PRO SKIS

Amphibio Waveflex 88 XTi ELX 12 or

Amphibio Waveflex 82 XTi ELX 12

Those who accept compromise need not read further. Elan’s Mens Amphibio Waveflex 88 XTi and 82 XTi are the culmination of style and performance. Elegantly designed by Porsche Design Studio, they showcase the revolutionary Amphibio technology that combines the rocker and camber profile in one ski to produce confident edge grip and fluid transitions. Add WaveFlex technology, RST sidewall, laminated woodcore, and Dual-Titanium reinforcement to the mix and you’re prepared for a truly uncompromising, ripping-good experience in all snow conditions.

Amphibio Waveflex 88 XTi ELX 12

MSRP: \$1250

Dimensions (mm): 136/88/116

Lengths and (Radius): 170 (15.5), 178 (17.2), 186 (19)

Amphibio Waveflex 82 XTi ELX 12

MSRP: \$1,250

Dimensions (mm): 128/82/109

Lengths and (Radius): 160 (14), 170 (15.7), 178 (17.4), 186 (18.4)

Interra F ELW 11

Simply put...POWER! That’s what Elan’s women’s-specific Interra will deliver. With 84 millimeters underfoot, these all-mountain boards are equipped with our Amphibio profile (rocker/camber) and WaveFlex technology for powerful but easy turning, confident edge grip, and smooth transitions. A full tip-to-tail laminated woodcore offers exceptional responsiveness and durability. Lock down on these power sticks for unmatched fun.

MSRP: \$1,100

Dimensions (mm): 134/84/112; 134/86/114; 136/88/116

Lengths and (Radius): 152 (11.9), 158 (13.5), 168 (15.5)

Inspire Fusion ELW 11

As the name suggests, the Inspire Fusion is designed to inspire and encourage. The ingenious Amphibio profile ensures stability and easy turn initiation at the same time, while Dualite Woodcore brings improved power transmission and edge hold and keeps the ski easy to handle in various snow conditions. Developed by women for intermediate to advanced female skiers, this jewel will make skiing effortless and fun all day long.

MSRP: \$950

Dimensions (mm): 127/78/108

Lengths and (Radius): 152 (11.9), 158 (13.3), 166 (14.9)

Snow Pro



AMPHIBIO WAVEFLEX 88 XTi ELX 12



AMPHIBIO WAVEFLEX 82 XTi ELX 12



INTERRA F ELW 11



INSPIRE FUSION ELW 11

We're Here for You

Elan is proud to support PSIA-AASI.

We invite all members to check out our ski lines, and welcome questions at info@alpinasports.com.

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Amphibio 78Ti ELX 11 or

Amphibio 78 EL 11

Happy sticks for Eastern skiers of various abilities. The Amphibio Waveflex 78Ti and 78 are versatile and flexible in their ability to conquer coiffed corduroy or venture into mixed conditions. The 78Ti offers reinforcement via a layer of Mono titanium, while both models are equipped with WaveFlex technology, RST Sidewall, and upgraded with the revolutionary Amphibio technology. The Power Woodcore brings better edge hold on tip and tail areas, resulting in a uniform ski flex. These skis will put a smile on your face.

Amphibio 78Ti ELX 11

MSRP: \$1000

Dimensions (mm): 127/78/107

Lengths and (Radius): 160 (13.3), 168 (14.9), 176 (16.5), 182 (17.7)

Amphibio 78 EL 11

MSRP: \$900

Dimensions (mm): 127/78/107

Lengths and (Radius): 152 (11.8), 160 (13.3), 168 (14.9), 176 (16.5), 182 (17.7)

SPECIALTY SKIS

Boomerang TBT

When you want to ride deep pow beyond the ropes, the Boomerang TBT is the weapon of choice. The Triple Base Technology (TBT) offers optimal stability and good flotation while allowing you to stomp catch-free switch landings. Simply disrupt the status quo by having more confidence in your skis and upping the ante for your tricks.

MSRP: \$850

Dimensions: 138/119/138, 140/120/140

Lengths and (Radius): 180 (21/19), 190 (23/21)

Puzzle TBT

Inspiring confidence is the true essence behind the Puzzle TBT. Elan knows you play hard and are constantly trying to take it to the next level, and TBT is at the core of helping you accomplish that. The tips and tails are flared upwards on the inside and outside edges for rocker, while the mid-section camber provides perfect pop when needed most.

MSRP: \$600

Dimensions (mm): 119/85/111, 120/86/112, 121/87/113, 122/88/114

Lengths and (Radius): 166 (14.9), 171 (16.1), 176 (17.3), 181 (18.5)

Aspirational



AMPHIBIO 78Ti ELX 11 AMPHIBIO 78 EL 11

Specialty



BOOMERANG TBT



PUZZLE TBT

SNOW PRO GEAR *Preview*



fischersports.com

Fischer stands for building innovative, premium, high-quality products that reflect our deep passion for the sport of skiing. As an independent company that has been under family ownership ever since it was founded in 1924, Fischer takes pride in being a reliable partner for our customers, our top athletes, and our employees.

SNOW PRO SKIS

Motive 86

The Motive 86 will bring a smile to any accomplished skier's face! With its 86-millimeter waist, sandwich sidewall construction, Air Carbon Ti 0.5, and rockered tip, this ski is impressive in all snow conditions. Although it excels on the frontside, this ski performs exceptionally in soft snow and chop as well. Features include wood core and All Mountain Rocker.

MSRP: \$750

Dimensions (mm): 128/86/116

Lengths (cm): 161, 168, 175, 182

Radius (m): 17 at 175 cm

RC4 Superior Pro

The ultimate carving weapon! From technologies on the World Cup comes a true crossover racing ski with perfect edge hold, stability, and power transfer at mach speeds due to its construction. Features include sandwich sidewall construction, Air Carbon Ti 0.5, and a wood core.

MSRP: \$1100 w/binding

Dimensions (mm): 122/72/104

Lengths (cm): 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180

Radius (m): 15 at 170 cm

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Motive 80

With an extremely high fun factor at any speed, this is the perfect everyday driver for the intermediate through expert student. Stable yet damp with plenty of energy, it features sandwich sidewall construction, wood core, All Mountain Rocker, and a Powerrail binding system.

MSRP: \$900 w/binding

Dimensions (mm): 122/80/110

Lengths (cm): 161, 168, 175, 182

Radius (m): 17 at 175 cm

Watea 84

With its 84-millimeter waist width and sandwich sidewall construction, this wood-core ski has been a magazine test winner for years. Its versatility is unmatched. Stable, agile, lightweight, and responsive at a variety of speeds, with Freeski Rocker and Fiber Tech.

MSRP: \$595

Dimensions (mm): 126/84/112

Lengths (cm): 159, 167, 176, 184

Radius (m): 18 at 176 cm

SPECIALTY SKIS

BigStix 122

With a complete redesign for 2013, the BigStix 122 is the widest offering in the reinvented BigStix line. The 122 now features a shorter (20-meter) radius and progressive sidecut paired with the perfect amount of tip/tail rocker. This ski will surf the deepest of fluffy white goodness with ease, while still giving you confidence in other snow conditions. Features include sandwich sidewall construction, wood core, Air Carbon, Freeski Rocker, progressive sidecut, reduced camber underfoot, and tip/tail rocker.

MSRP: \$895

Dimensions (mm): 145/122/136

Lengths (cm): 179, 189

Radius (m): 20

Watea 106

Whether you're heading out the backcountry gates or skinning to your secret stash, the Watea lineup has what you need. This ski features a 106-millimeter waist, a flat, square tail notched for easy skin fixation, and smooth rocker in the extended tip. The sandwich sidewall construction, along with Air Carbon and Freeski Rocker, keep these skis light, responsive, and full of energy.

MSRP: \$795

Dimensions (mm): 138/106/124

Lengths (cm): 174, 182, 190

Radius (m): 24 at 182 cm

Live in a Vacuum

Don't miss our revolutionary Vacuum Fit boot technology!

For more information, go to:

fischersports.com/en/Alpine/Technologies/Highlights/VACUUM-FIT

Snow Pro



MOTIVE 86



RC4 SUPERIOR PRO

Aspirational



MOTIVE 80



WATEA 84

Specialty



BIGSTIX 122



WATEA 106



flow.com

Flow is about doing things differently and making snowboarding fun. We strive to help you find your mission and realize how great it is to be on the hill. At Flow, we cater to all riding levels and all types of terrain. We understand the obstacles that instructors have and we take this into consideration with our products. With our comfortable, speed-entry bindings, our great fitting boots, and our performance boards, we have created what we call the Flow Fusion—all products working together, better. Flow should be your obvious choice when it comes to teaching and instructing the future of our sport.

SNOW PRO PRODUCTS

For the instructor/pro to teach on, we suggest our Black Out Board, NX2-GT Binding, and Hylite Boot.

Black Out

The all-new Black Out is our answer to the die-hard camber rider who refuses to give up the performance of camber shapes. This slightly directional board with a lower profile nose and tail are the answer for your deepest days or pristine park features. The four-piece Augmented Base Technology (A.B.T.) will help you with concrete landings and pamper you in chunky powder. The Black Out just might be the perfect snowboard.

MSRP: \$549.99

Lengths (cm): 153, 156, 159, 162

NX2-GT

Our NX2 bindings are designed to be the best binding in the market. The high-output GT delivers technical performance and handling in a tight and responsive package. This stealthy machine has all the goodies under the hood. The aluminum alloy chassis is responsive and playful, and our Active HYBRID PowerCapStrap with N.A.S.T.Y (New Active Strap Technology) movement will allow for a simple “in and out” experience that we know instructors deal with day in and day out.

MSRP: \$369.99

Sizes: M, L, XL

Hylite

The Hylite boot is our answer to the question “Can someone make the perfect boot?” A lightweight, performance-orientated boot with BOA Focus lacing and our Ripper internal closure system gives you ultimate control and comfort at the twist of a knob. The B.F.T. (Barefoot Technology) outsole with our OC Kush padding adds to this environment by allowing your senses to work at the ground level. This medium flexing, aesthetically pleasing creation will not let you down even when you’re going up.

MSRP: \$369.99

Sizes: 7–13

ASPIRATIONAL PRODUCTS

Products we think student riders should gravitate toward are our Verve Board, Fuse-AT Binding, and Rival Boot.

Verve

The Verve is an agile-yet-mellow EZ-Rock board with a forgiving flex and a convex base for a virtually catch-free riding experience. An urban slayer and park player, make Verve your choice when you want to keep things “skatey.” With its blunted nose/tail and Whiskey Royal construction, your utilitarian stick has arrived. This all-around board will help take you to the next level in your riding and not break the bank when doing it!

MSRP: \$359.99

Lengths (cm): 149, 152, 154, 154 (wide), 157, 158 (wide)

Fuse-AT

The Fuse-AT is our composite-chassis binding that is responsive enough for any conditions yet flexible enough to not feel restrictive. Paired with our Active 1-Piece I-FUSION Powerstrap, the future of bindings has arrived. Some riders simply prefer the feel of a molded baseplate over an aluminum one, but don’t want to compromise on performance. The answer is here: our all-new Fuse-AT brings the best of Flow’s fundamentals, N.A.S.T.Y., and Fusion together in this all-mountain destroyer.

MSRP: \$249.99

Sizes: M, L, XL

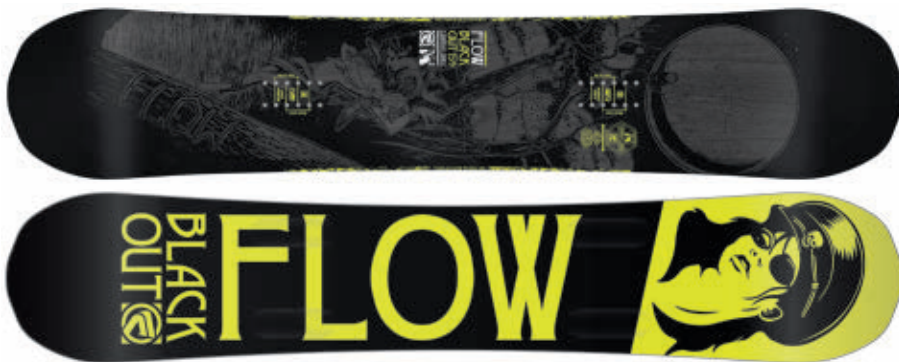
Rival

All hail the Rival boot! We think this is hands-down the most comfortable, out-of-the-box boot ever made. It takes comfort and performance to a new level. Offered in our Quick-Fit, H3 BOA Coiler or H3 BOA Focus lacing systems, these bad boys offer our lightweight FLOW Kush outsole to give you the ultimate comfort at all levels. Mid flex, superior support and, our 3 Barrel vented liner and Ripper internal lacing make riding all day a better scenario. Step into it.

MSRP: \$279.99

Sizes: 7–13

Snow Pro



BLACK OUT



NX2-GT



HYLITE

Aspirational



VERVE



FUSE-AT



RIVAL

SPECIALITY BOARD

Darwin

Flow introduces the Darwin; your best opportunity yet to sell your soul to the powder gods! This innovative board features a large, wide nose shape with a tapered tail for that super floaty feeling all powder hounds crave. The two-piece A.B.T. base with a sick swallow tail create a type of hydrofoil in the deep stuff. Carve this little powder rocket on the groomers or take it to the deepest, steepest run you can find. Playful, fun, and directed at the niche group of true powder mongers who are surfacing these days.

MSRP: \$599.99

Lengths (cm): 153, 156

Specialty



DARWIN

THE WORST DAYS ARE THE BEST DAYS

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Login to the members-only section
of the PSIA/AASI website to access
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At HEAD, we focus on building the most fun-to-use equipment for *all* skiers. Our skis, boots, and bindings are chosen by the best skiers in the world—athletes like Lindsey Vonn, Ted Ligety, Simon Dumont, Kaya Turски, and James Heim—because HEAD equipment makes them better. At the same time, we have a passion for making skiing and riding more fun and easier to learn for new participants. Our Link skis and 4D Snowboards make a person's first turns memorably fun and easy!

This is where our relationship with PSIA-AASI and LSSM (Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month) come into play. PSIA-AASI, and our PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member representatives (Robin Barnes, Kelly Coffey, Heidi Ettlinger, and Eric Lipton) help us keep our finger on the pulse of teaching, while our relationship with LSSM allows us to be active in expanding our sport to new participants. These relationships help keep HEAD focused on building the highest quality, best performing skis, boots, and bindings for you professionals *and* your students.

Snow Pro

Aspirational

Specialty



ISUPERSHAPE RALLY
W/PRX 12

MYA NO. 6
W/MYA 10 PR

REV 78
W/PR 11

MYA NO. 4
W/MYA 9 LRX

COLLECTIVE 105

MYA NO. 9

SNOW PRO SKIS

Supershape Rally w/PRX 12

The Supershape line has been a favorite of pros for years. This year, the entire line has been redesigned with ERA 3.0s, a high-performance version of ERA 3.0 rocker, radius, and rebound found in our Rev and Women's line. New to the Supershape line is the 76-millimeter waist-width Rally. We've widened the tip and narrowed the tail. This V-shape design, along with a slight race rocker, makes for effortless turn initiation and finishes in lock-step with the skier's input. The new design allows the Rally to maintain lower edge angles and ultimate turn-shape versatility. The Rally is truly a unisex ski, with lengths starting at 149 centimeters.

MSRP w/PRX 12: \$1,050

Dimensions (mm): 131/76/109 at 170 cm

Lengths (cm): 149, 156, 163, 170, 177

Radius (m): 13.6 at 170 cm

Mya No. 6 w/Mya 10 PR

The Mya No. 6 offers the perfect balance between power and finesse. The women's-specific wood core and sandwich construction give the ski a forgiving longitudinal flex, yet a stiff torsional flex. The result is a ski that enters and exits the turn with ease, but has rock-solid edge hold in the middle of the turn and at high speeds. Couple this with ERA 3.0 rocker, radius, and rebound and an 11.2-meter radius, and you have a ski that is as comfortable making short-radius, low-speed turns as it is mashing high-speed, GS turns. No matter what level student you have, you can be sure this is the proper tool for the day.

