

PSIA/AASI

NORTHWEST

Spring 2010

Issue #3 2009/10 Season  
PNSIA-EF

# NW snowsports vwinstructor

**Spring's coming!  
It's time to Party!**

Symposium April 9-11 in Sun Valley, Idaho

**first the proof,  
then the pudding**  
Measuring Counter



**more snow pro tips**

Alpine, Snowboard,  
Telemark & Track

**examine, diagnose,  
then prescribe**  
Build Great Lessons





# Bergans

OF NORWAY

PSIA AASI  
NORTHWEST



Bergans of Norway is a proud supporter of PSIA-NW



Svartisen Jacket



[www.bergans.com](http://www.bergans.com); Bergans North America, Seattle, WA (206) 329-2088; [info@bergans.com](mailto:info@bergans.com)

# contents

## features

## the goods

- 04 **State of the Union**  
Board of Directors Messages
- 08 **Certification: Levels of Understanding**  
by Chris Thompson
- 09 **Teaching Through Sciencing: Guiding the Ownership of Information**  
by Linda Cowan
- 19 **Snow Pro Tips: Alpine, Snowboard, Telemark and Track Tips**  
from Northwest Divisional Staff
- 22 **Early Season Training with PSIA-NW Divisional Staff**  
by Brad Jacobson
- 27 **Are You New? Cool!**  
Scholarships, Go With A Pro and Member Benefits
- 28 **Pink Elephants and Flaming Ducks: Children Specific Tips**  
compiled by Jodi Taggart
- 29 **Play-Drill-Adventure-Summary**  
by Dustin Semb
- 30 **What I Learned at Technical Team Training**  
by Nick McDonald



- 10 **First the Proof Then the Pudding**  
Measuring Counter  
by Dave Lucas



- 14 **Symposium in Sun Valley**  
Get the Details of the Annual Spring Party



- 24 **Examine, Diagnose, then Prescribe**  
Building Great Lessons: Learn from the Nords



## cover

FRONT: PSIA-NW TECHNICAL TEAM AT TEAM TRAINING IN JANUARY 2010 WITH NATIONAL TEAM MEMBER GUEST COACH MICHAEL ROGAN. PHOTO TAKEN AT STEVENS PASS BY KIRSTEN HUOTTE.



# State of the Union

## President's Report

by Jack Burns, PSIA-NW President



As we start the new year, I want to thank both the office and the on-snow staff for the hard work they have done over the summer and fall planning for the 2009/2010 season.

By now, you have all probably heard about the Association Management System which is coming online. Online dues payment is available, automated billing will begin with next season's bills, online event registration is in the implementation stage and should be available next season, updates to the PSIA national website are in progress and our accounting system has been enhanced and is available online through ASEA. While all the changes that have happened, and are in the process of happening, are virtually transparent to you, they have put a tremendous burden on the northwest staff.

Barb, Nicole, Joan and Kirsten have had to do their regular work load of processing dues, setting up events and communicating with members while at the same time, respond to requests from ASEA for data transfer, assist in the set up, verification and testing of new systems and participating in online training, all in order to efficiently operate the new software. This has been a difficult and often frustrating time for them. However, they have persevered despite the many challenges they have faced.

I want to extend my thanks to each of them for a great and well done job. As we move forward, you will be able to enjoy the fruits of their efforts as these new systems provide you with increased access to a wider range of current information about membership status and benefits as well as useful links between the PSIA-NW and ASEA national offices.

I also want to thank our Divisional Clinic Leaders for their hard work that will enable them to provide you with new and modified events that offer the training opportunities you have requested. Fall training this year was well attended and work progressed in several areas. The Specialist programs for Seniors, Freestyle and Children are all taking shape. The goal for each of them is to have a similar look and feel that provides introductory as well as more advanced information to clinic participants in successive events.

Staff training is being enhanced to insure consistency in event content as well as in the quality of the presentations. The goal is to make these specialty clinics truly educational events and, at the same time, provide an assessment to the participant about their performance in order to further their growth and development.

Another shout out must go to Tyler Barnes, our newly elected (May 2009) Communications Vice President. The changes to the *Northwest Snowsports Instructor* newsletter have been dramatic and have received universal acclaim. What is not so readily apparent is the amount of time and effort it has taken to coordinate and technically accomplish the changes at little or no cost to the membership.

In his off-snow job, Tyler is the founder and creative force behind 509 Inc., a company which provides design services for print-based materials (like this newsletter) and web-development services for database-driven websites (like our soon-to-be-launched divisional website). Even so, it took an extraordinary amount of his personal time to accomplish the changes you have seen in the last two newsletter issues; time well beyond that which one would expect of a typical volunteer. Thank you Tyler.

Finally, I want to thank those who have chosen to run for seats on the Board of Directors. For the first time in several years we will have contested elections to fill open Board seats. More gratifying is that those elections will fill seats in the Bend and Whitefish regions, both of which have been vacant. Only through your volunteer efforts can our organization continue to function and grow.

On a more serious note, I need to report that the Board took action at its September 20, 2009 meeting to stanch the economic burden of offering Lifetime Membership to our Forty Year Members.

Currently, Forty Year Members pay no Northwest Division dues but pay National dues of \$50 per year. This practice was introduced several years ago when there were only a handful of Forty Year Members and it was not expected that this number would grow substantially. Unfortunately, that prediction was in error.

Currently, there are 190 Forty Year Members and that number is expected to double in the next 6-7 years. The cost in lost membership dues is over \$7,200 per year. To further add to the burden, 75% of the 190 Forty Year Members are not part of an active member group that participates in events. In addition, beginning this year, PSIA-NW will be required to pay to ASEA \$2.25 per year per

member in order to maintain membership information on the new database.

In these tough economic times, the Board painfully determined that it was unfair to require current active members to subsidize the cost of these longtime members. Accordingly, effective with the next billing cycle, Forty Year Members will be required to pay divisional dues, in addition to national dues, in order to maintain their certification status and continue as active members of ASEA and PSIA-NW.

As we slide into the new season, let's pray for lots of snow, great weather during the day and a successful teaching season. ❄️

---

*Jack Burns is a 40 plus year member of PSIA, an Alpine Level III certified instructor, as well as a trainer and supervisor for Fiorini Ski School. He can be reached by email at the\_lawyer@msn.com*

## Every Penny Counts

by Diana Suzuki

PSIA-NW Financial Vice President



As we start the new year and look forward to a happy and successful 2010 I hope you are marking your calendar to attend many of the wonderful educational events planned for you by the staff and volunteers of your PSIA-NW Division.

For myself, I have already booked tickets to Sun Valley for Symposium in April and am looking again to attend the Summer Ski Camp in July on Mt. Hood. Where else can you ski in the morning and then choose another sport such as golf, hiking, biking, etc. in the afternoon. What a way to get a great day of skiing under the sun with friends!

The events for the upcoming season are on the PSIA-NW web site, as well as detailed in the Winter 2009 issue of this newsletter in the special Season Guide section. Please take a moment, check out the opportunities and put the dates on your calendar. Sign-up early and on-time as most late-season events fill up fast!

PSIA-NW strives to provide our membership high quality educational events for the lowest price possible. Many organizations are cutting back and running leaner than in the past due to the current state of the economy. I am proud to share

# It's More than a Card

with you our NW Division has been value driven and cost conscious over the years. As a result, how we manage our budgets, despite the state of the economy has not changed. Even during a bull-market we spend money very cautiously and make every penny count.

Attendance at events is an area that the organization can really benefit from your involvement. The more events you attend the better off the financial state of your organization. So, spend your money wisely and with an organization that supports you. So please join us for some great events during the 2009-2010 snow sport season.

And don't forget if you need winter clothing or other gear deals, they are available on the National web site at [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org). I recently purchased some great products from Patagonia, and the money I saved by receiving these specials prices have now paid for my 2009-2010 dues. Membership has its privileges. ❄️

*Diana Suzuki is a 36 year member, an Alpine Level III Certified instructor, and works as an instructor and trainer for Clancy's Ski School, Stevens Pass. Email her at [Diana.Suzuki@astronics.com](mailto:Diana.Suzuki@astronics.com)*

## Symposium News

by Mary Germeau

PSIA-NW Executive Vice President



As the 2010 ski and snowboard school season continues, we are all anticipating working with a lot of new students and passing on our love of the snow, the mountains and snowsports. We are also anticipating the Winter

Olympics at Whistler and other exciting activities, none more exciting than Symposium in Sun Valley again this April.

But nothing could be more exciting than our annual fund-raiser to benefit the PNSIA Education Foundation. In addition, we will be sharing this Symposium event with participants from Intermountain, Northern Intermountain, East, and Northern Rocky Mountain so we will have an opportunity to meet and ski or ride with some new people and work with some new Divisional clinicians. We are planning to coordinate our fundraiser with the Intermountain organization.

I know you will now start to find those special things to donate to the annual raffle or find a item to contribute to the silent auction. This is

a little heads up for the "usual suspects" on the board, and those in mountain and snowsports school management, but contributions from anyone is greatly appreciated. Please note my personal contact information at the end of the article. This will facilitate your contacting me with your possible contributions. Each year we have been successful in earning between two and four thousand dollars for the EF fund due to our member's generosity.

As you may know, the PNSIA-EF is a not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) charitable organization, so your contributions are tax deductible. The revenue generated from benefits held at events like Symposium help fund the development of advanced training programs like the new Senior Specialist curriculum and fund scholarships for members.

Due to the number of dinner guests at the banquet this year, we will be changing some of the format of the raffle and silent auction. Tickets will be sold by both instructor associations (Northwest and Intermountain) on Thursday evening, Friday morning, Friday evening, and Saturday morning; however, sales will close at that time. Winning raffle names will be drawn after the Saturday classes and compiled on a list which will be posted at the no-host cocktail hour and during the banquet. You may buy, and win from either group, Northwest or Intermountain. Winners of raffle prizes will be able to collect their prizes on Saturday evening.

The silent auction portion of our fundraiser will be on display for bid during the no-host cocktail hour and the banquet. All items in the auction will be listed and described during ticket sales on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, so potential bidders can get a sneak preview and make their bidding plans. Bids will be made on Saturday evening for the items in the auction and the winners circled on the bid boards near the end of the party. Naturally, yours truly will be available to collect your payments.

We are all looking forward to a wonderful time at "the Valley" and a successful fundraiser for the PNSIA Education Foundation. I know that all of you who have received scholarship monies from the fund will agree this is a worthy cause deserving your contributions in terms of items for the raffle and auction as well as your contribution, in the form of buying raffle tickets and bidding on items. ❄️

*Mary Germeau is co-owner and operator of Olympic Ski School at Stevens Pass. You can reach her by email at [maryolympic@hotmail.com](mailto:maryolympic@hotmail.com)*



*I love being a part of the organization that supports the sport that consumes my winters. Skiing is a family affair for us. PSIA gives me the source for training to be the best instructor and skier I can be. The members are a wonderful group of skiers and boarders – friends! I look forward to seeing them at seasonal training sessions. There are other perks too – too many to list, but they just enhance the whole package.*

## Did You Know?

The Pacific Northwest Snowsports Instructor Association - Education Foundation (PNSIA-EF) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, so your contributions are tax deductible. The revenue generated from benefits held at events like Symposium help fund the Education Foundation. The Board of Directors then approves funds from the Education Foundation to be spent on special projects brought to the Board relative to:

- Development of instructor educational programs
- Establishing scholarship funds for members
- Production of training films and manuals
- Research and development in snowsports teaching
- Development of advanced training programs



## Back Issues: Available, Accessible, and Searchable

by Tyler Barnes

PSIA-NW Communications Vice President

Last week, while researching a specific lesson plan idea for a group of multi-week junior high school aged "freestyle" students I sifted through my library of back issues of the *NW Snowsports Instructor*. In so doing, I came across some valuable articles that were published over the past 10 years that relate to some of the content in this issue, as well as to present-day teaching strategies and technical information.

Having grown up in an age where withdrawing money occurred at anytime and just about anywhere via the Automated Teller Machine (ATM), not with a real teller at a bank during banker's hours, I have come to expect that information be accessible. Accessible to me means information is available at anytime from anywhere.

My back issues were actually very accessible: they were in a stacked pile on the floor of my office loosely organized by year. Yes indeed, very accessible. I could easily just pick one up and start flipping through it. Hmm, but what I was looking for was somewhere in that one issue I saw back in 2005, or was it in the 2007 issue? During this "old school" search I came across an article titled "Flow Like a River: Developing Counter vs. Countering Movements" by Karin Harjo in the Fall 2003 Issue on page 4 – if you don't have your back issues in a pile like me, you can just as easily search the "new school" way, on-line at the psia-nw.org website. Click the search link in the left-hand column, then type "flow like a river" in the search field. Broaden your search by typing "counter" and your search results will include numerous "pearls of wisdom" on this topic ranging from authors like Ron Kipp, Nelson Wingard, and Steve Frink to name a few.

Some may ask, "What is so great about these back issues? I already read that article." Well, at the time you read that article for the first time, you may not have been ready for it; the information was not relevant to your current state of being. Then perhaps you received some feedback from an examiner, "You need to turn your legs more than your upper body, which creates counter. Once you can do this accurately and consistently for your desired turn size you will meet the National Standards." Once the outcome of the exam begins

to sink in, you begin to reread the exam feedback, sometimes weeks or months later, and seek to find the answer to being successful at the next exam.

Part of being successful at the next exam involves having a personal understanding of a given topic. Karin's article relates to John's article and Dave's article. Content on the same topic by three very knowledgeable individuals, each from a different background and way of describing their concepts relative to "counter." The ability to access these different articles on the same topic is a huge value. Now you can begin to create your own understanding of this topic from multiple sources of information. I would argue that we all have the physical ability to ski or ride at a very high level of performance, but only if you understand how and why you need to move your body to achieve your desired outcome. Alas, this is a whole other article in the making.