MSRP w/Mya 10: \$700

Dimensions (mm): 127/79/109 at 156 cm

Lengths (cm): 142, 149, 156, 163, 170

Radius (m): 11.2 at 156 cm

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Rev 78 w/PR 11

Today's average student is looking for an affordable ski with easy performance that can grow as their ability improves. Sound like a tall order? Not for the Rev 78. It's hard to find a ski on the market today that offers so much performance at such a value. Take one terminal intermediate, add a Rev 78, throw in a bit of snow, and get a breakthrough! Not only will your aspiring student feel comfortable on the Rev 78, but we challenge any pro to take a pair out and tell us where the performance ends. Simply put, the Rev 78 will get you and your student the results you're both looking for.

MSRP w/PR 11: \$575

Dimensions (mm): 127/78/110 at 170 cm

Lengths (cm): 142, 149, 156, 163, 170, 177

Radius (m): 13.6 at 170 cm

Mya No. 4 w/Mya 9 LRX

We took the premise of the Rev 78 and created a women's-specific version. After all, what woman doesn't appreciate value and performance in one package? The difference is that the Mya No. 4 has a lighter-weight ski and binding package, with a slightly tighter turn shape. This ski is sure to produce grins from ear to ear, both on the mountain and at the cash register.

MSRP w/Mya 9 LRX: \$575

Dimensions (mm): 125/77/108 at 156 cm

Lengths (cm): 142, 149, 156, 163

Radius (m): 11.1 at 156 cm

SPECIALTY SKIS

Collective 105

The new Flight series offers wider, big-mountain-style skis with incredible skiability. But what separates the Flight series from the rest is how well they ski out of the soft snow. Like most big-mountain offerings, the Flight series has a healthy dose of tip and tail rocker (we call that TNT Rocker, to be exact) for soft-snow versatility. Our TTS, or Tip and Tail Stabilization system, is responsible for the unique feel of the Flight series. TTS is an exoskeleton made of a fiberglass-enhanced proprietary elastomer that follows the rockered areas of the ski, providing dampening and torsional stability. The most versatile of the series is unquestionably the Collective 105. This ski allows you to go out and smear pow turns, but when you get back to the groomers you have a ski that will arc GS turns like a ski 20 millimeters narrower.

MSRP: \$700

Dimensions (mm): 146/105/128 at 181 cm

Lengths (cm): 171, 181, 191

Radius (m): 17.5 at 181 cm

Mya No. 9

The Mya No. 9 is for the athletic female who is looking for a ski that matches her ability. Typically, skis that are more than 90 millimeters underfoot require greater edge angulation to engage the full effective edge. However, ERA 3.0, Allride rocker, and Progressive radius allow the skier to maintain lower edge angles while enjoying the benefit of the full, effective edge. The result is a ski that feels much more nimble than its 98 millimeter waist would normally imply.

MSRP: \$700

Dimensions (mm): 137/98/123 at 170 cm

Lengths (cm): 156, 163, 170, 177

Radius (m): 15.3 at 170 cm

You'll Find Us Here

HEAD is everywhere you
want to be: head.com

 facebook.com/headski

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k2skis.com

K2 was founded in 1962 on a small island in the Pacific Northwest. Today, the brand continues to call the Pacific Northwest home, maintaining a focus on delivering innovative products designed to make skiing more fun. What built the brand in the beginning still exists today—a commitment, desire, and flat-out addiction to skiing and the lifestyle drives K2 and its athletes to keep pushing the limits of the sport. K2's latest products are a true testament to its legacy of innovation and unpredictability.

SNOW PRO SKIS

AMP Rictor 82 XTi

The legacy continues with an all-new Rictor built on a more versatile and wide-waist chassis, complete with top-shelf performance, unmatched edge hold, and unrivaled control. The Rictor features All-Terrain Rocker, AT RoX Technology, metal laminate, Hybritech sidewall, and an aspen/paulownia core. Binding options: K2/Marker MXC 12 or flat.

MSRP: \$1,080 with binding,
\$780 without binding

Dimensions (mm): 127/82/112

Lengths (cm): 163, 170, 177, 184

Radius (m): 17 at 177 cm

SuperGlide 80

The most versatile model in the collection, the SuperGlide 80 is designed to be equally at home on hard or soft snow anywhere on the mountain. Features include Carbon Web, All-Terrain Rocker, AT RoX Technology, Triaxial Braid, Hybritech sidewall, and BioFlex 2 core. Binding options: K2/Marker ERC 11 TC or flat.

MSRP: \$960 with binding,
\$720 without binding

Dimensions (mm): 127/80/109

Lengths (cm): 146, 153, 160, 167

Radius (m): 13 at 160 cm

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

AMP 80X

The most versatile, responsive, and energetic ski of the AMP collection, the 80X is built for any condition or terrain the mountain has to offer. It features All-Terrain Rocker, AT RoX Technology, Triaxial Braid, Hybritech sidewall, and a fir/aspen core. Binding options: K2/Marker M3 12 TC or flat.

MSRP: \$840 with binding,
\$636 without binding

Dimensions (mm): 125/80/109

Lengths (cm): 156, 163, 170, 177

Radius (m): 17 at 177 cm

SuperFree 76

This is a sidewall ski with a versatile waist-width for added control and performance that will set your skiing free on groomed or ungroomed terrain. Features include Carbon Web, All-Terrain Rocker, AT RoX Technology, Triaxial Braid, Hybritech sidewall, BioFlex 2 core. Binding options: K2/Marker ER3 10 or flat.

MSRP: \$840 with binding,
\$636 without binding

Dimensions (mm): 120/76/104

Lengths (cm): 139, 146, 153, 160, 167

Radius (m): 14 at 160 cm

SPECIALTY SKIS

Annex 108

The Annex 108 is an entirely new ski that picks up where the award-winning SideStash left off. It features increased tip taper and a metal construction for the stability required to charge tight chutes, strafe untouched bowls, or blast through your favorite stash with rock-solid confidence and control. Other features include All-Terrain Rocker metal laminate, Hybritech sidewall, and aspen/paulownia/maple core, tip/tail skin grommets, tapered tip, and powder tip.

MSRP: \$840

Dimensions (mm): 139/108/127

Lengths (cm): 170, 177, 184, 191

Radius (m): 23 at 177 cm

Shreditor 112

This all-new model for 2013–14 is as fun and maneuverable as a ski gets. It's built with enough camber and sidecut to make hot laps through the park and rip the entire mountain in any snow condition. Combine that with an impressive 112-millimeter waist width, early taper, and healthy rocker for optimal float in soft snow. It features All-Terrain Rocker, Triaxial Braid, TwinTech sidewall, fir/aspen core, powder tip, tapered tip/tail, Swap Base, available Z-Clip skins, and tip/tail skin grommets.

MSRP: \$780

Dimensions (mm): 135/112/130

Lengths (cm): 169, 179, 189

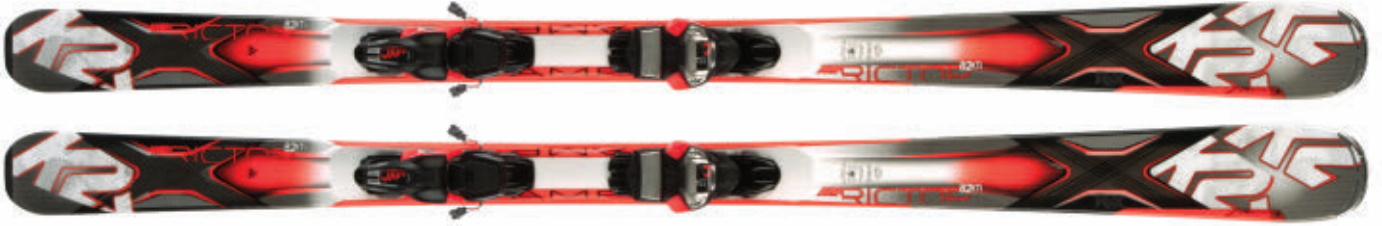
Radius (m): 20 at 179 cm



Treat Your Feet

The SpYne 130 is the first expert-level boot that didn't evolve from racing. Check it out—as well as our entire boot collection—at K2boots.com. **MSRP: \$650**

Snow Pro



AMP RICTOR 82 XTI



SUPERGLIDE 80

Aspirational

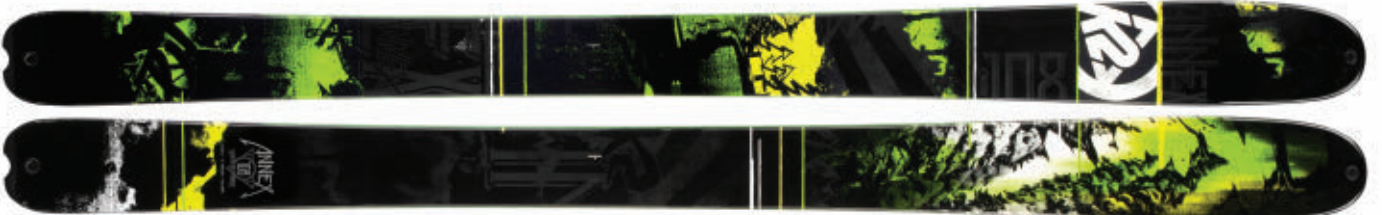


AMP 80X

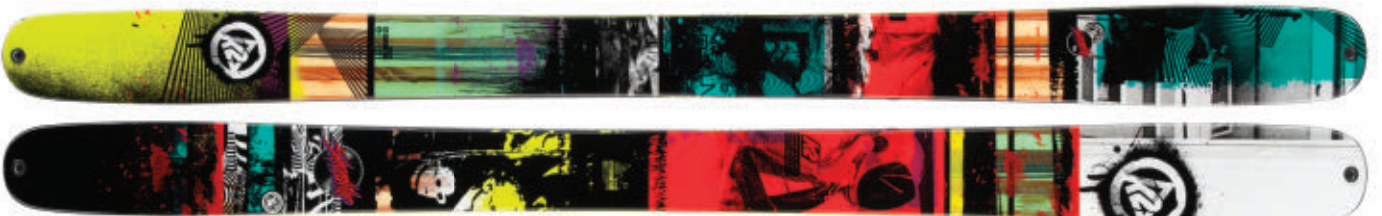


SUPERFREE 76

Specialty



ANNEX 108



SHREDITOR 112



neversummer.com

Never Summer gets it . . . instructing isn't all private lessons and après hangouts. Instructing ain't easy, with below-zero-degree lineups, uniform violations, and pow days missed at the Magic Carpet. A lot of us have been there. Turns out, instructing is a lot like working for a snowboard company that manufactures all their boards at their own factory in the U.S.A. It's not all glory, but we can't see ourselves doing anything else.

Each board is carefully handcrafted in our factory in Denver, Colorado, using the highest-quality materials and craftsmanship. As a result, we bring you what we consider the most durable, high-performance boards on the planet. Instructors serve as a direct line of communication between us and the consumer. Here at Never Summer, we understand the importance of the role you play within the snowboard industry. We are eternally grateful you are out on the front lines getting people hooked on the shred!

SNOW PRO BOARDS

Evo 4.0/Revolver 4.0

The Never Summer evolution in optimum freestyle performance continues with our fourth-generation Evo. The Evo 4.0 is a board you can ride for any lesson. And, yes, we did just say you could take a freestyle board to any lesson. That's because this board features RC Technology coupled with Vario Power Grip Sidecut—along with a new low-profile nose and tail that reduces drag and lets you carry speed into the next feature. Our Evo Dampening System (EDS) works in perfect union with our new Harmonic Damper (HDT) in the tip and tail. Together, EDS and HDT reduce vibration from the tip and tail while being crisp and snappier in the cambered areas. This is a freestyle board with no chatter and superior stability that retains all of the park-slaying characteristics the Evo has always delivered. Time to get out there and teach!

Evo 4.0 MSRP: \$499.99

Lengths (cm): 147 (24.1 waist), 150 (24.3), 152 (24.4), 154 (25.1), 157 (25.3)

Revolver 4.0 MSRP: \$499.99

Lengths (cm): 149 (waist 25.5), 152 (25.8), 155 (26.1), 158 (26.4), 160 (26.5)

Proto HD

Let's be honest, we all hate the expression "quiver killer." Well, we're going there anyway. The Proto HD is the QUIVER KILLER. If you have no idea what the day's lineup is going to bring, *you* bring the Proto HD. For 2013–14 we've developed a new Extended Transition Rocker Camber profile (EXRC) specifically for the Proto. Glide and float characteristics are increased and pressure over the ends of the contact points is decreased, allowing for effortless edge-to-edge transitioning. Unmatched snap, power, and pop, plus amazing powder flotation, edge hold, and high-speed stability make the Proto HD a versatile and formidable threat for all aspects of snowboarding.

MSRP: \$549.99

Lengths (cm): 152 (24.4 waist), 154 (25.1), 157 (25.3), 160 (25.5)

30 Years Strong

Designing and building snowboards since 1983 has given us years of experience testing and perfecting our snowboard designs and construction methods.

Snow Pro



EVO 4.0/
REVOLVER 4.0

PROTO HD

ASPIRATIONAL BOARDS

SL/Legacy

The SL and Legacy are Never Summer's most popular and versatile models. We have modified our Custom Flight Core to reduce weight and increase pop. We've also added the Carbon VXR Laminate Technology, adding powerful edge response and control. The lightweight RDS 2 Dampening System provides the perfect balance of freeride absorption and freestyle liveliness. Slightly set back for powder flotation but centered enough for spinning and carving, this one-board quiver excels on hardpack, in the park, on natural features, and during all-around free riding.

SL MSRP: \$509.99

Lengths (cm): 151 (24.3 waist), 153 (24.4), 155 (25.1), 158 (25.3), 161 (25.5)

Legacy MSRP: \$509.99

Lengths (cm): 156 (26.1 waist), 159 (26.4), 161 (26.5), 163 (26.9), 166 (26.9), 170 (27.0)

Cobra

Driven by the massive success of our true twin Proto HD, the carbonic Cobra features blunted ends for reduced swing weight, a drawn out nose that knifes through soft snow, and a blunted quick-spade tail to enhance float in powder. Slightly set back for a more directional ride, the Cobra comes with a dual top and bottom carbon matrix that provides incredible power underfoot. We think the Cobra is the highest-performance and most versatile all-mountain board ever made. Its futuristic shape, combined with the time-tested edge hold of Vario Power Grip Sidecut, gives you the ability to strike any terrain with deadly force.

MSRP: \$559.99

Lengths (cm): 153 (24.4 waist), 155 (25.1), 158 (25.3), 161 (25.5), 164 (25.5)

SPECIALTY BOARDS

Onyx

New for women in 2013–14, we are introducing the Onyx—which is engineered with a true twin shape; blunted, low-profile nose and tail; and Press Flex Core. This shape minimizes material for a lighter, more balanced spin weight while extending the effective edge for more stability on takeoffs and landings. The nose and tail shape promote powerful pop that also reduces drag and enables the rider to carry speed into the next feature. The Press Flex Core allows riders to easily manipulate the board for a buttery, fun, and playful ride. The Onyx Damping System (ODS) and the Harmonic Damper Tip/Tail (HDT) work together in perfect harmony to absorb vibration in the nose and tail, while increasing liveliness in the cambered areas.