So, I started out looking for an article about introducing rails to beginners and in so doing came across various other topics that caught my attention, so much so that I had to stop searching for the article I was initially seeking, and read these other articles, and well, then it was 1am. The process, while valuable in its own right, took me way too long to actually find what I was searching for. The next time you need to do some research on a given topic and start hand searching for the topic in your back issues, but don't have until 1am, or don't have all your back issues, just head to the search link on the psia-nw.org website.

By the way, the new and improved psia-nw.org website will be on-line soon where each article will have key words associated to them for more reliable search results. New articles will allow you to post your comments and get clarification from the author and readers. It should be cool. ❄️

*Tyler is an instructor and trainer at Mt. Hood Meadows Ski Resort, is a member of the PSIA-NW Technical Team, and an Alpine Examiner. He is also the owner of 509 INC, a print-and-web design company with more than 10 years of experience on-and-off line. Email him at tyler@509design.com*



## NW snowsports Winstructor

Professional Snowsports Instructors of  
America-Northwest,  
Pacific Northwest Snowsports Instructors  
Association – Education Foundation  
11206 Des Moines Memorial Drive, Suite 106  
Seattle, Washington 98168  
Phone (206) 244-8541 • Fax (206) 241-2885  
office@psia-nw.org • www.psia-nw.org

### Contacts & Submissions

Jodi Taggart, Editor  
j\_taggart@msn.com

Tyler Barnes, Communications VP  
tyler@psia-nwtechteam.org

PSIA-NW Office  
office@psia-nw.org

### General Submission Deadlines

Download the Ad Rate & Specifications Guide  
from www.psia-nw.org website.

#### Fall Issue (Sep – Nov)

Published mid-September  
Ad Reserve 8/1 Content 8/15

#### Winter Issue (Dec – Feb)

Published late-November  
Ad Reserve 10/1 Content 10/20

#### Spring Issue (Mar – May)

Published mid-February  
Ad Reserve 1/1 Content 1/20

#### Summer Issue (Jun – Aug)

Published mid-June  
Ad Reserve 5/1 Content 5/20

### Guidelines for Contributors

The *NW Snowsports Instructor* is published four times per year. This newsletter will accept articles from anyone willing to contribute. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit all submissions including advertising. Articles should include the author's name, mini-bio and portrait image suitable for publishing (if available). Please submit all content, articles and photos as attachments via email or contact the editor for other options. All published material becomes the property of PSIA-NW. Articles are accepted for publication on the condition that they may be released for publication in all PSIA National and Divisional publications. Material published in this newsletter is the responsibility of the author and is not necessarily endorsed by PSIA-NW.

## National Report

by Ed Younglove, National Board Member  
and PSIA-NW National Representative

The American Snowsports Education Association (ASEA) met in Denver on January 27-28, 2010. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Division Presidents Council meeting and at the same time as the 2010 SnowSports Industries America (SIA) "Snow Show" trade show.

The "Snow Show" highlights the hottest snow sports trends, innovations, educational seminars, product presentations, personalities and events. Featuring over 3,100 exhibitors representing over 800 snow sports brands, including over 125 new exhibitors the show provided the opportunity for board members and presidents to interact with our important industry partners. The PSIA/AASI booth ran the Go With A Pro videos for tradeshow attendees.

The board meeting highlight was a look at the new association software (CRM4M) and some of its features. The web based programs will allow members greater web access, to register for events on line, renew membership, update member profiles, etc. The association will be able to better identify and meet individual member needs, schedule and staff events and retrieve membership data. The national association purchased the software and central hardware.

ASEA and the divisions will share equally in on going maintenance costs on a prorated, per member basis. As of the board meeting, service agreements with each of the divisions were being finalized. Members should only see a seamless partnership between all the divisions and the national organization. It was pretty exciting to see the possibilities now that the several year initial development phase is finally drawing to a close.

Other board action included the first steps to amend the association's articles and bylaws to make them more current and consistent with present practices. The new articles will require membership approval and you should be receiving

information and an opportunity to approve the proposed amendments in the future. I encourage you to approve them as our current articles are woefully out of date. The proposed bylaw changes will require a second board vote, after input from the divisions.

The audited financial report given to the board was positive and showed the organization to be in good financial condition even despite the breakup with National Ski Patrol (NSP) and the large outlay for the association software, hardware and development costs.

2011 will be the Fiftieth Anniversary of the organization. Plans are already underway for a very special combined Rider Rally and National Academy at Snowmass in early April 2011. The celebratory event will feature all four disciplines: alpine, snowboard, adaptive and nordic. It's not too early to start thinking about attending; it promises to be quite a party!

A national Fifty year membership pin is also in final design stages. 2011 is also the Sixtieth anniversary of Interski, the premier international snowsports education event. The event will be held where it all began, in St. Anton Austria in mid-January 2011 and special offerings are in the works for PSIA/AASI members. Meanwhile,

this year's Academy will be at Snowbird, April 17-22, 2010. The Rider Rally will be at Copper Mountain on March 9-10, 2010. Mark your calendars and be sure and read the next issue of 32 Degrees.

The board and presidents received an update from Michael Berry, National Ski Area Association (NSAA) Executive Director on his model for growth and the "cookbook for success." Recent studies reflect

2011 will be  
the Fiftieth  
Anniversary of  
the organization.  
Plans are already  
underway for  
a very special  
combined Rider  
Rally and National  
Academy at  
Snowmass in early  
April 2011.

seasoned instructors do not necessarily have greater success in converting new comers to snowsports. The critical factor for conversion appears to have more to do with the instructor's ability to empathize with his/her students, assuage their fears and ensure they have a good experience, than the instructor's years of experience.

Not so coincidentally, the organization's unity task force which had been focusing on a national level III exam, has re-directed its focus on Level I instructors. Many of us have long felt that this was a more critical need for the growth of the industry.

Progress was reported on the organization's quality assurance initiative. The education department has done extensive research into various credentialing organizations' best practices and quality assurance programs. The new association software (CRM4M) should prove a useful tool in obtaining member feedback on the quality of the organization's program and products.

After the meeting, I enjoyed a few days of skiing with a northwest instructor taking a sabbatical to teach full-time this winter in Aspen. Ain't life grand. ❄️

Ed Younglove is a past PSIA-NW President, current PSIA-NW National Representative and Alpine DCL. He teaches at Crystal Mountain for the Crystal Mountain Ski and Snowboard School. He can be reached by email at [edy@ylclaw.com](mailto:edy@ylclaw.com).



The critical factor  
for conversion  
appears to have  
more to do with the  
instructor's ability  
to empathize with  
his/her students,  
assuage their  
fears and ensure  
they have a good  
experience...





# Certification: Levels of Understanding

by Chris Thompson  
PSIA-NW Certification Vice President

Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) and the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI) divisions have been conducting skiing certification exams since the early 1960s, and snowboard exams beginning in 1996. We all know that testing is an integral element of the education process. Each of the eight other divisions inclusive of Alaska, Western, Intermountain, Northern Intermountain, Northern Rocky Mountain, Rocky Mountain, Central and East have an exam similar to that of the Northwest. Functionally they vary in time and duration however, all are looking for similar outcomes. As an instructor seeking to improve teaching and skiing or riding skills, look at the exam as an opportunity to challenge yourself and to learn; not as something to be feared.

Both the Alpine and Snowboard Northwest Certification Guides point out that the premise of the certification standards is based upon the concepts of “levels of understanding” which define stages of learning in degrees of understanding. As certification is a measure of understanding, levels of certification represent stages of understanding. Candidates are held to the knowledge and performance standards of the level at which they are testing as well as the criteria for all preceding levels. The exam guide is a living document constantly edited to best reflect current skiing, riding and teaching trends.

## Examiner and Divisional Staff Training

Divisional Staff training is held twice per season with the first training at Mt. Hood in mid-November and the second in early to mid-March, typically at Stevens Pass. The Friday of each session is devoted to the exam process. At the fall training, we focused on how to improve the overall exam process. In the spring, we review the current standards to ensure that the exams are conducted according to the certification guide. Although it is exam oriented, the examiners as well as the Divisional Clinic Leaders are engaged in the training process to ensure the message delivered at divisional functions is consistent.

The Divisional Staff is comprised of individuals from all levels of member ski and snowboard schools. They are directors, supervisors, full time

and part time teachers or coaches. They work for resident and concession schools. They come from different walks of life and varying skiing or riding experiences. They all have a passion for teaching snowsports and are devoted to working with their guests including the public as well as other instructors.

Last season the focus of the alpine staff was on the teaching and professional knowledge segment of the Level II exam. The Level II topics were rewritten to better reflect the current Alpine Technical Manual - Second Edition, Core Concepts for Snowsports Professionals and other current teaching manuals and resource materials. Both Level II and Level III result sheets were reworked providing the examiners the opportunity to better express their findings. It is the examiners goal to provide the examinees with constructive feedback, including concrete, and attainable short and long term goals. Much is the same with the snowboard, nordic and adaptive exams.

## Exam Preparation

There are three exam modules – written, skiing/riding, teaching/professional knowledge. The modules of the exams are designed to test the skill and knowledge you have amassed throughout your teaching career. It truly is your opportunity to showcase your skiing or riding skills, as well as your teaching skills and professional knowledge. Look at the exam positively and you will derive the greatest benefit.

Each day you are on the snow with your students or free riding, you are rehearsing for your time in the exam spotlight. The primary differences in the exam and day to day teaching are two fold:

1. time allowed to work with your students;
2. you will be working with your peers versus paid guests.

Yet, your charge is the same, being prepared, working with the teaching cycle, communicating effectively. You will be working to enhance the skiing or riding, and knowledge of your peers.

Throughout the season, I am certain that you will have the support of your peers, trainers, supervisors, and divisional staff members you interact with. All of them are there to help you succeed, along with the examiner staff.

As is said, it is not the pin as much as it is the path along the way. The final outcome is more the personal gains and the ability for you to become a better teacher and coach.

## Exam Process

The on-snow module of the exams is always staffed by two examiners. On the alpine side, this season, we are working to have the makeup of the teaching/professional knowledge module also have two examiners working together. We feel that this will make for a more complete and equitable exam. In addition to the staffing changes we have adjusted the Level II and III teaching topics and modified the skiing task descriptions.

If you have any questions regarding the changes or the exam process, the divisional staff email addresses are listed on the PSIA-NW website. ❄️



Chris Thompson is the PSIA-NW Certification Vice President, an Alpine Examiner and Founder of the PSIA-NW Technical Team. He is also the TD for Schweitzer Alpine Racing School and a ski school trainer at Schweitzer Mountain Resort, Idaho. Email him at [mistert@nctv.com](mailto:mistert@nctv.com).

## Alpine & Snowboard Scheduled Exams

### Written Modules

Date	Location
February 12	Schweitzer
February 26	Stevens Pass, Mt. Bachelor

### On-snow Modules

Date	Location
March 20-21	Schweitzer
March 27-28	Stevens Pass
April 3-4	Mt. Bachelor
April 17-18	Mt. Hood Meadows

See Event Calendar in the Winter 2009/10 Issue for more information. Written modules may be scheduled and proctored at other times with prior approval with the office and the exam proctor. Exam registration is first-come, first-serve and space is limited. Please sign-up early to secure a spot.



# Teaching Through Sciencing Guiding the Ownership of Information *by Linda Cowan*

A few weeks ago when skiing with a group of students, I was struck by the notion that although I knew these students had been taught movement patterns necessary for effective and efficient skiing, I saw little execution of these movements when we were warming up. At first I thought, well, it's just our first run, perhaps they were still waking up and I should just move on, but this led me to evaluate my role as their instructor. I can teach movement patterns all day long, but how can I get these students to own this information? These students can do movement patterns when asked, but how can I get them to voluntarily choose these movements on their own? My role as an instructor is not only to teach, model, guide and give specific feedback but to also lead my students to the ownership of information so that they will know when, where and why they should apply different movement patterns. I then determined that today's lesson would focus on the ownership of a movement pattern we'd been working on for the past 3 weeks.

This led me to think about how to spend our time together that day. How could I better ensure their application of movements essential to good skiing? Now granted, these students are experienced. They can ski the entire mountain, and they're motivated to learn because they ski race, but that doesn't change a necessary outcome for all students-ownership of information.

First, I knew that we could walk through a lesson on alignment. For example, we could spend the morning focusing on our upper and lower body alignment through turn transition, and spend time applying this skill in different environments/terrain, but my goal was broader than these experiences themselves, my goal was a deeper understanding of why and a conviction for their movements given the desired outcome, terrain and snow conditions. I wanted them to

own what to do, when, where and why.

So, I decided to use science to help us build our efficient skiing convictions. Since I teach fifth grade, we tackle the topic of Variables. We take a scenario, change one variable and study the outcome. Then, we change a different variable, and compare the two experiments. These simple experiments help students to see how scientists can study problems and learn from the outcome of different experiments. Sure, I could have chosen to run the group through a battery of drills, terrain challenges, and talked through the sensations and feedback they were receiving from their skis and movements, but they need to own this information for themselves. So, we became scientists.

To get buy-in, we talked as a group about what we'd been working on the past few weeks. We agreed to study the alignment of our hips through turn transition. So, as a group, we decided to finish each turn by squaring up our hips to our skis before starting our next turn. We wanted to see what outcome was achieved with this movement. Our conversations went as follows:

"I felt my tails wash out at the finish of each turn."

"I found it hard to start the next turn because I wasn't facing the right direction."

So, we then agreed that on our next lap (same terrain so that we were careful to change only one variable) we would be mindful of our legs turning in our hip sockets, and through turn transition, work to keep our hips more aligned to our intended direction of travel through turn transition instead of squaring up to our skis. Our next conversation went as follows:

**MY ROLE AS AN  
INSTRUCTOR IS NOT  
ONLY TO TEACH,  
MODEL, GUIDE AND  
GIVE SPECIFIC  
FEEDBACK BUT  
TO ALSO LEAD MY  
STUDENTS TO THE  
OWNERSHIP OF  
INFORMATION...**

"I felt better prepared for the upcoming turn because of the discipline of my hips and upper body."

"I was surprised how this focus helped me to move my weight to my outside ski through turn completion."