MSRP: \$449.99

Lengths (cm): 140 (23.3 waist), 143 (23.3), 146 (23.4), 149 (23.4)

Raven

You asked and we responded. Introducing the new women's Raven, the most high-tech, highest-performance women's all-mountain snowboard Never Summer has ever created. Our NS Superlight Wood Core and Carbonium Laminate Technology has been engineered specifically for women who want a softer mid flex for torsional control but power underfoot for unmatched carveability. The Raven's shape features a more drawn-out nose and quick tail that allows the board to plane over soft snow, in addition to blunt ends for superior maneuverability. Our exclusive Women's Carbonium Damping System makes the Raven smooth and stable. If you're searching for a women's, super-high-performance, aggressive all-mountain board, the Raven calls out "Nevermore."

MSRP: \$499.99

Lengths (cm): 146 (23.4 waist), 149 (23.5), 151 (23.5), 154 (23.6), 157 (23.8)

Aspirational



SL/LEGACY



COBRA

Specialty



ONYX



RAVEN



ULTIMATE CONTROL
ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE
RX 130



LANGE'S PSIA PURCHASE PLAN:

For PSIA-AASI member discounts, login at TheSnowPros.org
and click on the **Pro Offers** link.

 **LANGE**
ULTIMATE CONTROL. FEEL IT
www.langeski boots.com



OUTLAND 87



The Outland 87 is the ultimate blend of powerful, on-trail performance and “crossover” versatility for expert skiers.



“The ski I used to earn my 3rd consecutive Alpine Team term!”
- Jeb Boyd



DYNASTAR
Chamonix Mont-Blanc



DYNASTAR'S PSIA PURCHASE PLAN:
For PSIA-AASI member discounts, login at **TheSnowPros.org** and click on the **Pro Offers** link.

Dynastar.com

For more than 70 years, Nordica has built some of the best-performing, highest-quality products in skiing. Everything we design starts with the understanding that the final product will perform better, fit more comfortably, and enhance the skiing experience more than any other product on the market. Performance, innovation, and passion for the sport of skiing are in our DNA.

SNOW PRO SKIS

Fire Arrow 84 PRO EVO

When you find yourself on the first chair on that perfect bluebird day in the middle of winter—and the air is crisp and you can see the freshly rolled corduroy on the frontside of the mountain—you're going to be exceptionally pleased that you pulled the Fire Arrow 84 Pro EVO High Performance rip-sticks out of the quiver. The generous sidecut, combined with a full sandwich wood core construction reinforced with two full sheets of Ti, make the Fire Arrow 84 Pro the ideal all-mountain ski that will invite you to lean a little more into each turn with the confidence that tip-to-tail edge control are going to be there for you.

MAP: \$899

Dimensions (mm): 128/84/112.5 at 176 cm

Lengths (cm): 160, 168, 176, 184

Radius (m): 17 at 168 cm

Wild Belle

If you're a women looking for an all-mountain ski to do it all, look no further than Nordica's Wild Belle. It's just wide enough to float in powder, yet makes turns on the groomers with ease and stability. With the unique Wi-Core design, the Wild Belle is 25 percent lighter than a traditional full-wood core, giving you the extra energy to go nonstop all day long or venture out into the backcountry with ease. The Wild Belle will be your favorite ski partner in the mountains, taking you anywhere you want to go and letting you ski anything.

MAP: \$599

Dimensions (mm): 126/84/112

Lengths (cm): 146, 154, 162, 170

Radius (m): 14 at 154 cm

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Steadfast

Able to take on any conditions anytime, Nordica's all-mountain Steadfast will be the only ski your students need. Equally at ease on groomers or in crud, wind blown snow, or powder, the Steadfast will take you into the sidecountry or stay on the frontside and make you wonder why anyone would ski anything else. Offering great flexibility in soft snow and versatility in variable conditions with a lively response and predictable rebound, this ski also holds a solid edge on groomers. Built with Nordica's lightweight construction I-Core, the Steadfast allows you to explore any part of the mountains you desire.

MAP: \$649

Dimensions (mm): 132/90/118

Lengths (cm): 170, 178, 186

Radius (m): 17 at 170 cm

Avenger 82

The Avenger is made for intermediate to advanced skiers looking for a ski that will perform in a wide variety of snow conditions. At 82 millimeters underfoot, and with an all-mountain CamRock profile in the tip, this ski offers a modern platform that will hold an edge on the groomers, dominate the crud, and allow you to explore all parts of the mountain with confidence. Available flat or with our EVO plate.

MAP: \$399 flat

Dimensions (mm): 128/82/112

Lengths (cm): 146, 154, 162, 170, 178

Radius (m): 15.5 at 170 cm

Snow Pro



FIRE ARROW 84 PRO EVO



WILD BELLE

Aspirational



STEADFAST

AVENGER 82

SPECIALTY SKIS

La Niña

Finally, a 113-millimeter-underfoot, ripping powder/all-mountain ski for women who charge. The La Niña is extremely versatile for any conditions. Whether skiing on hardpack, crud, or pow, this ski is super stable and floats effortlessly. Built with Nordica's new Wi-Core technology that consists of two strips of wood and two strips of a polyurethane, which makes the ski ultra light without compromising the torsional stability or flex. Featuring Highrise CamRocker in the tip and tail with camber underfoot, the La Niña can make short little choppy turns or bigger, swoopier turns with ease. This is going to be the only girlfriend you need on the hill.

MAP: \$749

Dimensions (mm): 143/113/132

Lengths (cm): 169, 177, 185

Radius (m): 14 at 169 cm

El Capo

Inspired by our award-winning Enforcer and Patron models, the El Capo takes the best of both and combines them in a 107-millimeter-waisted stick that brings the word versatile to a whole new level. With the trusted construction of the Enforcer—two sheets of metal and a full-wood core—and the confidence-building, high-rise blunt nose shape of the Patron, this ski will dominate anything you can throw at it and leave you grinning from ear to ear!

MAP: \$699

Dimensions (mm): 137/107/125 at 177 cm

Lengths (cm): 169, 177, 185, 193

Radius (m): 22.5 at 177 cm



Timeless, Trusted Boot Designs

Hey snow pros, check out the latest Nordica H1/H1W All Mountain ski boots at nordica.com. MSRP: \$699

Specialty



LA NIÑA



EL CAPO



rampsports.com
 usacolab.com

At the RAMP factory in Park City, Utah, we—the Riders Artists Musicians Project—are bringing you boards you can be proud to ride. Our goal is to do the right thing. We moved our production from Taiwan to Park City, and more than doubled our staff in the past year. Plus, we apply the highest standards of environmental consciousness by using, for example, FSC-certified bamboo cores in our skis and snowboards. We love being creative and innovative, using aerospace and patent-pending technology to make the best skis/boards for our pros. Because, just like you, we ride hard, we pack our product with quality because that's what pros deserve. And we are pleased to bring to you—our pro friends—an exceptional, hassle-free program.

Snow Pro

Aspirational



FRENZY



TUMBLEWEED



CHICKADEE



WOODPECKER



PRICKLY PEAR



SAGEBRUSH

SNOW PRO SKIS AND BOARDS

Frenzy

Don't fight the Frenzy. The mere mention of virgin corduroy or icy hardpack makes this pro ski hot and bothered with wild excitement. Take a fast-paced ride down the hill, or show off the perfect arc. This isn't a kiddie ride, it's a roller coaster—a speedy adventure for the racer at heart.

MSRP: \$949

Dimensions (mm): 126/80/110

Lengths (cm): 149, 159, 169, 179

Radius (m): 14.9 at 169 cm

Tumbleweed

Our top-selling snowboard, the Tumbleweed is made for the expert/pro who wants that quiver board to access any speck of terrain. Floating in the pow, ripping groomers, flying big air in the park—with the rockered nose and tail, it's that perfect combo of solid yet playful. And this year, we're introducing the 177(wide) for massive big-mountain riding.

MSRP: \$769

Dimensions (mm): 28.9/25/28.9

Sizes (cm): 148, 152, 157, 158 (wide), 161, 162 (wide), 167 (wide), 177 (wide)

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS AND BOARDS

Chickadee/Woodpecker

(same ski, different topsheet)

The Chickadee—a 2013–14 *Freeskier* Editor's Pick—is the quiver ski for that client who wants to push to the next level. With 90 millimeters underfoot, it is the 65-35 ski—for women who rip hard on groomers 65 percent of the time, but still like to spread their wings in the trees and pow as well.

MSRP: \$949

Dimensions (mm): 123/90/111

Lengths (cm): 149, 159, 169, 179

Radius (m): 17 at 159 cm/18.3 at 179 cm

Prickly Pear/Sagebrush

(same board, different topsheet)

The softer version of the Tumbleweed, this is the board that gets you stoked to ride the entire hill inbounds and out. With its early rise tip and tail, and zero camber underfoot, it's a great board for aspiring riders who want to improve rapidly. It hooks easy on groomers, and floats in pow. What more does a rider want?

MSRP: \$569

Dimensions (mm): 28.9/25/28.9

Sizes (cm): 148, 152, 157, 158 (wide), 161, 162 (wide)

SPECIALTY SKIS AND SNOWBOARDS

Kapow

The Kapow—a 2013-14 *Freeskier* Editor's Pick—is the ultimate ride for slashing backcountry and resort country in every direction while throwing down tricks and taking names. This high-speed, fat twintip surfs in deep snow but pros will appreciate how it carves turns—even with 125 millimeters underfoot.

MSRP: \$1,089

Dimensions (mm): 153/125/142

Lengths (cm): 169, 179, 189

Radius (m): 15 at 179 cm

Lobstah

The Lobstah is the choice of RAMP athlete and Olympic and X Games Gold medalist Ross Powers. Rip stable carved turns at speed with this traditional camber ride, and get that “pop” that every pro loves, whether it's in the park or in the turn. If you like to snowboard at the highest level, then the Lobstah is your ride.

MSRP: \$635

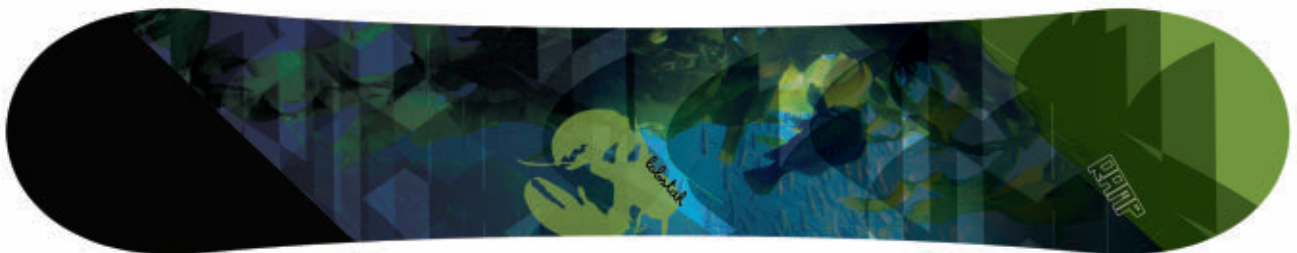
Dimensions (mm): 29/24.7/29

Sizes (cm): 152, 157, 158 (wide), 161, 162 (wide), 167 (wide)

Specialty



KAPOW



LOBSTAH



For more than 100 years, Rossignol has delivered innovative, world-renowned snowsports equipment that makes sliding downhill easier, more accessible, and more fun for all levels. For 2013–14, Rossignol is introducing a revolutionary fusion of backcountry, freestyle, and freeride performance with the all-new 7 Series. Featuring new, athlete-driven innovation and design, the 7 Series is the future of freeride and encourages all skier types to push the boundaries and leave their mark. Meanwhile, the award-winning Experience and Temptation all-mountain series continue to deliver more versatility, ease of use, and progressive all-mountain performance in *all* conditions, for *all* skier levels.

SNOW PRO SKIS

Experience 88

The award-winning Experience 88 is the most versatile all-mountain ski we've ever built for expert skiers. With the heart of a high-performance carving machine and an effortless freeride feel, this powerful one-ski quiver delivers amplified performance in all snow conditions.

MSRP: \$700

Dimensions (mm): 135/88/124

Lengths (cm): 162, 170, 178, 186

Radius (m): 16.5 at 178 cm

Pursuit HP Ti

The award-winning Pursuit HP Ti is a hard-charging, high-performance carving ski loaded with horsepower for technical expert skiers. World Cup construction and Power Turn Rocker deliver explosive race-ski power combined with more versatile and playful carving.

MSRP: \$1050

(Axial² 140 Ti bindings included)

Dimensions (mm): 125/81/111

Lengths (cm): 163, 170, 177

Radius (m): 16.8 at 170 cm

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

Experience 83

The Experience 83 is an incredibly versatile all-mountain ski for expert to advanced skiers. Auto Turn Rocker, Extended Sidecut, and Cascade Tip provide easy maneuverability and playfulness with powerful edge grip and stability for amplified performance in all snow conditions.

MSRP: \$600 (flat, pictured); \$800 (Axium 120 binding included)

Dimensions (mm): 132/83/120

Lengths (cm): 152, 160, 168, 176, 184

Radius (m): 15.5 at 176 cm

Temptation 82

The award-winning Temptation 82 is an incredibly versatile women's all-mountain ski for expert to advanced skiers. Auto Turn Rocker, Extended Sidecut, and Cascade Tip make these skis maneuverable and playful, with powerful edge grip and stability that boosts performance in all snow conditions.

MSRP: \$600 (flat, pictured); \$800 (Saphir 110 binding included)

Dimensions (mm): 131/82/119

Lengths (cm): 144, 152, 160, 168

Radius (m): 14 at 168 cm

Snow Pro



EXPERIENCE 88

PURSUIT HP TI

SPECIALTY SKIS

Soul 7

A revolutionary fusion of backcountry, freestyle, and freeride performance, the all-new Soul 7 is a freeride “quiver-killer” whether charging all-mountain, attacking long ascents, or shredding backcountry pow. New lightweight technology and construction reduce weight by 20 percent, enhancing agility with ultra-light swing weight. Redesigned Powder Turn Rocker delivers effortless flotation, maneuverability, and speed control while eliminating “tip flap” for increased versatility.

MSRP: \$800

Dimensions (mm): 136/106/126

Lengths (cm): 162, 174, 180, 188

Radius (m): 17 at 180 cm

Savory 7

A revolutionary fusion of backcountry, freestyle, and freeride performance, the all-new Savory 7 is the most versatile women’s freeride ski we’ve ever designed. New Air Tip and Light Core technologies reduce weight by 20 percent, enhancing agility with ultra-light swing weight. Redesigned Powder Turn Rocker delivers effortless flotation, maneuverability, and speed control while eliminating “tip flap” for increased versatility.

MSRP: \$800

Dimensions (mm): 136/106/126

Lengths (cm): 162, 170, 178

Radius (m): 17 at 178 cm



Admirable Feet

With the Alltrack Pro 130, you get a fusion of on-trail precision and freeride versatility, plus a new 100-millimeter fit and powerful ski-hike mode. MSRP: \$800

Aspirational

Specialty



EXPERIENCE 83



TEMPTATION 82



SOUL 7



SAVORY 7



volkl.com

Völkl began ski production in the Bavarian town of Straubing, Germany, in 1923, making 2012 its 90th anniversary! A rich heritage marked by a tradition of exciting technical innovations has given the company a well-deserved place in the hearts of committed pro ski instructors, such as PSIA-AASI Alpine Team members Rob Sogard, Matt Boyd, and Ryan Christofferson. When a skier is trying to improve, new ski technology can help . . . and with several new models, Völkl's exciting 2013–14 collection is filled with category-defining products for both men and women.

SNOW PRO SKIS

RTM 81 (Men's)

Building on the success of the RTM Series is the new RTM 81, an additional high-performance option for skiers who want to rip up the frontside on a lively, playful ski that is also capable of performing at lower speeds while teaching. Our Dual XTD Transmission Sidewall construction combines with spring steel for a stable, yet lightweight ride, and the Motion iPT Wide Ride binding system guarantees lightning-quick responsiveness.