This conversation was directed and led by the students, not by me. If ever they seemed to get stuck, we'd extend the distance or add varied terrain to help feel sensations that they could then put to words. These students ranged from 8-13 years of age, yet, they were talking like both scientists AND skiers. They now had a reason to focus on the alignment of their hips through turn transition, because they better understood the outcome of not doing so.

When we came out after lunch our lesson changed gears. At the top of each run, students were asked to state the movements they wanted to focus on, where in each turn and why. As a result, the skiing from the group began to change. Each student started skiing with conviction, purpose and intention. They were making the decisions, and learning about the outcomes and beginning to own the information from our morning 'sciencing lesson' for themselves.

Of course, our first role as instructors is to teach, model, guide, and give specific feedback to help all of our students learn, but eventually, our students need guidance towards owning the information we've been teaching, modeling and guiding them through all season.

Whether teaching two-hour classes, one-day or multi-week programs, it is our responsibility to help our students own the information we've taught, modeled and given them feedback on, and perhaps in the future, a "sciencing lesson" might provide the vehicle for students to take on and own the information you worked so hard to communicate to them. ❄️



*Linda Cowan is a two-term PSIA-NW Technical Team Member, Race Coach for Lyon Ski School at Stevens Pass and a Fifth Grade Teacher in the Northshore School District. Email her at [lindacowan1@mac.com](mailto:lindacowan1@mac.com)*

# FIRST THE PROOF THEN THE PUDDING

by Dave Lucas

In the Winter 2009 issue of the *NW Snowsports Instructor* there was a featured article and a Snow Pro Tip that jumped out at me: “*It’s Counter to be Square*” by John May and “*When it Comes to Your Pole, Get a Grip*” by Kate Morrell.

The old saying goes, “The proof of the pudding is in the eating,” which loosely means that the true value or quality of a thing can only be judged when it is put to use. But first the proof, then the pudding.

In case there are any non-believers still out there, I present the following proof of May and Morrell’s concepts for your review. WARNING! Do not try this on the hill. This is only a proof.

## Background

At Fall Training at Timberline in November 2009, we were introduced to a theme for the season: Stance, Alignment, Movement and Flow. In John May’s article he presented a clear description of an aligned stance and made a compelling argument as to why it would be beneficial for alpine skiers to use his concepts. In Kate Morrell’s Snow Pro Tip she presented a task and method to facilitate movement of your center of mass forward in the intended direction of travel.

You’ll often hear the catch-all answer to most ski-related questions that seek a definitive answer; “Well, it depends.” For those of you who grew up skiing with John Mohan, you’ll know exactly what I mean. So, here’s the question, “How much counter does a turn require?”

Often you’ll hear from someone who knows something about skiing that shorter radius turns need

more counter and longer radius turns need less counter. The following is a graphical explanation of why counter changes with turn shape and speed, how counter relates to movement in the direction of the new turn and explains why you should put all of this information to use immediately. Like, right now!

## Making Assumptions

Let’s assume that our desired outcome is flowing from turn to turn and that it is a good thing when skiing down the hill. Let’s also assume that flow means the coordinated movements of our bodies relative to our skis, with few, if any, major rebalancing or erratic movements to change direction and continue down the hill.

In the purest sense of these terms as goals, to achieve this we need to align our center of mass over our point of contact in such a way as to direct balance to the outside ski and resist all of the external forces pushing and pulling on us. In other words: We need to keep our feet between us and the snow, and not fall down.

As an aside, I use the words “over” and “under” in a frame of reference where my ski edges are always “down” and my center of mass is always “up.”

So, what does all of that have to do with “counter, square and getting a grip?” Everything. But it’s actually quite simple: you just have to be moving in the right direction.

Let’s start with the picture of Kate “ripping” (see Figure 1) from her Snow Pro Tip (Winter 2009 NW Snowsports Instructor, page 13). Kate appears to be balancing over her outside ski, roughly in the middle of a turn, in the fall line and, if I know Kate, skiing fast. Let’s assume she is modeling good skiing – umm ... yes, definitely! Let’s now go ahead and make some basic calculations based on a few more assumptions and determine how far to the inside her center of mass is from her outside edge in this photo.

## Taking Some Measurements

First, how tall is Kate? I could measure her, but I just asked her. She is five-feet five-inches tall or 65 inches or 165cm. Note: 1 inch = 2.54 cm. OK, let’s draw some lines (see Figure 1).

The orange line [c] extends from her Point of Contact (PC) on the snow, which is the inside edge of her outside ski, up her outside leg to a point just slightly above the center of her pelvis, which we can use as a rough estimate for her Center of Mass (CM), indicated by the white circle. Note: The center of mass is actually a single point, but by using the circle target area allows you to visually approximate the center of mass in Kate and other skiers as well. The orange line continues from her CM to her shoulders [d] then to the top of her





$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

Equation 1 : Pythagorean Theorem

head [e]. The blue line [b] extends horizontally from her outside ski edge under her boot to the point under her hips that aligns vertically with the point used for her center of mass [a]. These two line segments intersect at 90 degrees.

Measure the distance from her feet horizontally to the point vertically under her center of mass [b]. Now measure the combined length of the lines drawn from her feet to the top of her head [c+d+e], the sum of the orange lines.

In this drawing the measurements are shown in centimeters. I originally measured this drawing at twice this size, then when placed into this publication it was scaled by 50% the original size. You can measure this drawing yourself, but bear in mind that the measurements are a scale factor of the original larger version, so your measurements might be less accurate. You can use the Pythagorean Theorem from 9th grade geometry [  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$  ] to verify the lengths (Equation 1).

(continued on next page)

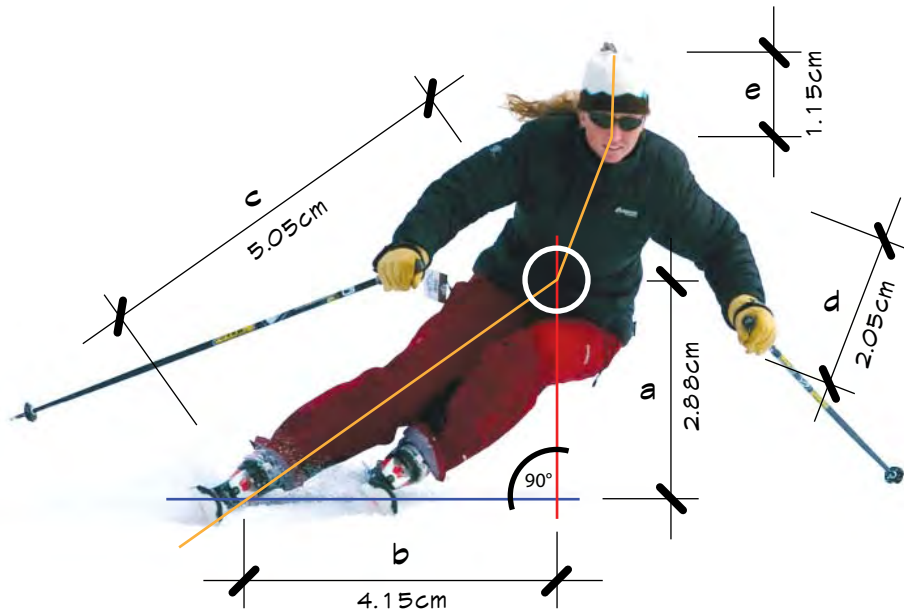


Figure 1 : Measuring Kate. Photo by Wayne Nagai



(continued from previous page)