MSRP: \$1065

Dimensions (mm): 126/81/108

Lengths and (Radius): 161 (15.3), 166 (16.3), 171 (17.4), 176 (18.6), 181 (19.7)

Charisma (Women's)

A frontside ripper that can also tackle softer snow on a whim, the Charisma's shape is 127/79/100, with tip rocker. All Völkl women's frontside skis feature Bio-Logic technology, a four-way combination of stance, geometry, flex, and rocker adjustments that enhance performance while also reducing the stress on the leg muscles and knee joints for less fatigue. The Charisma's xtraLIGHT pawlonia wood core saves weight, and a belt of spring steel provides liveliness and stability.

MSRP: \$1065

Dimensions (mm): 127/79/100

Lengths and (Radius): 142 (12.1), 149 (13.6), 156 (15.2), 163 (16.8)

Snow Pro

Aspirational



RTM 81
(MEN'S)

CHARISMA
(WOMEN'S)

RTM 77
(MEN'S)

ESSENZA CHIARA
(WOMEN'S)

ASPIRATIONAL SKIS

RTM 77 (Men's)

For improving skiers who want a frontside ski that can handle soft snow on a whim, the RTM 77 over-delivers. When the skier breaks through to the advanced ranks, a wood core and Full Rocker design makes it smooth, silky, and forgiving all at once. Many skis designed for intermediates include entry level system bindings, but not the RTM 77. It features Marker's 4Motion system, designed to enhance the ski's flex, and, thanks to a wide connection to the ski, enhance power to the edge.

MSRP: \$825

Dimensions (mm): 122/77/107

Lengths and (Radius): 161 (14.1), 166 (15.1), 171 (16.1), 176 (17.2)

Essenza Chiara (Women's)

For intermediate female skiers looking for an exciting frontside ride with effortless handling, the Chiara is a dream come true. Its updated construction gives the skier both lighter weight and a flatter stance than past models. With the wide binding-to-ski-connection of the Essenza 4Motion system, plus tip rocker, the Essenza Chiara is sure to keep performing as the skier becomes more advanced.

MSRP: \$950

Dimensions (mm): 123/77/97

Lengths and (Radius): 141 (12.5), 148 (14), 155 (15.7), 162 (17.4)

SPECIALTY SKIS

Völkl One

An all-new powder ski for easy, drifty turns, the Völkl One is a brand new model for skiers who want to excel in both deep and variable snow conditions. The key to the new design is early taper in the tip and tail, allowing the ski to instantly maneuver in any direction at any time. With its smooth, gradual bend, ELP Full Rocker allows a slightly stiffer flex than other skis in this category, for added stability.

MSRP: \$750

Dimensions (mm): 138/116/130

Lengths and (Radius): 156 (16.3), 166 (19.7), 176 (23.5), 186 (27.5)

Bridge

Perhaps the most versatile ski in today's freeskiing market, the Bridge features a shape of 128/95/115, with a smooth, gradual ELP Full Rocker profile, allowing deep-snow maneuverability along with solid groomed-snow performance. It's a smooth, playful ride for the ultimate all-mountain experience, ranging from big-mountain conditions all the way to the park.

MSRP: \$700

Dimensions (mm): 128/95/115

Lengths and (Radius): 163 (16.5), 171 (18.5), 179 (20.7), 187 (22.9)



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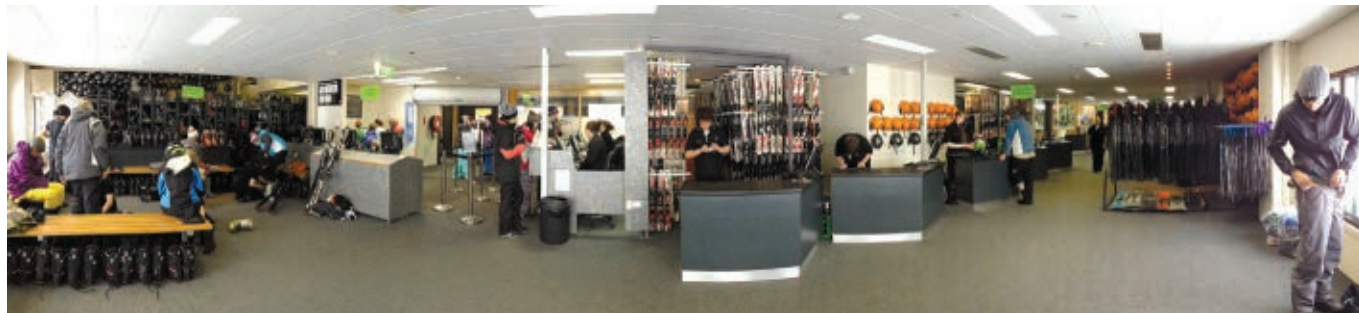
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— PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Matt Boyd



Rental Redux with the Alpine Team's Heidi Ettlinger: Successful Lessons Begin Before You Get on Snow

BY PETER KRAY, PSIA-AASI LEAD CONTENT OFFICER



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HEIDI ETTLINGER

From beginners to experts, more people are using rentals to either facilitate their first experience with skiing or riding, or to check out new equipment/technology that they are considering purchasing in the future. PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Heidi Ettlinger first developed the *Gearing to Go Guide* back in 2006 precisely for skiers and riders preparing for their first experience sliding on snow. *32 Degrees* asked her to share rental navigational tips you can pass along to students and consider when working with rental shops.

32°: Heidi, thanks so much for taking the time to talk about the rental experience. I know this is an area you spend a considerable amount of time studying, so I wanted to ask, “What are the most important factors people need to address when they decide to rent equipment?”



Heidi Ettlinger: One of the most important factors facing our industry today is getting more people to try snowsports and then converting them into lifelong skiers and riders. The rental shop is the port of entry for most participants and it's important to make this pathway as easy and educational as possible. Although a

majority of guests seek out an economy package (lift, lesson, rentals), they are often unaware of the qualitative difference between demo centers and basic rental shops. Depending on where they choose to rent their gear, most guests simply don't understand the wide variety of available equipment.

32°: What are the most common mistakes that occur during the rental process?

HE: Most guests indicate they feel frustrated with wait lines and being rushed through the process of determining a good boot fit. Several well-documented studies indicate we need to do a better job serving people during the rental process. For example, staffing bootfitting areas with instructors who understand the difference between adult and junior shell sizes, anatomical differences between women's and men's feet, and emphasizing the importance of a comfortably snug fit that allows the skier to flex their ankle would resolve the issue of people leaving the rental area with an uncomfortable boot.

32°: What, to you, is the perfect rental experience for a new skier/rider?

HE: One that leaves them feeling excited to start their day and eager to return again.



Some children end up in an adult shell which can make skill development more challenging.

32°: What role should ski and snowboard instructors play in helping their students get outfitted with the right gear?

HE: There are several areas where the rental experience could be innovated. Instructors are far under-utilized for their knowledge and expertise in understanding how to equip guests with a good-fitting boot and ski that complements their ability level and goals for the day, regardless of whether that guest is taking a lesson. Assigning coaches to guests from the moment they arrive at the resort would provide a level of professionalism we rarely see during the scramble to gear up for the day.

Alternatively, using instructors to assist with rental shop employee training would help both departments work together on

the same goals. We know that the period prior to “getting on snow” is often the most challenging part of the day. Transforming what can often be a humiliating experience and providing a tier of guest service that exceeds their initial impression would have a huge impact on wanting to participate again.

32°: How about in terms of explaining new technology such as reverse camber/rocker?

HE: New technology is certainly helping guests get better faster, but it’s not a silver bullet for success. Students still need to understand how to improve their technique before they can take full advantage of it. Instructors who understand the difference between rental skis with early rise versus true rocker skis with different camber profiles (and how these skis will respond on a variety of conditions and terrain) will be able to help the guest compliment their goals with equipment.

Consider the skills an average beginner needs to learn to get over the hump from putting on their equipment for the first time to perceiving they are intermediate.

This is a crucial time frame when guests either identify the sport as being too difficult to learn, or they persevere and become lifelong participants. Will these students get better faster on a rocker ski that is 90 millimeters underfoot?

This initial phase of skier development is probably more influenced by a ski that is the appropriate length and has a good tune, then providing them with technology that may be better suited for when they want learn how to safely navigate off-piste conditions and steeper terrain (which is largely what the bulk of modern skis have been designed to do better).

32°: Along those technology lines, what opportunities do you see working with rental shops/demo centers to get more advanced riders to take lessons on some of the new gear?

HE: If we look historically at when shaped skis were introduced (and carving was cool) it enticed lapsed skiers back into the sport, sparked a renewed interest in the desire to “learn the newest technique,” and

it really gave the entire industry a flood of business. Somehow the latest introduction of technology didn’t pair the necessity of hooking up with instructors to learn what it was all about, and instead implied that simply getting on the skis would make them better skiers. This perception has led advanced skiers to believe these skis replace the need for technique.

I believe this is the challenge we face as an association. Everyone should share the responsibility to strengthen working partnerships with local shops and explain what we have to offer. **32°**

Heidi Ettlinger has devoted her career to growing the snowsports industry. She is an ambassador for Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month, develops and leads custom instructor training programs, and produces resources for the trade (gearingtogo.com) to improve the retention of new skiers and riders. She is a member of the PSIA-AASI Alpine Team and coaches year round, dividing her time between Heavenly in Lake Tahoe, California, and Mt. Hotham in Australia.

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Snowsports Stock Report: A Deeper Look at Skier Visits, Lesson Volume, and Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month

BY PETER KRAY, PSIA-AASI LEAD CONTENT OFFICER

When it comes to annual performance reports, two stat sheets in particular have become increasingly important to the ski and snowboard industry—and instructors in particular—as the most relevant barometers of where our sports are, and where we are helping to steer them in the future.

Those reports include the National Ski Areas Association's (NSAA) *Kottke End of Season Survey* and, more recently, the Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month (LSSM) end-of-season roundup. The Kottke survey focuses on total ski and snowboard visits across the country, but also includes stats on lesson volume, skier and snowboarder participation, and total lift ticket and pass sales. The LSSM report, however, looks solely at how many beginner lessons were generated during January's Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month. Here are some of the highlights from both reports.

Skier Visits Top 56 Million

According to NSAA's Kottke survey, there were 56.6 million ski and snowboard visits during the 2012–13 season. This represents an 11 percent increase over the previous season, and the largest year-over-year gain in 30 years.

NSAA reports visits were up in all regions, with the biggest rebounds seen for the Pacific Southwest (up 20.5 percent), Northeast (up 20.3 percent), and Southeast (up 17.2 percent). Impressive gains were also recorded in the Midwest (up 11.5 percent) and Pacific Northwest (up 7.5 percent). The region with the smallest percentage gain was the Rocky



LIBERTY MOUNTAIN RESORT

Mountain region, which was up 1.9 percent over 2011–12 visits.

Lessons Show Mixed Results

The industry has focused on lesson participation, particularly at the entry level, as a key element of the strategy for attracting newcomers to snowsports and converting first-timers into committed, long-term participants.

Of no surprise to any snow pro, snowsports visitation models demonstrate that long-term, sustainable growth in the industry will be strongly tied to improving the retention of entry level skiers, in large measure through improved and upgraded lesson programs.

A total of 127 areas provided data on total lesson volumes for both the 2012–13 and 2011–12 Kottke surveys. At these resorts, total lessons given were up a slight 0.6 percent (with an average of 21,323 lessons per area), while total visits in this same resort sample increased by 8.3 percent. Hence, the lesson participation rate declined by 7.1 percent. This result indicates that the proportion of total visits that included a lesson declined to 8.0

percent from 8.6 percent the year prior.

The greatest lesson volume increases were seen in the Pacific Southwest (up 24.5 percent), Southeast (up 14.7 percent), Pacific Northwest (up 7.4 percent), and Northeast (up 6.6 percent). On the other hand, declines were witnessed in the Rocky Mountain region (down 4.9 percent) and Midwest region (down 30.6 percent).

LSSM Growth Skyrockets

For January, organizers of the Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month/Bring a Friend (LSSM/BAF) initiative reported that more than 153,000 children and adults registered for beginner lessons from professional instructors during the month. The tally reflects an increase of more than 50,000 compared to last year and the largest one-year increase since the initiative began in January 2009 with 20,000 participants.

Ski and snowboard areas in 34 states took part in LSSM/BAF. The majority offered a discounted lift, lesson, and rental-equipment beginner's package. Most made their LSSM offer available to consumers for the entire month. Seventy

percent of the ski/snowboard areas that responded to a post-initiative survey said their consumer participation was higher compared to last year. Forty-four percent thought that the amount of snow in their region had a positive effect.

Nearly 175 adults (ages 18 and older) took the Bring a friend Challenge that encouraged current participants to help newcomers sign up for lessons. Many newcomers were children.

“Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month/Bring a Friend has enjoyed support from all aspects of the snowsports industry and that is what makes it work so well in a cost efficient manner,” commented LSSM Task Force Chair Raelene Davis, who is the marketing vice president for Ski Utah. For more LSSM information and resources, go to skiandsnowboardmonth.com.

Snowboarding Participation Down

Also according to the Kottke survey, snowboarding trended down for the third consecutive season, declining to 29.6 percent of total visits in 2012–13, down from 30.3 percent in 2011–12, 31.0

percent in 2010–11, and 32.0 percent in 2009–10. The decline in snowboarding has been greatest in the Pacific Southwest and Midwest, where snowboarding visits declined by 3 percentage points (in terms of share of total visits). Snowboarding participation also dipped this season in the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Northwest regions, while holding relatively steady in the Southeast and Northeast.

The Pacific Southwest still has the highest rate of snowboarding participation of any region (42.5 percent this season), followed by the Pacific Northwest (36.7 percent), Midwest (35.5 percent), and Southeast (34.5 percent). A lower share of total visits from snowboarding is seen in the Northeast (26.4 percent) and Rocky Mountains (23.7 percent).

Season Pass Sales Dipped

And finally, at the top end of the committed skier and snowboarder scale, the Kottke survey reports that average season passes sold per ski area declined by 4.3 percent from 2011–12, averaging 9,495 passes sold. Pass unit sales dropped 7.8 percent

in the Rocky Mountains and 7.6 percent in the Midwest, followed by somewhat smaller declines in the Southeast (down 1.5 percent) and Northeast (down 1.1 percent). On the bright side, season pass unit sales were up in the Pacific Northwest (up 4.0 percent) and the Pacific Southwest (up 0.9 percent).

The greatest volume of season passes sold per ski area is in the Rocky Mountain region (15,825 per area), followed by the Pacific Northwest (13,177) and Pacific Southwest (12,415). There is, however, no data on just how many lessons all of those passholders took before they became infatuated with the sport. ❄️



More Online

To see how LSSM Ambassador (and PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member) Heidi Ettlinger rocked LSSM at Heavenly, go to the Web Extras on the “Publications, Videos & Resources” page at TheSnowPros.org.

PHOTO / ANDREW MAGUIRE

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Terrain-based Teaching Offers Answers for Students with Autism

BY KIM SEEVERS; PHOTOS BY MARC BRYAN-BROWN

In the immortal words of Jack Nicholson, “Here’s Johnny!” Yep, here’s Johnny, a student in your mainstream group lesson who’s throwing an epic tantrum. His parents just told you he has autism.

What runs through your mind? Go ahead, you can admit it . . . you’re nervous, maybe a little scared, and wondering how in the world you’re going to get through the lesson with this child in your group. Teaching a student with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can be a daunting task for a snowsports instructor without the background or training to understand the disorder or how to deal with the behavioral issues that may arise.

Consider first that you have a child for whom crowds, unfamiliar noises, heavy clothing, cumbersome equipment, and the experience of learning a new activity may all combine to create an intolerable sensory situation. Indeed, many of the symptoms of autism spectrum disorder manifest themselves as a result of the very things that we love about our sport. When children on the autism spectrum respond to your teaching with inappropriate behaviors, they are simply trying to find a way to communicate to you that something is wrong. Paying attention to the stimulus that may have caused your student discomfort can help you open up the lines of communication.

Using Terrain as a Tool

While there’s no magic answer for dealing with inappropriate behavior, you can minimize many of the stumbling blocks a child with autism might encounter by using alternative ways to present information or modifying the learning environment. Terrain-based teaching, for example, may



help alleviate some of the challenges that arise for your student with autism as a result of frustration, inability to communicate needs, or sensory overload created by learning to ski or ride.

Terrain-based teaching and learning is a shiny new term for a concept introduced in the late ’70s by the folks who pioneered SKIWee. While terrain parks for learners are certainly not new, the practice of building features into the beginner progression is gaining traction as a way to remove fear, reduce falls, and let the student naturally feel the proper movements required to have success.

For use in a terrain-based teaching progression, terrain features are built specifically for beginners on the learning hill. Interactive stations—such as bank turns to a stop, camel humps, and bobsled runs—are designed to introduce a variety

of movements and sensations in a fun and unthreatening way. In addition, obstacle courses, bicycle bumps, and mini halfpipes can promote a more enjoyable experience and make learning more accessible for a beginner.

Appreciating a Tight Focus

So you have Johnny in a group lesson and aren’t quite sure how best to communicate with him. Using your ingenuity and the area’s terrain features might be your best bets for success.

You can use terrain to promote spontaneous movements—such as turning or slowing to a stop—without the verbal interaction Johnny may not be interested in. Unlike a neurotypical child who will think you’re the coolest instructor in the world because you let him or her play on the terrain features, a child on the spectrum



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Most likely to pay attention



ANN GALVIN

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ANDY DOCKEN

Most likely to carpool to National Academy

KEVIN ASHLEY

Most likely to have you sign his skis



will appreciate structured use of terrain features to focus attention as tightly as possible. By experiencing movement on a terrain feature, Johnny is able to focus on one thing at a time.

A second advantage to using terrain features in your learning progression is that they are visible and encourage tangible outcomes. Many children with autism are visual learners. What can get lost in translation with your verbal attempt at explanation may be more easily demonstrated and felt on a feature. For instance, asking Johnny to make an arrow with his skis and point it in the direction of the woods most likely will not register. It's not possible to make an arrow with your skis! You may achieve the outcome you're looking for, having Johnny guide his skis in the direction of the turn, by letting him ride a banked turn onto a flat runout.

Another advantage to terrain-based teaching is that it helps alleviate a safety concern of skiing with a child with autism. Many children on the spectrum don't understand danger. Unlike typically developing peers who may fear going too fast and falling, a child with ASD often doesn't consider the possible outcome of too much speed or the inability to stop. By selecting terrain features that encourage turning and speed control, you help the student develop habitual movement that lead to safe skiing.

Although he's doing well and developing effective movements, don't expect Johnny to respond with the same enthusiasm shown by other members of the class. To children on the autism spectrum, play often seems random; they much prefer clearly defined tasks. Johnny will likely appreciate the order and routine of terrain features as opposed to the unstructured space of a traditional beginner's slope.

Benefits Beyond the Lesson

So, why should all of this matter to you as a mainstream ski or snowboard instructor—besides the obvious opportunity to share your love of snowsports? Skiing and



snowboarding are wonderful family activities. Just like many other families, parents of children with autism are searching for something their family can do together. In the big picture of growing our sports, if you make the extra effort to take care of the child with autism and make some of the accommodations necessary to ensure success (e.g., embracing routine, structure, and consistency), you will capture a devoted family for life. And the autism network is a strong one. These families will tell other families and so on and so forth. You might end up being the most requested private lesson instructor in your school!

Even more important than the conversion element is the human element of the lesson. Approach teaching a child with autism in a positive way and you will help a young person become more physically fit, self-assured, confident, and independent. Unlike many of your other lessons, you

have the power to change a child's life through your teaching. It doesn't get any better than that! ☺

Kim Seevers has served PSIA-AASI in a number of roles. She is a member of both the adaptive and alpine education staffs in Eastern Division, and in 2012 was named coach of PSIA-AASI Adaptive Team. She works full-time as a grant writer for the Adaptive Sports Foundation in Windham, New York.

As an offshoot of her work with adaptive ski racers, Seevers was paired as a guide with Adaptive Sports Foundation Race Team member and visually impaired athlete Staci Mannella. Seevers and Mannella have been training and racing together for six years and are members of the U.S. Paralympics Alpine National Team that will represent the United States at the 2014 Paralympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia.

WHY YOU'LL LIKELY HAVE STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

To understand why so many kids with autism are finding their way to your classes, consider the latest statistics. In March 2012, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that autism affects 1 in every 88 children and 1 in 54 boys. These numbers represent a 23 percent increase from the CDC's 2009 estimate of 1 in 110 children on the autism spectrum and a whopping 78 percent increase over its 2007 estimate of 1 in 150.

In navigating the world with a child with autism, parents look for activities they can do together as a family. A direct result of the increase in the numbers of children with autism spectrum disorders is that mainstream snowsports schools are teaching record numbers of students on the spectrum. The encouraging fact is that more and more parents understand that physical activity is crucial for their child's good health and are placing their children in classes to learn to ski or snowboard. —Kim Seevers



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Lid key features

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- Unique patent pending lens attachment system
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Fornix key features

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How to Bring Beginners Back For More

COMPILED BY STEPHANIE PRINCE, PSIA-AASI SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITOR

Be safe. Have fun. Help students learn something. That triumvirate of teaching strategies—touched upon in *Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors*—rings true for many instructors, for these three themes came up most when we asked members for their advice on getting beginners to come back to ski or ride again. Check out these snow pro tips if you're just getting started as an instructor. And all you long-timers out there will likely find this a fun refresher that affirms what you've been doing right all along.

Safety First

Keeping students safe while on mountain or trail is a big part of an instructor's job. There are many different aspects of safety to consider for skiers and snowboarders. So put your safety cap on and learn some tips from your colleagues.

"Keep them comfortable, both emotionally and physically. Connect with them right away by asking the guest questions about themselves. Make them feel like they're the most important part of our day, because they are! The pace of the lesson and terrain should be dictated by the client's individual comfort level and progression, not the instructor."

—Lou Sturbois, Taos Ski Valley, NM; Alpine II, Children's Specialist 1

"Make sure students hydrate, wear sunscreen and apply lip block. Look out for and address symptoms of altitude sickness."

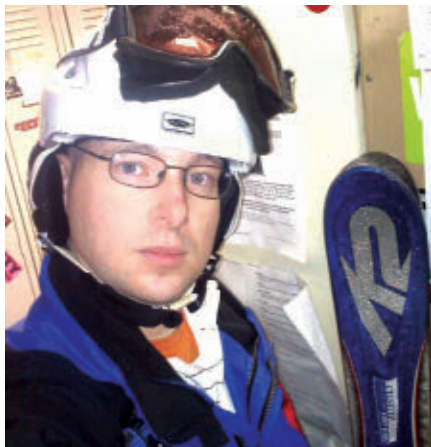
—Sharon Dale, Vail, CO; Alpine III, Telemark II, Adaptive II, Children's Specialist 2



Sharon Dale



Bill Downey



Greg Blackburn



Bob Leonard

"Skiing involves risk and it's best to minimize this. In my beginner lessons, I address the most common ways you can get hurt when skiing and then offer tools on how to avoid them. I fall in each lesson to show students how to fall and then get back up."

—Greg Blackburn, Winterplace Ski Resort, WV; Alpine I

"Once the safety factor has replaced much of the fear factor, sense of accomplishment will grow throughout the lesson through

repetition and incremental tasks. The 'I can do this' feeling will continue to develop so long as the new skier is not put into a threatening situation."

—Bill Downey, Boston Mills Brandywine, OH; Alpine II

"If fear prevails, then learning ceases. Work with them through any fears and be careful not to set up any potential situations that would create doubt in their learning abilities. Take small steps and pay attention



David Bertoni



Jimmy Brokaw

to feedback and body language—it will tell you when to move forward and when enough is enough.”

—Bob Leonard, *Platekill Mountain, NY; Alpine I*

Find the Fun

Let’s face it; if a beginner student isn’t having any fun on the mountain, there is a good chance he or she won’t come back to the sport. Share your passion for the sport, smile, and spread the stoke of being on the mountain—it’s contagious!

“It doesn’t matter if they are newbies or grizzled hot-shots. The one reason people come back for more is simple: they have more fun skiing or riding with you than they can have on their own. If you, or your staff, does not keep that at the top of mind (along with safety), don’t expect a great retention ratio.”

—David Bertoni, *Alumni, Rocky Mountain Division*

“Help them relate the sport to a personal benefit, like bragging rights or a chance to spend more time with their friends and family.”

—Don Johnson, *Pajarito Mountain, NM; Alpine I*

“For kids: a smile, candy in your pocket, and a progression based on the snow conditions.”

—Saundra Stringer, *Bellingham, WA; Alpine II, Children’s Specialist I*

“Be sure everyone is having fun. This is a no-brainer when working with children, but adults want to have fun as well. Throwing in an exciting activity while working on a particular movement works for all age levels. Engage students in conversation, tell jokes, and poke fun at yourself—all these things will lighten up the mood of the lesson.”

—Patti Eney, *Alpine Valley Resort, WI; Alpine I*

The Allure of Learning

Newbie students come to the mountain to learn (or at least try something new), so make sure they walk away feeling like they’ve accomplished something. Ask them what their goals are for the lesson; if they don’t know, start with the basics and celebrate even the smallest successes. Make sure to help them set realistic expectations as well, so they don’t leave disappointed.


“As instructors, we can keep students coming back by ensuring that they leave with a goal for their next visit. It can be as simple as, ‘Next time, I’d like to do some exercises to improve your turns so that we can try a slightly steeper slope.’ Help your students develop long-term goals, whether that be getting into the terrain park, the trees, or even alpine touring. Then help them set a realistic goal for their next visit that works toward that long-term goal and they’ll have a good reason to return.”

—Jimmy Brokaw, *Liberty Mountain Resort in Fairfield, PA; Alpine II*

“Give a high level of reinforcement—make the lesson personally satisfying for the student. Praise the student for what he or she does satisfactorily, not what they can’t do. You can build upon their new skills. Do not demand too much of the student and make him or her fearful or anxious. Systematically build and shape skills and movements.”

—Martin Agran, *Snowy Range Ski and Recreation Area, WY; Alpine II*

“Use ‘If-then’ statements. For instance, ‘If you came this far in an hour, then you could really master this skiing thing with a season pass and have this much fun every weekend.’ Or, ‘If you commit to a month of Sundays or even a second hour lesson, then you would be well on your way to becoming a confident skier and being prepared to ski on your vacation out West.’ Then set up their next lesson on the spot!”

—Liz Henry, *Cascade Mountain Snow Sports School, Wisconsin; Alpine I* 



More Online

For additional member insight on bringing

newbies back, check out the Web Extras on the “Publications, Videos & Resources” page at TheSnowPros.org.

Slice, Shape, and Slash For Dynamic Skiing

BY JEB BOYD

Skiing can be such a mental game with so many new techniques emerging. I frequently see folks stumbling over themselves while working toward a professional goal, trying to perform a long list of awkward mechanical movements that they believe equate to contemporary technique.

They're working so hard, it's questionable if they are even having fun. We all battle with this as we strive to improve, especially when working on something new. A strategy I've come up with to help simplify my movements and keep things in perspective is "slice, shape, slash."

We all have a speed at which we like to ski; it's where everything feels just right—technically and emotionally. Once I hit my comfortable speed, I have to anticipate the effect of the conditions and terrain and do a variety of things with my skis to stay at that speed. If I start going too fast, then I need to do something different. "Slice, shape, slash" gives me the tools

needed to negotiate difficult situations more confidently, enabling me to push the performance envelope. And with terrain-based teaching making its mark in the industry, you could say that terrain definitely helps define this approach.

"Slicing" is another word to describe carving. It is the ability to run a clean edge through a turn. It's typically a fast or accelerating type of turn on flat to moderate terrain.

"Shaping" is simply a turn with some skidding or buttering that enables me to manage my speed as it starts getting steeper. Shaping leads to braking, which is why I shape my turns more the steeper



DANN COFFEY

it gets. The rate of shaping is purely determined by the amount of extra speed control that's needed.

"Slashing" is basically putting on the brakes—hard. The important thing to note is that braking does not mean I come to a complete stop. It simply means my skis got away from me and I need to shut them down for a second to allow my body or center of mass, to catch up. I usually "slash" for a ski length or so and then resume slicing or shaping, depending on the speed, terrain, and conditions at hand. The slash is for momentary use and becomes poor technique if over used.

With slice, shape, slash, I can make tactical decisions throughout a run that will help me maintain rhythm, radius, and speed even as conditions and terrain change, such as dropping into steeper terrain. Fluid skiing is good skiing and these tactical adjustments can be combined in a number of ways to keep it flowing.

Take a closer look at how this strategy works. Typically, at the beginning of a run I'll slice my turns until my speed approaches the high end of my comfort zone. At that time, I'll switch gears into a shaping mode where I allow the edges of my skis to brush the snow or skid a touch through the turn. I shape by twisting the tips inside the path of my intended arc. Ultimately, the rate of my twisting is determined by what I need to do to manipulate my rate of descent. The more buttering in a turn the less acceleration there typically is.

I can go back and forth between slicing and shaping as needed, but every now



HOLLY BOYD

I enter the new turn with very little snow spray, indicating more of a slicing tactic.

Slice



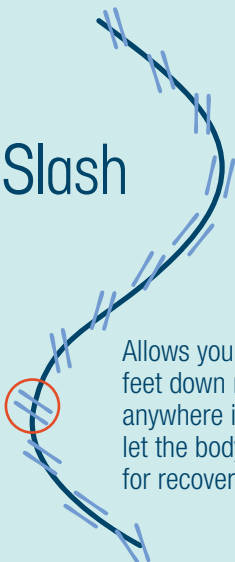
Skis follow same path as the intended arc

Shape



Ski tips are guided just inside the intended arc
> Guiding = > Speed Control

Slash

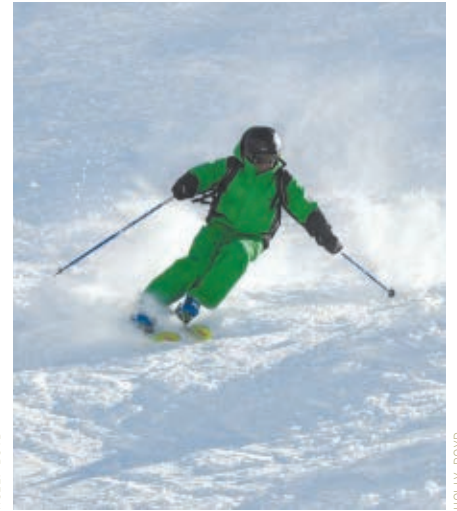


Allows you to slow your feet down momentarily anywhere in the turn to let the body catch up for recovery



HOLLY BOYD

Shaping begins in anticipation of acceleration.



HOLLY BOYD

Additional shaping is used to slow the descent. You can see that the outside ski has turned inward slightly more than the outside ski.



HOLLY BOYD

I need to shut it down to keep the skis from running away. Typically a slash is accompanied by heavy snow spray moving downhill, which slows the feet down and allows the body to catch up.

and then I'll underestimate how much shaping is needed and my skis get away from me. At that point, I'll slash them. The slash is nothing more than a heavy pivot, hockey slide, or—as described more fully in the article on page 86, a stivot. This momentarily slows the skis down, allowing my body to catch up and regain the equilibrium needed to keep on moving. In essence, the slash is a safety brake I use as needed to recover, and it goes a long way toward building confidence on steeper terrain.