### Get Out Your Calculator

Now divide the horizontal distance her CM is from her feet (b); the length of the blue line by her total height (sum of c, d and e). The result is a 0.50 - let's call this "k" (see Equation 2), where k represents the ratio of line b to the sum of c, d, and e. In other words: In this picture, line b is about half as long as c + d + e.

$$\frac{(c + d + e)}{b} = k$$

Equation 2

If I now multiply her real height (165cm) by 0.50 (k) I get 82.5cm or 32.5 inches. This is a reasonable estimate of how far inside her hips are from her outside ski. For you literalists out there, yes, there is some measurement error in using this picture in this fashion. Her leg is slightly flexed as are the other joints in her body. But, remember that any change in her measured height results in half of that change to how far her CM is away from her outside ski. In reality, the error may be a few inches and compared to the size of the turn, for example: a 15 meter turn (49.2 feet), a few inches is immaterial.

Now let's figure out where she needs to direct her movements in relation to her skis to achieve the alignment shown in Figure 1. First, a few more assumptions to help visually show our answers: Assume that we always finish our turns completely across the hill or skis perpendicular to the fall line. Note this amount of turn completion is not very common as we tend to not actually bring our skis completely perpendicular to the fall line, but this is an "assumption" for making these calculations. Assume that we wish to directly move

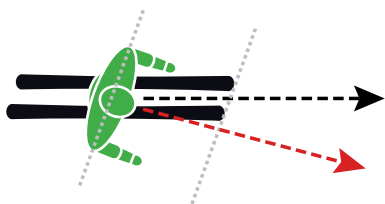


Figure 3. Counter and Intended Direction of travel of Center of Mass (red line) and theoretical path of skis (black line)

our center of mass from the inside of one turn, through the transition and into the inside of the next turn, while continuing to direct pressure to the outside ski.

In Figure 3, from a bird's-eye-view, the black line represents the path of our skis and the red line represents the path of our center of mass from

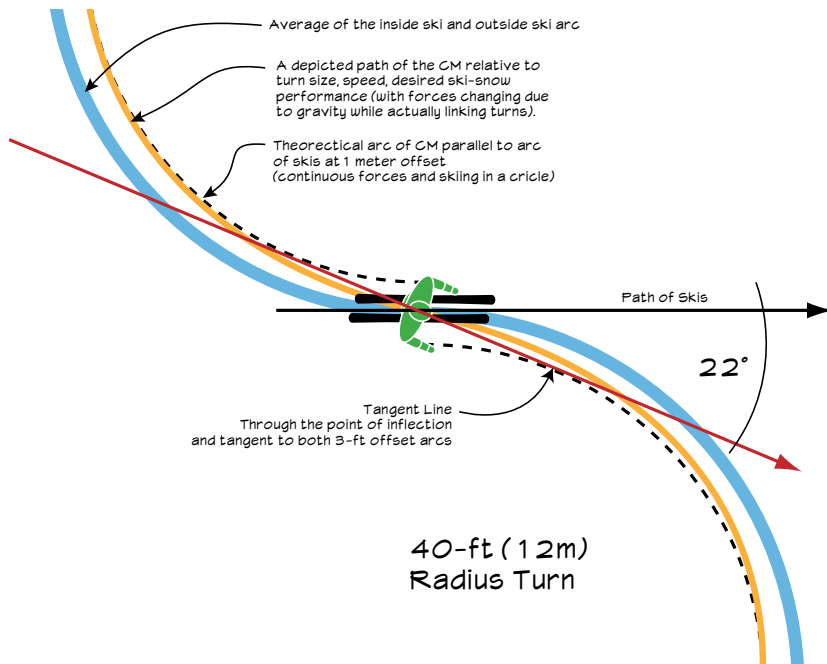


Figure 4. Path of skis (blue line), 3-ft offset CM to Path of Skis (dashed black line) and one path that the Center of Mass might follow given the specifics of terrain, snow conditions, carved vs. skidded turn, etc. (orange line). Tangent line to path of skis measures about 22 degrees of counter.

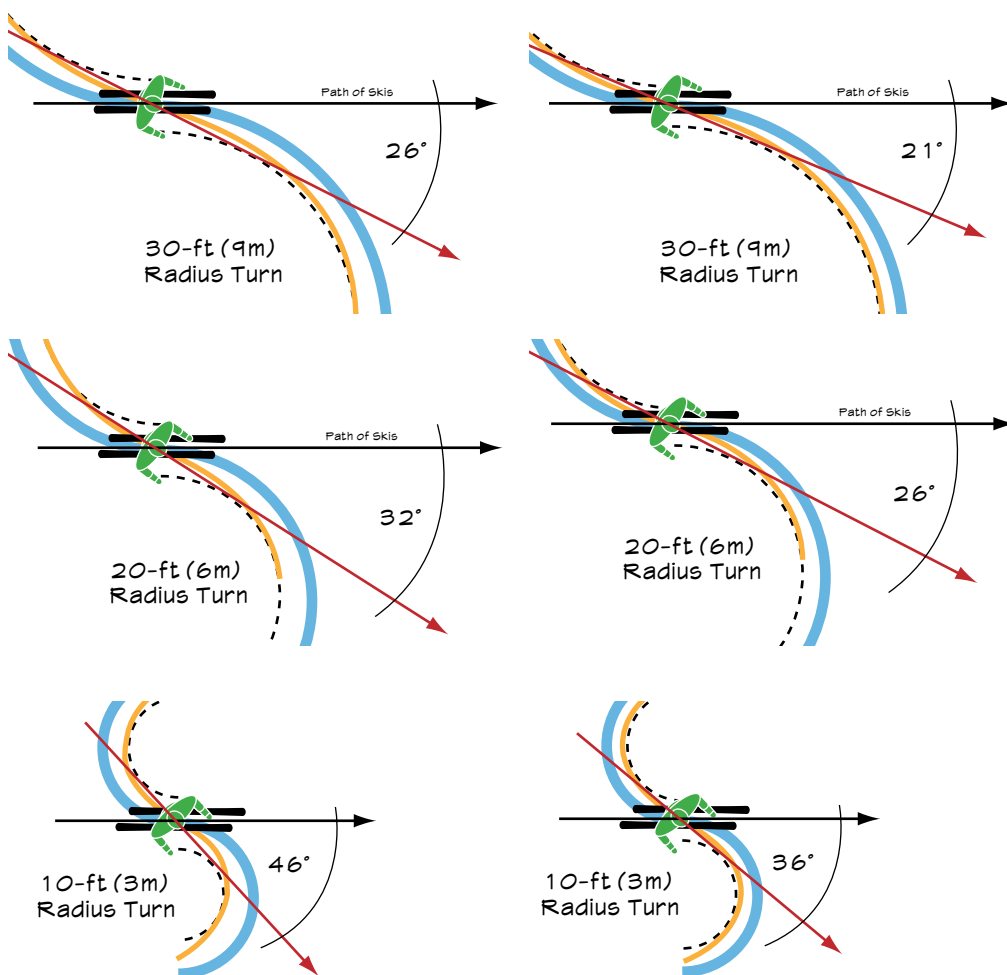


Figure 5. Various turn radii and degrees of counter. Higher speed turns on the left with 3-ft offset, Lower speed turns on the right with 2-ft offset. The orange line represents ONE path the CM MAY follow - this path varies with turn shape, snow conditions, slope of the hill, etc.



one turn through the transition and into the next turn. The red line also represents the direction that our hips should be facing to facilitate the directed movement into the next turn. The angle between these two lines represents how much our legs must turn past our upper body to develop the counter needed for the next turn.

In Figure 4, the black line again represents the path of our skis and the orange line represents the path of our center of mass from one turn through the transition and into the next turn. The turn radius is 40' and the offset from skis to center of mass is 32.5". Using a computer-aided design and drawing (CADD) program, the angle from our skis that we would need to move our center of mass in the direction of the new turn to end up looking like Kate above is about 26°.

Let's think about this for a second. In a high-speed turn Kate's center of mass is about 32 inches inside of her outside ski. If she was "channeling" Lindsey Vonn and had her hip on the snow, she could only get maybe 39" of separation. As I mentioned earlier, in that 30' turn, a 6-inch difference is very small and would only make an extremely small change in that angle.

So it seems the skier height has little effect on the direction the hips should be facing, the direction the center of mass needs to move at the beginning of the turn and ultimately the amount of counter needed.

### Concept Applied

Let us now take a look at how varying the turn size and speed will affect the orientation of our hips and the direction we would move into the next turn.

In Figure 5 the black line is again the path of our skis and the orange line is now the path of our center of mass (CM) through the turn. The right side of the graphic, with the 2-ft offset from CM to skis, represents skiing at a moderate speed and/or with less edge angle. The left side, with

the 3-ft offset from CM to skis, represents faster skiing with a higher edge angle. As you can see, the slower the speed for a given radius, the less counter we need to align our hips and movements into the new turn and the larger the radius, the less counter we need to align our hips and movements into the new turn.

To calculate the change in counter for a change in radius I assume that our center of mass moves from the inside arc, through the transition and onto the inside arc of the following turn in a straight line. In geometric terms the line that the CM travels is tangent to the inside arcs and passes through the point of inflection between the two turns.

The easy way to say this is to take a ruler and draw a line from just touching one inside arc to the next while passing through the transition point of the skis between the turns. There is only one line that will fit those criteria.

Now if you look at Figure 6 it looks like the skis take an S-shaped path between turns. Often I describe this as how your skis get from one side of your body to the other. This is how we ski into and out of a countered relationship; by turning our legs to shape the turn while our body seeks the path the CM should follow. The opposite is shown when a skier aligns to the path of the skis, then realigns to the path of the CM.

### It's Just Skiing

Does this mean that we all need to carry protractors with us on the hill and calculate every turn? NO! What this does mean is that as turn radius and speed change so does the amount of counter that is needed in our hips for us to align our movements into the next turn.

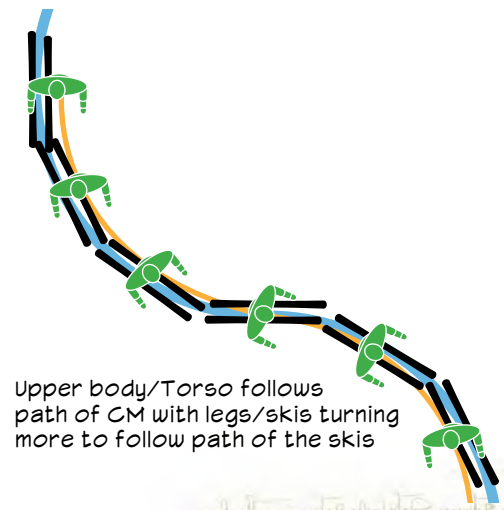
I hope that this information has helped to explain why radius and speed affect the amount of counter needed to align your center of mass over your outside foot and cleanly move from turn to turn.

Many thanks to Steve Olwin, Marty O'Connor, John May, Tyler Barnes and Rick Lyons in reviewing this article, helping me formulate the content and convey these concepts.

Be sure to let me know how the pudding is! ❄️



Dave Lucas is a PSIA-NW Technical Team member, alpine examiner and past PSIA-NW President. He currently works out of Stevens Pass. Email him at [dave@eventhorizon-farm.net](mailto:dave@eventhorizon-farm.net)



Upper body/Torso follows path of CM with legs/skis turning more to follow path of the skis

Figure 6. Skiing into and out of counter. Legs turning more than the upper body, opposed to the body aligning with the path of skis, then re-aligning to the path of CM.

# It's More than a Card



*I've been a member for 34 years and at each level of participation there have been new challenges; discussions which broadened my perspective, terrain which changed my skiing that I could not have experienced solely at my home area, and a continuum of learning as ski design and technique have evolved. My friends pushed me, my students inspired me and I forged life-long friendships. Some of my favorite memories have come from my involvement in PSIA-NW, and I am eternally grateful.*

## Featured Photographers

**Kirsten Huotte's** cover photo was taken at Stevens Pass during Technical Team training in January 2010. Special thanks to **Jordan Petram** for the Divisional Staff photos. If you have a great photo you'd like to see in print, be sure to email the highest quality version you have with your photo credit details to [office@psia-nw.org](mailto:office@psia-nw.org).

**Wayne Nagai** is a Level II Alpine Trainer and Supervisor at Fiorini Ski School at Summit West, Snoqualmie Pass. He is also a Snoqualmie Region Representative for the PSIA-NW Board of Directors. You can view his photography work on-line at [waynen.zenfolio.com](http://waynen.zenfolio.com) or contact him by email at [waynetheguy@earthlink.net](mailto:waynetheguy@earthlink.net).

**Matt Aimonetti** is a Level II alpine instructor at Mt. Hood Meadows, Oregon. He also pulls a toboggan for the Mt. Hood Ski Patrol on Mt. Hood. Matt has been skiing for 6 years and works for several major Oregon newspapers shooting sports. He also enjoys shooting weddings and other photography as well. You can check out Matt's photography on-line at [www.aim1photo.com](http://www.aim1photo.com) and he can be reached at [aim1photo@gmail.com](mailto:aim1photo@gmail.com).

# SYMPOSIUM AT SUN VALLEY

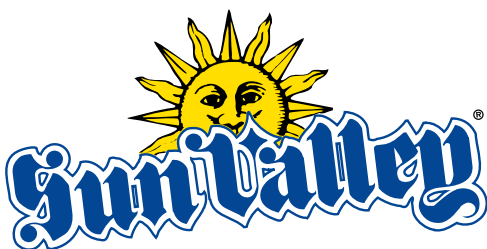
It's that time of the year again, time to come enjoy the sun, fun and snow at Sun Valley, Idaho. We'll be carrying on the Symposium tradition with all your favorite topics and clinicians from the Northwest and Intermountain in the alpine, snowboard, telemark, track and adaptive disciplines.