When the “slice, shape, slash” techniques are blended well, the product is exciting, fluid skiing. Slice ‘em and feel the power of a turn. Blend the slice with a little skid to shape the turn and twist the tips inside the path of your turning arc to get some extra speed control. Shut

it down with a slash to regain your mojo when you start feeling uncomfortable. When done well, speed is maintained as well as the rhythm and shape of turns.

This simple mantra of “slice, shape, slash” gives me a basic ski plan that allows me to push myself while relying on the safety net of the slash. And it provides the foundation to work on other techniques. So, get out there and give this strategy a try—I hope you have as much fun with it as I do. ☑

A three-term member of the PSIA-AASI Alpine Team, Jeb Boyd is the founding partner of the Arc2Arc Alpine Training Center in Thornton, New Hampshire. He is the head coach for the board of alpine examiners in PSIA-AASI's Eastern Division.

The Rise of the Stivot: How a Skidded Carve Became Hot Technique

BY PETER KRAY

When U.S. Ski Team phenom Ted Ligety won gold in the GS at the World Championships in Schladming, Austria this past February, his startling 0.81-second winning margin was the talk of the sport.



If you watch the replays of his second run on, you can see that the “stivot” he throws halfway down the slope may have been the key to getting that top spot. The stivot—a sort of steered pivot, or skidded redirect into a carved arc—has become a go-to move for World Cup skiers. So why has no one heard of it?

“What we call a stivot, a pivot, or a skier pivot is something the coaching and many members of the instruction community have been talking about for awhile now, but I think in the mainstream ski community the term still isn’t prevalent,” said PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Michael Rogan. “In racing though, it is something you’re seeing in wide use.”

Evolution of a New Technique

Ron LeMaster was publishing photo sequences of Bode Miller employing a stivot on a GS course as early as 2003 (see page 87). In an article describing how Norway’s Aksel Svindal—who won the overall World Cup title in 2007 and 2009—was dominating race courses with what LeMaster called a “super stivot,” LeMaster wrote, “‘Stivot’ is a term that’s been around for a while, used to describe a combined steering and pivoting movement at the start of a turn.”

A Google search of “stivot,” will turn up any number of online forums regarding rapidly steering the skis in a new direction, then applying pressure and edging *after* they are in the fall line. Many of those posts also question whether this is good technique.

Rogan said the evolution of the stivot has been as much about skiing style, as it has been about sidecut and the way race courses are set. With regard to the move’s effectiveness, he said that it flat out works.

CELSAR PIOTTO

Former PSIA-AASI Alpine Team member Jim Schanzenbaker butters the slope with a slave—the powder-snow equivalent of a stivot.



RON LEWMASTER

Bode Miller initiates a turn with a stivot on his way to winning the World Cup GS at Park City, Utah, in 2003. The set of the course, pitch of the hill, and Miller's velocity dictate that he redirect his skis through the fall line so he can carve the second half of the turn and exit with maximum speed.

“The stivot is something racers are doing when they can’t carve, and need to adjust their turn radius,” said Rogan. “It’s about getting the job done, first and foremost.”

The Slarve

The stivot, Rogan noted, seems to be employed more frequently on the steeper sections of a race course, where it is easier to redirect the skis and carry momentum down the slope. In this manner it’s also similar—if not identical—to the “slarve” that powder skiers use to surf a spine or butter through the crux of a chute.

“I have a friend who is a big-mountain skiing coach, and he sees guys doing this all over the place,” said Ron Kipp, alpine sports education manager for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association. “You see them carrying speed into a feature on the mountain where they might want a little bit more control, and they almost automatically do it. For me, in racing as well, it’s more of a line issue, where these guys are kind of letting their legs do the thinking about where they want to go next.”

As a slarve, or a “buttering” move—which enjoys even more traction in

both terminology and usage in the snowboarding and freestyle skiing community—the stivot is already part of the mainstream ski lexicon. Rockered tips and tails, wider boards, and fast-moving athletes who want to quickly change direction or even schmear off a little speed have ensured that. And as more skiers in more disciplines employ the move, it seems only logical to also teach it.

“In our *Giant Slalom Technique and Tactics DVD*, there is a section on stivoting,” said Kipp. “In our program we have a lot of rotary exercises, and if you are trying to master those, you’re also starting to learn to stivot.”

Teaching the Technique

For Kipp, ancillary exercises such as pivot slips are a good place to start practicing how to stivot—whether for racing or skiing off-piste. Rogan also suggests practicing hockey stops, but without coming to a complete stop.

“Doing those down the hill and across the hill, and making sure it’s all done the right way, helps reinforce the sensation and get you in the right body position,” Rogan said.

For Rogan, “the right way” means making it clear that your upper body needs to be in a position to support the move, and that your legs are acting independently of your hips.

“You can’t turn your skis by using your shoulders,” he said. “You have to be able to turn your legs and have good separation from your body. And you have to be in good position to start to stivot, because most of the time it’s a tactical move, with skiers deciding right at that moment to stivot.”

And whether you want to call it a stivot, a slarve, or a redirect, Rogan said it’s all about being able to quickly adjust the radius of a turn, typically to find a new line that is either faster or more efficient. Simply put, he said, “It’s about being able to choose how you want to control your descent.”

Peter Kray is the lead content officer for PSIA-AASI, focusing on emerging ski and snowboarding trends and on-snow innovations. Kray skis, telemarks, and snowboards out of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is co-founder of the Gear Institute (gearinstitute.com), a website founded to professionalize the testing of outdoor equipment.

Change Up the Terrain to Teach the Tele Stance

BY J. SCOTT MCGEE

With the emphasis these days on making use of natural or manmade snow features to help students learn fundamental skiing and riding movements, one great thing about teaching telemark from a cross country perspective is that getting around in the woods is just about the most natural terrain-based teaching you can ask for.

When I first started teaching tele in 1987 (at New Hampshire's Dartmouth Skiway), we had an awesome beginner area; away from the lift, with flat terrain and an enviable runout. We also had an adjacent woody area with a few small, ungraded trails between the trees. While our initial inclination was to take the new tele skiers along the trails

to give them the experience of kicking and gliding, possibly skating a bit and managing balance on uneven terrain, it didn't cross our minds that we were engaging in terrain-based teaching. But across each trail, a log would inevitably present itself. And then whether it was a tree well or a dip in the trail, we'd have a little "ditch" to glide across.



DANN COFFEY

Log and Ditches

For both the log and the ditch, aside from taking a running start and carefully placing the lead ski, the skier also had to deal with a couple of "plane changes," and not like the kind you make at Chicago O'Hare. Both logs and ditches present a big challenge to fore-aft balance and train the body's natural reflexes to maintain balance and redistribute weight in ways that are super helpful in making telemark turns later or dealing with uneven terrain or conditions.

It didn't take long for us to conclude that what we'd hit upon as a fun activity



EARL SALINE

■ Traversing bumps, powdery or not, can be a great terrain-based approach to getting intermediates ready for varied terrain and conditions.

was also a great way to establish skills. One of the most difficult parts of telemarking to master, especially for alpine converts, is the tele stance itself—with the flex in the lead ankle and weight on the trailing leg. The ideal learning stance distributes weight evenly between the ball of the back foot and the whole front foot, with the leading knee over the toe and the trailing knee below or in front of the same hip.

By allowing new skiers to find features in the natural environment that challenge balance, they'd "naturally" learn the balancing moves needed to survive an ice patch or a powder pile in their first set of linked tele turns. The challenges they'd met in a straight-run tele glide had challenged their fore-aft balance, and they'd learned to deal with it by gliding in a tele stance.

Jumps

Finally, the fun part: by erecting the smallest of bumps (four inches high) off the side of the slightly sloping learning area, we'd get people going over the "jump" and landing in a "tele" stance—"Just the way they do in the Olympics!", our students would say. We

knew they could relate to that—and the fun of it.

Hiking up a little hill to glide, jump, land, and turn is nearly an automatic, intrinsically rewarding activity for youngsters. And adults can have the same kind of fun, although they may tend to wear out more quickly. Adding some variations and turns after landing can offer the next step.

Beyond jumps and bumps, look for naturally forming features in and around the woody trails near your beginner area. Many areas have trails through the woods that kids love. If these develop as winding troughs, I can't recommend this type of trail as ideal for developing tele stance skills—as they'll tend to encourage wedging for control. But trails with rolling bumps can be ideal.

Conditions are another variable that can add flavor to terrain-based teaching. Especially for newbies with powder aspirations, finding a patch of pow to glide through in a tele stance can get them feeling like they're really making headway toward their goals, and get them anticipating and rebalancing in response to the challenges that variable snow conditions present.

The Terrain's the Thing

So find logs, ditches, and jumps to help students master the tele stance and make a relatively straightforward straight run far more interesting. The undulations in terrain will naturally promote skill development. Take care to focus on key aspects of effective technique: flex in the front ankle and in the bellows of the back boot (with enough weight on the back foot to make this happen).

Have fun adding the "exploration" aspect to your lessons, and be prepared to help guide folks through recovery from a faceplant or a sitzmark. They'll thank you for getting them out there and you'll have a hook to bring them back for more. ☒

J. Scott McGee coaches the PSIA-AASI Nordic Team is the director of Wyoming's Snow King Mountain Sports School. A former telemark competitor, he now dreams of perfect corn on spring backcountry skate-ski tours. McGee spends his summers guiding climbs in the Tetons for Exum Mountain Guides.

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Hotbeds of Telemark: These Epic Areas Have It All

BY J. SCOTT MCGEE

If your quest for that perfect free-heel experience involves a little wanderlust, why not set your sights on the country's original tele areas? Most share some enticing characteristics: easy access to backcountry skiing, outdoor education programs, quality tele instruction, a reputation as a powder haven, and a rich history of tele races.

Did tele blossom in these areas because there was backcountry beyond the ropeline, or did tele'ers discover backcountry because they had the tools and skills to access it? Did tele racing produce a plethora of pinners, or did the proliferating pinning population precipitate competitions and parties?

Either way, here are my picks for the hotbeds of telemark skiing. If you teach tele, you owe it to yourself to explore what they have in store.

Alta/Snowbird (Utah)

- **Backcountry skiing:** The Wasatch was one early backcountry mecca, and Dave Hanscom's book, *Wasatch Touring*, was an early bible for powder seekers. Charlie and Dwight Butler started Wasatch Touring in 1972 and, said cagey old nord Chi Melville, "Back then, it was all about Filson knickers and tall wool socks."
- **Tele instruction:** The Alf Engen Ski School has long offered regular groups for tele, and been a stronghold for tele trainers and clinic leaders.
- **Powder havens:** Alta gets some of the deepest snowfall in the country, much of it light and dry—which is one of the reasons Utah has trademarked the saying, "The greatest snow on earth."
- **Tele racing:** Alta was home to the famed Groundhog Day Race for more than 25 years.

Aspen, Breckenridge, and Crested Butte (Colorado)

- **Backcountry skiing:** Numerous mining roads in these areas provide ready-made cross country trails, which allowed tele pioneers to access better snow and terrain.
- **Powder havens:** The ski nexus Aspen averages about 300 inches per year, and it comes in light and dry.
- **Tele instruction:** Paul Parker, co-founder of Boulder's Neptune Mountaineering and author in 1988 of the classic *Free Heel Skiing*, got his nordic certification in 1975 and moved up to Breckenridge in 1976 to focus on instruction.
- **Tele racing:** The Breckenridge Telemark Returns, attended by more than 300 participants annually, included tele slalom, orienteering, and costume events from 1973–79. In addition, the Summit Series comprised an eight-race schedule and was the birthplace for the modern rules for telemark racing on the World Cup level (which have been in place since the 1990s). In the early 1970s, Crested Butte was home to the Al Johnson Race and a six-race series known as the Trucker Cup.

Whitefish (Montana)

- **Backcountry skiing:** With nearby Glacier National Park and other places to backcountry ski, what's not to love?



Telemark pioneer Art Burrows conquers the Sierra's U Notch.

- **Powder haven:** Whitefish has long had a reputation for "white smoke."
- **Tele racing:** Big Mountain has been a training ground to the U.S. Telemark Team and home to World Cup Races, U.S. Telemark Nationals . . . and 2000–01 world champion Reid Sabin, who was the first American to win a World Cup race. Many members of the US Team who reside in Whitefish train at Stillwater Nordic Center, where Sabin is co-owner. Cody McCarthy also had numerous FIS wins at Whitefish.

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Grand Targhee and Jackson Hole (Wyoming)

- **Backcountry skiing:** Nearby Teton Pass has long been a promised land for backcountry enthusiasts, and the foothills of the Tetons and the Big Hole Mountains have access to one of the most successful hut systems outside New England and Colorado.
- **Outdoor education programs:** The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) has run winter backcountry ski courses for over 20 years, with two-day intro-to-tele sessions at Grand Targhee. The nearby Big Holes were originally home to Rendezvous Ski Tours, a pioneer in the yurt-to-yurt touring business.
- **Tele instruction:** As an early hotbed of tele'ing, instruction came naturally to the early proponents of a new (old) type of turn here. Originally alpine ski teachers with cross country roots,

they brought depth and breadth to tele teaching.

- **Powder havens:** With snowfall to rival Utah's, and a northern latitude to keep the spoils from spoiling, Grand Targhee's powder quotient frequently tops the charts. Jackson's legendary terrain and adjacent Teton Range are a fertile medium for tele steep skiing and tele-mountaineering.
- **Tele racing:** Hosted the US Telemark Nationals in 1994.

North Cascades (Washington)

- **Backcountry skiing:** Stevens Pass has great skiing down the ridge and "across the street," and with the whole of the North Cascades at the doorstep, how could you not want to explore the beyond?
- **Tele instruction:** Steve Barnett wrote the seminal work, *Cross Country Downhill*, in 1976, opening the door to tele for skiers of both cross country and downhill backgrounds.
- **Powder havens:** Here's to an annual snowfall of 450 inches, albeit of a

generally greater wetness and density.

- **Tele racing:** Another host of US Telemark Nationals once upon a time, and home base to many a speed-racer hopeful.

Bear Valley (California)

- **Backcountry skiing:** With a backcountry run from the resort to the town, and off-piste patches on the way down, the "last run of the day" proves more poachable than proverbial.
- **Outdoor education programs:** Mountain Adventure Seminars is a hiker/climber/skier magnet led by Aaron Johnson and his family and crew. Backcountry hut and snow camping tours were guided in the 1970s and 80s, and now the programming focuses on avalanche education, snowcat powder tours, and a telemark festival.
- **Tele instruction:** The world-famous Bear Valley Telemark Festival has long been an annual academy for Silicon Valley types and Bay Area urbanites. Lessons and rentals have been available in Bear Valley since the early 1980s.

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- **Powder havens:** Up to 600 inches of Sierra goodness falls in a good year. That's nothing to sneeze at.
- **Tele racing:** Various iterations have been ongoing since the 1970s. The Slobberhorn and Koala Nordic Downhill led to the Sitzmark Cup, an awesome race with a Lemans start and a full Home Run downhill with mandatory costumes and huge party at the end.

Mad River Glen (Vermont)

- **Backcountry skiing:** All around Vermont, backcountry skiing opportunities abound. Cross country trails with high, snowy meadows and glades first tempted free-heelers into dabbling—and wanting more support, better edges, and single-cambered skis, which actually made skiing on man-made and Eastern snow a lot more fun.
- **Tele instruction:** Home base to Dickie Hall and his North American Telemark Organization, inducting thousands of tele'ers into the sport over the last few decades.

- **Powder haven:** For Vermont, the annual average of 250 inches is pretty respectable.
- **Tele racing:** Tele Festivals at Mad River have included gate racing for years.

Epidemiological Evolution

The evolution of every “cultural hub” has its own epidemiological story. In the case of telemark, it has to do with how the passion for snow or a new “snow tool” spawned forks in the road and niche sub-species to fill each habitat opportunity.

There's a story for each place or region, and the stories shape the sport. Take a closer look; commit to visit a hotbed. You're bound to get a richer sense of where today's snowsports come from, and what tomorrow's will look like. ☒

J. Scott McGee coaches the PSIA-AASI Nordic Team and is the director of Wyoming's Snow King Mountain Sports School. He thanks Art Burrows, Paul Peterson, and Chi Melville for the historical references in this article.

CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN, FROM CALIFORNIA TO CANADA

The ski mountaineering aspects of tele evolved quickly in the 1970s thanks largely to Vermont's Ned Gillette, a cross country racer from Dartmouth College, and some of his partners; Rick Barker, Art Burrows, Todd Eastman, and Dudley Rood. This group explored Canada and the Northwest and California Sierras, where new routes were put up on teles that were previously the domain of ice climbers and alpinists: the U Notch and V Notch. Other Sierra pioneers included Tom Carter, Glen Poulson, Dave Beck, and others. (Note: While this article cites telemark pioneers for context, it's not intended as a full accounting of those who shaped the sport in the U.S. If you know of someone worth including in a future article on the pioneers of America's telemark scene, email scottmcgee@wyom.net.)

— J. Scott McGee



Curing Cat Track Fever with a Terrain-based Approach

BY ERIC ROLLS

Terrain is what gives the mountain you shred upon its character. Sure, resorts can offer great amenities and aesthetically pleasing villages, but the contours of the hill or mountain are what spark the creativity of a snowy descent. As instructors and coaches, it's up to us to show our students and athletes the fun in using your snowboard to explore varying terrain.

In turn, riders learn many great skills from the challenges we create. To prepare these riders for future adventures, we can use the terrain itself to teach snowboarding at all levels.

Several resorts have invested in machine-sculpted features that assist in

learning. These are great teaching tools, and although ideal they're not always available. Natural terrain can create very useful learning areas, as well.

A useful feature I often see is a banked hillside where one fall line meets another. This often occurs where two trails merge,



DANN COFFEY

or if there is a steeper slope coming into a shallower slope at a different angle. It's the same concept as the halfpipe or a shaped berm, but not as neatly carved out throughout the transition. This type of natural or manmade feature serves many purposes.

One way I use this is to get riders to control their speed while preparing them for navigating cat tracks. It's very typical that once the new rider gets off the green learning hills, they will inevitably encounter some sort of traversing cat track. To skiers this may be easy terrain, but to many snowboarders it can be more challenging than any green level trail they've experienced.

Oftentimes, new riders steer clear of the drop-off side of the cat track. Favoring the banked hillside offers them an opportunity to carve their board up the hillside to slow down. I refer to this banked hillside as a runaway truck ramp; if riders gain too much speed on the cat track and panic, they can ride their edge up the bank to slow down. The skills involved for this "runaway truck ramping" are all activities that we typically use in our beginner progressions. These include body alignment, twisting the board, and edge control.

Try the following four activities with your students.

Static

Review the movements for turn initiation accomplished by twisting the board. Promote good body alignment



ERIC ROLLS

A banked hillside offers the perfect terrain for helping riders learn the speed-control tactics that will serve them well on cat tracks.

continuously. For example, on the toeside, coach students to bring their front knee over their toes by flexing the front knee and ankle. Have them keep their shoulders and chest upright. On the heelside, encourage them to bring the front knee past the outside of the foot just in front of the heel to increase weight toward the heel edge in the front part of the board.

Simple

While traversing on the heel edge, riders should over-exaggerate the knee by moving it uphill over the heel edge until the speed stalls out. Have them utilize a shallow garland by starting to initiate the toeside turn.

As the nose of the board starts to enter the fall line, they should return pressure to the heel edge by moving the leading knee over the heel edge so the board carves uphill and loses speed again (see photo montage). Have students try this during a toeside traverse so they can also feel the stall of speed at the apex of the garland on their toes. This can be done by dropping

the lead knee over the toes until the nose carves up the hill a bit. Then let the nose drift down the hill a bit and repeat.

For better edge control, coach riders to use both ankles simultaneously to change the board's edge angle to grip or slip the edge. When the board is flat, the board slips. When the board is on edge it grips and can assist with slowing down.

Find a steeper section of a green trail and have students practice heel slips and toe slips with a focus on feathering the edge up and down subtly by opening and closing the ankle joint. Similar to the floating leaf, it's a useful tool to have for many situations but shouldn't be depended upon for everything.

Complex

Find some terrain that has a transition similar to the cat track meeting the banked hillside. Have students practice finding a clean approach angle that has the smoothest entry onto the bank. Encourage them to work on absorbing where the two angles meet by flexing the knees upon contact. The board will help

by flexing as well. Promote good posture and alignment for balance.

Freeride

For a freeride focus, take some laps with your students and ask them to follow your line. Have them challenge themselves on the toe and heelside, at varying speeds and approach entries. When their confidence is high and they are not too fatigued, bring them to the cat track.

Familiarizing your students with the terrain that they are about to encounter will reduce fear and increase their success. Get creative with this concept by "funcasting" what their next terrain adventure will be. Teach them the skills to be successful and use other contours to prepare them for success. ☞

Eric Rolls is the ski and snowboard school training manager for Canyons Resort in Park City, Utah. Rolls is a second-term member of the PSIA-AASI Snowboard Team. Questions, comments, concerns, and jokes can be emailed to erolls@canyonsresort.com.

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Listen to the River's Crossover Cues for Snowboard Instruction

TEXT BY K.C. GANDEE; PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE LEONARD

All eight of them were looking at me intently, waiting for instruction. They were cold, but the excitement of the day drove them on. We'd already talked about safety, I'd explained and demonstrated what I needed them to do, and each person practiced the necessary moves and received specific feedback. It was up to them now.

As the horizon approached, I called "Forward three!" and we dropped into a train of breath-stealing icy blue waves. One after another crushed over the bow of the raft and soaked the crew. As I fought from my guide position in the stern to keep the raft going straight through the Class IV-rated Narrows on the Hudson

River Gorge in New York's Adirondack Park, I couldn't help but chuckle. This was just like a group snowboard lesson.

Creating Experiences

Teaching snowboarding has taught me much about people, structuring lessons, and coaching for breakthroughs. And

now as a raft guide, I find myself learning lessons I can bring back from the river and apply on the snow. It's not because rafting uses H₂O in liquid rather than frozen form that makes it like teaching snowsports, nor is it the thrill of challenging gravity and nature. The amazing similarities lie in the experience you create for your guests.

At the beginning of the day, you meet your group. It could be three people or nine. They may or may not know each other and some have no idea what they've gotten themselves into. The group could be athletic or puny. They could be naturally adventurous or dragged to the experience by a gung-ho buddy.

The bottom line is that it's my job to bring them safely down a stretch of river, ideally with a smile on their face and perhaps having learned something along the way. Safety, fun, and learning. Sound familiar? Here are some lessons that being a raft guide has taught me, which I plan on using this winter on the hill—and you can too.

Building Rapport

First we greet guests at our base, treating each like a friend as we help them fill out paperwork and fit each with a personal flotation device (PFD). Once at the river, we continue to build rapport by introducing guests to each other and learning more about them.

Sometimes I ask guests to tell the group their name and what they had for breakfast. No mere conversation starter, this question also gives me a way to gauge who is well-fueled and who is not. I also gather clues with questions like "What'd you do last night?" (providing a tip-off to who is well-rested), "What's the craziest thing you've ever done?" (offering insight



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on who is likely adventurous), and “If you were a salsa, what kind of salsa would you be?” (which helps me tailor the trip; will we be running the “hot” lines or going for the “mild” scenic tour?). These questions also help me remember names by relating experiences to the individual people in the crew.

During all of these ice breakers, I try to forge conversations by asking follow-up questions rather than just saying “thanks” and moving on to the next person. This builds cohesion, which helps the crew paddle better and have a better experience on the day.

Without doubt, I’ll be applying these lessons during lineup this season. I’ll approach guests first rather than wait until I’m called upon, and I’ll be sure to spend plenty of time warming up the group dynamic with questions and conversations that promote togetherness.



■ If this rafter’s PFD isn’t snug, it could be an interesting couple of minutes.

Gear Check

An equipment check is a simple but often overlooked piece of the puzzle for both rafting and snowsports. On the Hudson, the first rapid has a feature called Alarm Clock. It’s a hydraulic, or a “hole” (imagine a small waterfall on one side of the river). We’ll often take the raft sideways into Alarm Clock to soak the boat and start

with a blast. The impact can sometimes knock rafters out of the boat and into the water. This is fun and not as dangerous as it sounds!

To get clients back into the boat, we pull them in by the shoulder straps of their PFD. If their PFD is loose-fitting, it becomes difficult to haul them back in and they could end up swimming through a rapid with the PFD over their head. This is no fun and just as dangerous as it sounds.

Before going into my safety talk by the river, I’ve learned to always check the fit of each guest’s PFD and helmet. The snowboarding parallel here may not be as heavily associated with safety, but it’s just as important for the guests’ success and enjoyment of the experience.

Before leaving the meeting area, check boots, pants, layering, helmet fit, and other equipment items. Rather than wait until you see discomfort or a lack of performance during the lesson, you can stay one step ahead by, say, borrowing clothing from your area’s Lost and Found or taking the client back to the rental shop for better-fitting boots.

Creating the Expectation

When the river is high, rafters get a vastly different trip than when the river is low. The same goes for Pineapple Habenero Salsa rafters compared to Mango Lime Salsa rafters. It’s critical to the guest’s overall experience that they understand what to expect on the river, and that I accurately describe that in the beginning and fulfill the expectation I’ve created.



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For example, there was a time last year when the Hudson was very low, which ups the odds of occasionally getting stuck on the rocks. During my initial safety talk, I made sure my crew knew what to expect and what to do if we did become high and dry. I always estimated on the high side for frequency; that way if we didn't get stuck that often, they were stoked.

As a general rule in teaching snowboarding and guiding raft trips, I try to under-promise and over-deliver. In riding lessons this season, I'll make sure I outline the day for the group and let students know what to expect. Maybe we'll get up the lift, maybe not. Insert your own reasonable expectations here; just be sure you fulfill them!

This part of your lesson goes both ways; it's equally important to let clients know what's expected of *them*. During the safety talk and before we get on the river, I always outline the expectations of my crew. Some examples include:

- "If you bring good energy today, you'll have more fun!"
- "If we work as a team, that is, we all paddle together, the day will be much more successful."
- "I'll be steering the raft from the stern and you all will be providing the power to get us down the river and around obstacles."
- "This is what it will sound like when I ask you to paddle: "Forward three!"—meaning you'll all paddle three strokes forward."
- "If you like something, please tell me and we'll try to do more of that. Same goes if you don't like something we do."

When teaching snowsports, I'll consider something like this:

- "You might fall down today. If you do, just get back up! If you bring positive energy to the day, you'll have fun no matter what!"
- "During the lesson, I'll be describing and demonstrating body movements on which to focus. Try your best to perform those movements."
- "I won't be able to spend every moment with everyone in the group. I'll try to dance back and forth so everyone gets personal attention. If you need more, please let me know."



Setting the expectation for this hit is critical for keeping rafters in the boat and assuring their enjoyment.

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Observe and React

In rafting, each day is very different. Water level, weather conditions, the crew's strength and energy, and the size and weight of the boat all affect the commands guides use. To avoid the Soup Strainer in the Class IV Givney's Rift rapid, I sometimes call “Forward two.” Other times it can take as many as five forward strokes. For some groups, I'll ask for three strokes, then another three. So, yeah, it's “different strokes for different folks.”

Likewise, to create the best experience in a snowboard lesson, give individualized instruction. Each person should receive different feedback based on their performance and learning style. A visual learner might need a demonstration. An

auditory learner might need to hear how the board should sound during a particular type of turn or maneuver.

This may take some trial and error, but gauge your guests' responses and react. If they don't get it when you tell them what they need to do, show them! If they still don't get it, help them feel it. Keep going until you find the pathway that works.

After a summer on the river, I learned to easily assess the crew's enjoyment level and vary the trip accordingly. If they're smiling after we drop Alarm Clock, I'll hit more holes sideways. If they look terrified, I'll probably avoid holes for the rest of the trip.

This applies directly to teaching skiing and riding, but it's sometimes overlooked. Is your group smiling? If not, change it up! Move to different terrain, try a different drill or focus, or simply take a quick break. The point is, your “crew” is always telling you something, even if they aren't using words.

Pick Up Cues

When I'm guiding on the river, my spiel includes a ton of history of the area, as well as tales about the rapids, the industry, and the culture of whitewater and the Adirondacks. It never occurred to me that this information isn't what everyone wants

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until a guest on one trip told me “Dude, relax. You’ve earned your tip, we just want to get big hits and chill in between.”

From that moment on, I always listened more closely to what my crew wanted. I would throw out tidbits and facts. If I got follow up questions, I’d answer them and continue to throw out facts as long as the crew seemed interested. If they didn’t bite the first or second time, I’d abandon that program altogether.

The point is that your guests are each there for a different reason and need or want information in different ways. If one guest on the hill is constantly asking questions, take the cue and provide the info. If others are staring off into space, try giving the demo first before spending time explaining. Again, your guests are constantly communicating with you. Are you paying attention?

Leave ‘Em Smiling

The last three miles of water on the Hudson is an easy float. By the time we arrive at our take-out, the crew may have forgotten the awesomeness they experienced in the gorge, so I remind them. I volunteer my favorite part of the day and ask the crew to share theirs. This puts a great image of the trip in their minds (and directly affects my tips).

I also tell them about different seasons on the Hudson (for instance, the bigger water in the spring) and the other rivers my company rafts, as well as invite them to our ropes course and paintball operation. This gives them a good idea of our services and helps them feel like they belong.

On the hill in the winter, I’ve been guilty of spacing out on the lesson conclusion once or twice, but I’m positive I’ll remember now. I’ll remind the guests of their successes in my eyes and ask them to share their favorite part of the day. I’ll also be sure to tell them what to work on for the rest of the day and what we’ll work on when they come back for their next lesson.

In the Experience Business

When my New York guide license arrived in the mail I figured I was in for a fun summer job. I never imagined how much the gig would improve my ability to manage a group. By focusing on building strong rapport, inspecting gear, creating proper expectations, reacting to needs, and offering a strong conclusion, I’ve learned that I can provide a better lesson and create an amazing experience for guests. In the end, that’s what they will remember.

On snow, even if students learn to link turns on a snowboard, go directly to parallel on skis, or get off the chairlift without falling, it’s the whole experience that will keep them coming back. And it’s not just the big icy hits in the Narrows that my rafting crew remembers. It’s the jokes, the friends they make, and the feeling that they belonged to the tribe for the day. That goes for riding any form of H₂O. ☑

A former member of the PSIA-AASI Snowboard Team, K.C. Gandee is the director of snowboard programs at Killington Mountain School in Vermont.



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Be a Game Maker: You Too Can Have a Way with Play

TEXT BY MARK AIKEN; PHOTOS BY SHERRI HARKIN

Red Light, Green Light. Remote Control. Sharks and Minnows. Unidentified Flying Objects. These are all games I've seen instructors play in kids' lessons. Can I tell you the rules? Probably not. Can I recreate them in my lessons exactly the way other instructors play

them in theirs? Definitely not. Can I use some version of each of these games—and others—to produce a desired outcome and maybe even help my students improve as skiers and riders? You bet I can, and so can you.

As a member of Eastern Division's Advanced Children's Educator (ACE) team,

I lead a lot of children-specific clinics and generally ask participants what they want to get out of the day (or days). Now and then someone expresses a desire to discuss how childhood developmental levels affect learning. Sometimes someone is interested in strategies for class management for younger age groups.

Most commonly, however, the response I get is, "I want to learn more games."

So, if it's games you want, it's games you'll have. But not before we visit that oft-quoted Chinese proverb: "Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. Teach him to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime." That's right, rather than give you a list of games, I want to help you make up your own games. By the time you're finished here, you'll be a game maker and perhaps a *game changer*.

What Do Games Accomplish?

Games are fun, and children learn well by playing. Games are also great lesson-fillers and can add spice to a run that might



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otherwise become mundane. According to Deborah Stipek and Kathy Seal, authors of the parenting book *Motivated Minds*, “Play is a child’s first foray into loving learning.” It’s for this reason, no doubt, that children’s ski and snowboard instructors, like myself, are on the lookout for games. We all want to tap into a zone where learning occurs.

Let’s be honest, though; games do more than just help kids learn. Think of a lesson where you spend an entire day lapping the easiest bunny hill—often off the Magic Carpet or other beginner lift. Games can take the monotony out of doing the same run over and over, pass the time, and keep both student and instructor entertained.

When instructors ask me for games they can use in lessons, I often ask, “What skill do you want to address?” This sometimes

throws people for a loop, because some instructors play games for the sake of playing games without realizing the teaching opportunity they provide.

“When I introduce a game, it’s to bring the student to a higher level of understanding and skill execution,” said Sue Kramer, a PSIA-AASI Eastern Division examiner and head coach of the ACE team.

Brian Whatley, another Eastern Division examiner and a staff trainer at Vermont’s Stratton Mountain, also emphasizes that games should be about honing skills. “You’re trying to coach movements,” he said. “Games are an entry point that help you reach out to students, and they should address student needs.”

Thus, get students started with a game that addresses a specific movement, then modify it based on their needs. “Anything that’s going to help with agility, balance, and movements—these are good,” said Whatley.

The fact that games are fun and make lessons exciting, well, that’s good too.

What Kids Want, What They Need

A good starting place is to really understand the movements that comprise effective skiing and riding and then create games based on correcting those movements and skills. Using PSIA-AASI’s *Visual Cues for Effective/Ineffective Skiing* as a jumping-off point, Whatley recommends, for example, that instructors have four or five exercises—or games, if you will—for each visual cue.

So strive to improve your awareness of skills concepts, the components of good skiing and riding, and your movement analysis skills; then see what students are doing and what they need. That way you’ll be in position to use the right game or activity—or create one of your own.

Another reason it pays to be a game-maker rather than a “game-regurgitator” is that the games you learned at the last kids clinic may not interest the students in front of you at your next lesson.

“First, you need to make a connection with the kids,” said Kramer. “Find out what they’re into, what they’re reading, and what



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they do. Discover what interests you have in common with them, and if you have no common interests ask questions about theirs.”

As a game maker, you won't ask students who love horses to pretend to park their cars on the side of the hill. You could also be barking up the wrong tree if you ask voracious readers and lovers of poetry to *count* the number of short-radius turns they can make between point A and point B. In order to invent (or select) the right game, explore the student's mind and what the student likes. From there, watch them move and slide down the hill. Using this knowledge, you'll have what you need to design your game.

Let the Games Begin!

Okay, game maker, now that you understand how games can set up great learning situations as well as make your lessons fun

With beginner students, most tasks you introduce will be new. Experienced students may have seen the exercises before. Either way, you can frame tasks so that everyone discovers new information.

and interesting, let's start creating your own games—with the following tips.

Recycle

Don't think you have to totally start from scratch—there is no such thing as plagiarism in ski and snowboard instruction. It doesn't matter where you came across it; any game or activity that you hear about, observe, or are taught is in play (so to speak). Ask the veterans in your ski and ride school for ideas.

“You'll end up tweaking it somehow to make it work for you,” said Kramer. And

once you do, their idea becomes unique to your lessons.

Use Your Resources

Plenty of books, manuals, and magazines (like the one you're holding!) have game ideas. But don't stop there! Flip through your TV channels for ideas, and next thing you know you'll have your students skiing like their favorite superhero, imitating the rare cat you saw on *Animal Planet*, or riding like team Power Rangers Ninja Storm. If it's on TV, you aren't the only one who saw it; your students saw it too.

“Think of last summer's London Olympics,” said Kramer. “Who were their favorite athletes?” Ask your students how sprinter Usain Bolt would ski this mogul pitch and then go for it. What would swimmer Michael Phelps think about if he were to ride through these trees? How would soccer player Hope Solo dismount the chairlift? Get them thinking about ways to approach different on-hill situations. And then do it!

Explore

With beginner students, most tasks you introduce will be new. Experienced students may have seen the exercises before. Either way, you can frame tasks so that everyone discovers new information, along the lines of “Let's see who can lift the uphill ski off the snow as we traverse across the hill!” or “Who can execute the most leapers between here and there?”

Alternatively, if some students have trouble getting their skis off the snow surface—or if they use inefficient movements to do so (say, they lean back in order to get their ski tips off the snow)—have them modify their leapers. Your cue might be “Who can make strong extension movements but take the leap out (i.e., do everything in a leaper but leap)?”

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“In order to become intelligent,” said Whatley, “you must test what you think you know.”

Set up challenges for students. Ask what different movements feel like for them and learn through play as a team.

Have a Party!

Obviously, the developmental level of your students will help you decide what game to play. Younger students—say, from ages 3 to 7—tend to prefer “social play” to competitions or games fraught with rules. The mindset of this age group is to have fun together. It’s a great mindset to tap into. For instance, “Let’s all make funny faces while we ski!” makes way for “Let’s all turn this direction!”, which becomes “Let’s all stand on these edges and let our skis carve this way!”

Then, of course, it’s high fives all around while you look for the next kind



How about inviting children to a “one-ski party” to help them learn new tasks in a spirit of fun and games?

of party to have. “It’s a one-ski party!” “It’s a bump party!” “It’s a backwards-skiing party!” Everyone loves a party—and no one more than 3- to 7-year-olds.

Make a Rule

Older students may be more open—even interested—in rules and results. This is where you may be able to really focus on

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performance, even in the most mundane tasks. “A simple drill of making J-turns can turn into a game or contest,” said Kramer. Have the group execute J-turns and then have them inspect and decide who left the cleanest tracks in the snow. “Competition is okay with kids between 8 and 11,” Kramer said. And competition doesn’t have to be limited to student-versus-student. Let the group compete against you; if they win, then they all win together.

Meanwhile, as you ski down the hill with your group, make a rule. “Do it slower,” suggested Kramer. “Or do it faster.” If that goes well, make another rule. Let them self-judge, and if they “break a rule,” assign consequences. Perhaps say something like “Everyone try to ski on one ski. If your ski touches the snow, you have to yell ‘Fluffy Bunnies’ three times loud.”

“Friendly competition heightens awareness,” said Kramer.

Make a Game of Making a Game

Tired of all this game making? Well, there’s one resource we haven’t tapped:

your students. You don’t have to do all the work; ask *them* for ideas! According to Robert Fried in *Passionate Learners*, “Children—as passionate learners—are meant to be heard.”

Or make a game of making a game. Start a run by making a rule, for example everyone has to hum while they ski. After a few turns, regroup and ask a student to come up with another rule; maybe he suggests tapping one ski. Another student’s rule might be that everyone has to alternate tapping skis. The next student adds hopping. The next student adds a booty-shake. By the time the run is over, your group has invented a whole new game—and, by the sound of it, a whole new sport! At any rate, this group practiced balancing skills, agility skills, versatility . . . and they had a blast doing it.

Do, But Don’t Overdo

Activities in children’s lessons don’t have to be elaborate productions; in fact, a case can be made for the simpler the better. Also, don’t overdo the games. “Kids don’t need to be playing games all the time,”

said Kramer. “They enjoy each other’s company, and sometimes the experience of schussing down the hill is enough.”

It’s easy to fall into a trap in which you feel the need to entertain your students every second they’re with you. Don’t forget the reason their parents brought them to the mountains in the first place—and the reason we all come. The magic is in the mountains and kids sense that. Play, learn, ski, and ride. “It’s about mileage,” said Whatley. “And, with the right games and activities, we can make it quality mileage.” **32°**

Mark Aiken’s growing resume includes Level III alpine, Level I snowboard, Level I telemark certifications; as well as roles on Eastern Division’s accredited children’s educator and division clinic leader teams. He serves as a supervisor for the Stowe Ski and Snowboard School in Vermont when he isn’t writing for The New York Times, Trail Runner magazine, or 32 Degrees, among others. His favorite ski partners are his wife Alison and his dog Oscar.



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A Mini Pipe Can Be a Mega Boost for Skill Development

BY RYAN CHRISTOFFERSON

Over the past few years, terrain-based teaching (TBT) has taken off and is becoming common at more and more mountains. The idea behind TBT is to create success in students by developing non-threatening terrain that will help them feel the movements or sensations we are trying to teach while being more hands off.

Another bonus to TBT is that many of these features resemble those found in terrain parks, which is where many of our students, especially the younger ones, want to go. The first place I came in contact with TBT was at California's Northstar, in the Burton Academy. It was so successful that Northstar soon incorporated it into the rest of the ski and snowboard school.

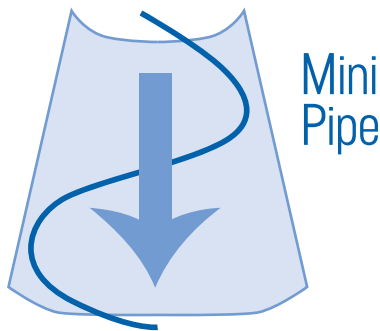


Figure 1

Maximizing the Mini Pipe

Areas have created many different features to help students learn a variety of movements, from gliding for the first time to developing flow and linking turns, all in an area that promotes confidence rather than frightens them. One feature I find very useful is a mini halfpipe, especially because it helps students gain confidence in linking turns. A mini pipe is just what it sounds like, a very non-threatening version of a halfpipe in which the center

goes down a gentle fall line and the upslope on both sides is slight (fig. 1).

Linking turns is a vital ability for students to develop because it puts them in control of navigating down the hill while managing speed. Before you take students to a mini pipe, they should be able to turn both ways and, hopefully, use the turn as a means to stop. However, if they're still relying on their wedge for braking, that's okay; the mini pipe will help with speed control.

The mini pipe does a number of things to boost confidence in linking turns. 1) The gentle upslope helps students control their speed as they come across the hill, and 2) The walls on both sides create a controlled area, helping students get a feel for flow while also protecting them from others on the hill. These are bonuses for you as an instructor because you can put students in a controlled environment that will help take their minds off the "scary" parts of skiing and allow them to focus on what you've been teaching them.

A Tutor for Turn Shape

With the environment made more friendly, you can now concentrate on using the mini pipe to help students develop their turns. When teaching turns to newer students, you essentially want them to shift their weight to the outside ski and rotate the leg to turn the ski. While



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mitigating some of fears related to skiing, the mini pipe can promote the sensation of shifting weight to one side.

As students approach the right side and start to go up the slope, the shape of the terrain controls their speed but also moves some of their weight to the right side as they start to go up the hill (before the left leg follows suit). That allows you to help students focus on rotating their legs to help steer their skis through the turn and across the hill to the next wall. In short, it allows you to focus on one skill instead of all the pieces that might become overwhelming to your students in early turning phases.

No Mini Pipe In Sight? Use a Gully

Clearly, mini pipes can aid early skill development . . . but what if your home resort doesn't have a grooming department that creates a mini pipe or any of the other features that have been created for terrain-based teaching applications? I'm willing to bet your mountain will have natural features that resemble many of these. A gully, for instance, can be a great stand-in for a mini pipe.

Whether or not your resort offers terrain-based features, go out and ski/board on what you have—whether natural or manmade—and get creative. Feel what they do to you as you ride through them and think of more ways they can be used to develop skills for all levels of students. ☑

Ryan Christofferson is a freestyle specialist on the PSIA-AASI Alpine Team. He is the head freestyle coach at Northstar California.

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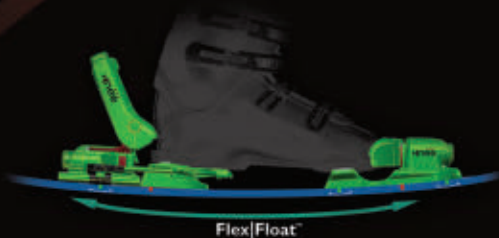
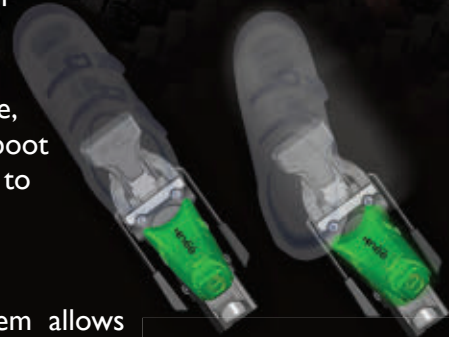


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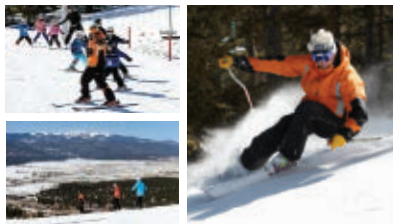
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Bottineau Winter Park
Bottineau, North Dakota
Starting: Fall 2013



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An ideal candidate should be PSIA certified, have a Bachelor's degree in business, and/or 5 or more years of relevant adaptive recreational experience. Have exceptional communication, grant writing and organizational skills, ability to work with board members, management, volunteer's and service providers.

Qualified candidates can mail or email Resume by September 30th, 2013 to Bradley Knudson, GM to ski@bottineau.com or mail to Bottineau Winter Park, Po Box 168, Bottineau, ND 58318. Call 701-263-4556 for additional information.

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Yellowstone Club Snowsports School is accepting applications for winter 2013/2014 for the following positions:

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Through the Lens

For Marina Gilpatrick, a Level I alpine instructor at Maine's Sugarloaf Mountain, this photo is all about hard work, dedication, and accomplishments. She snapped the pic on a day the lifts were closed due to high winds, and said: "As a seasonal program coach, wind-hold days are some of my favorites. I usually have one or two dedicated students who show up for the day, and my plan is always to hike up the mountain until we have half an hour left of our two-hour session, then ski down. It's something special for the kids to take away from the program and they really enjoy being the only ones in the group (of usually 9) for the day. This photo reminds me of when my students and I had the chance to ski some untouched drifts that had formed overnight. I'm elated that I had at least one student who showed up when every lift was shut down, because they just wanted to be on snow. Go team!"

Hard work and dedication describe Gilpatrick too. Last season, she juggled going to school in Boston (for engineering classes, no less) and traveling a total of eight hours by train, bus, and car every weekend to be able to ski and teach skiing. Attaining her Level I and Children's Specialist 1 credentials were highlights of her 2012-13 season, in addition to and training for and passing Part 1 of her Level II alpine exam.

"I enjoyed meeting people who loved skiing as much as I do and really appreciated the training opportunities we have at Sugarloaf," she said. "It was a privilege to ski with the examiners we had. They are so knowledgeable about skiing!"

INQUIRING MINDS

SPRING
2013

"What was the best customer service that you witnessed this season?"

Emily Maurer, the director of membership and continuing education for Central Division, goes above and beyond when working with members. She's always been very kind and prompt in answering my questions and helping me register for clinics at the student rate. — Jennifer DeMarco, Alpine Level II, Central Division.

NEXT
32°

"What's the best thing your area or resort has done to boost participation in skiing and snowboarding?"

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

Another season is right around the corner, but if that corner is further away than you'd hoped, you're probably going through withdrawal right about now. We've got your back, or at least a back page of images and stories that dull the pain of waiting to get back on snow. Have your own anecdote or high-resolution photo that should grace this space? Send it on in to 32Degrees@thesnowpros.org and put "Last Chair" in the subject line. You just might win a \$25 gift certificate to the *Accessories Catalog*.

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