And returning yet again this season is the ever-popular, free-ski or free-ride with clinicians on Friday, including Northwest Technical Team members, Northwest and Intermountain clinicians, and quite possibly a surprise guest as well! You never know what could happen when 4 divisions get together for a free ski day, especially at Sun Valley!

Registering for Symposium is all it takes to be eligible to attend the Friday clinics. Clinics will run from 9 am to 3 pm, so you are able to meet up with family and friends for some runs at the end of the day. PSIA/AASI lift tickets are \$30.

The Saturday evening dinner banquet will include a silent auction, raffle and awards presentation. Wait till you see all the great items to win and bid on – all of which is tax deductible as a charitable contribution. Not only that, it's also for a great cause.

We will be continuing the Family Clinic of touring the hill with tips and tricks for your family members, if they are interested. Remember your family needs to be signed up for the clinic on the Symposium application and be able to navigate easy blue terrain.



## Friday, April 9th

10:00 am – 2:30 pm  
FREE Ski or Ride with Clinicians (must register for this FREE event) – River Run Day Lodge, Sun Valley. Meet between the Roundhouse Gondola and the River Run Chairlift

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm  
No-host Welcome Party, Sun Valley Inn and Convention Center, Continental Room

## Saturday, April 10th

8:45 am Classes form – River Run Day Lodge, Sun Valley. Meet between the Roundhouse Gondola and the River Run Chairlift

8:58 am – 3:01 pm  
Classes disburse on the hill

6:00 pm – 6:58 pm  
No-host cocktails – Sun Valley Inn and Convention Center, Continental Room

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
Dinner Banquet – Sun Valley Inn and Convention Center, Limelight Ballroom

8:00 pm  
Presentation of awards and pins to our 20, 30, 40 and 50 year members

## Sunday, April 11th

8:45 am  
Classes form – River Run Day Lodge, Sun Valley. Meet between the Roundhouse Gondola and the River Run Chairlift

8:58 am – 3:01 pm  
Classes disburse on the hill

## Registration Times

Thursday Evening, April 8th, 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
Sun Valley Lodge, Sage Room

Friday Morning, April 9th, 8:00 – 9:30 am  
Sun Valley River Run Day Lodge

Friday Evening, April 9th, 6:30 – 9:00 pm,  
Sun Valley Inn and Convention Center,  
Continental Room

Saturday Morning, April 10th 7:30 – 9:00 am,  
Sun Valley River Run Plaza

Sunday Morning, April 11th 8:00 – 9:00 am,  
Sun Valley River Run Plaza

## Lodging Info

Lodging will be at the Sun Valley Resort. To make reservations please phone 800.786.8259 and let them know you are with the PSIA/AASI group. Lodging prices are below.

Lodge Standard - Queen	\$89
Lodge Medium - King	\$94
Lodge Medium - 2 Beds	\$94
Lodge Deluxe - King	\$99
Lodge Deluxe 2 Beds	\$99
Inn Standard - Queen	\$89
Inn Medium - 2 Dbl Beds	\$94
Inn Deluxe - King	\$99
Lodge Apt Hotel Room	\$89
2 Bedroom Lodge Apt	\$229
3 Bedroom Lodge Apt	\$279
Two Bedroom Condo	\$159
Four Bedroom Condo	\$209
Three Bedroom Condo	\$189

View pictures and layouts at [sunvalley.com](http://sunvalley.com) then click accommodations, then Sun Valley Lodge or Sun Valley Inn.



## ADAPTIVE CLINIC TOPICS

**Intro to Adaptive** – Come find out what it is about. This introduction will provide you a basic foundation of information as to what is adaptive and opens the door for you begin to working with this client. Saturday only.

## ALPINE CLINIC TOPICS

**All Mountain Skiing** – Challenge your skiing with a mountain tour de jour. Learn tactics and technique to ski a variety of terrain in the mountain environment.

**Beyond Level III** – You've been a Level III for a while, by now you've heard it all. What's left you say? Come and find out. Your goals are different, you've got the pin, not interested in any tryout but still have the desire and passion to continue to learn, teach and inspire.

**Challenge Your Concepts** – This clinic will focus on developing awareness of sensations, thoughts and visual cues to aid in the development of more efficient movements that can be applied on any condition or terrain. Expand your concepts of skiing by looking at equipment, mental challenges and physical movements.

**Children's Real vs. Ideal Movements** – Add to your bag of tricks and explore, learn and share experiences about how to play in a kid's world of real vs. ideal movements.

**Drills for Skills** – Come 'drill down' to see how the various use of drills effectively develops movement patterns. You'll spend time applying the drills and their tactical application in varying terrain and conditions to better enhance your edging, rotary, and pressure movements and increase balance.

**How to be Offensive** – Bring the mountain to its knees; don't be the passenger be the driver. Take command of your skiing, be it from wedge turns to that 'sick' line through the bumps or the trees. Don't keep saying 'move down the hill', learn and feel what it's all about.

**Legends** – Ski with a legend for a fun day designed for skiers of all ages. Let them show you a thing or two!

**Low-Fly or High-Fly Freestyle** – Come find out what the park is all about or push your skills to the next level. Groups will be split based on ability and comfort levels. The group(s) may be a mix of skiers and snowboarders, depending on sign ups.

**Shake and Bake** – It's all about the blending of the skills. This clinic will work to improve your skiing performance and understanding of the application of the skills concepts, efficient movements and the blending therein. Skill blending is a great prep for your Level II or Level III skiing exam.

**Ski Like a Girl** – Taught by top female clinicians. It's fun to ski with the girls and not always worry about keeping up with the boys. Come work on your personal skill development while enjoying the pacing and camaraderie found when skiing with this women's only group.

**Small Bumps or Big Bumps** – For skiers who have limited experience with the bumps or are accomplished bump skiers wishing to hone their skills with an aggressive group of skiers. Appropriate group splits will be made at the event. Clinics will focus on the technique and tactics of skiing bumps on terrain appropriate to the group's level.

**Tactics for the Senior Skier** – Low impact alternatives when working with the senior client for skiing a wide variety of terrain. This clinic will focus on various strategies and tactics for this demographic to ski more with less fatigue.

**Teaching With a Focus** – Focused teaching is where you want to be and your client needs you to be. This clinic will help the participant identify and describe, with precision and accuracy using the Teaching Cycle, skill blends and movement patterns in skiers of all ages and abilities in varied skiing tasks, snow conditions and terrain options.

*(continued on next page)*

## Recognizing Excellence

*by George Bailey, Awards and Recognition Committee Chair*

Now that most of the multi-week programs are finished and with spring approaching, I hope you can find time to help us recognize the outstanding accomplishments of your fellow members. Please look around your school and think about nominating someone for a PSIA/AASI-NW Service Award!

These awards are presented at our Spring Symposium, so time is short. The deadline for submitting a nomination is March 19, 2010. Forms are available online, [www.psia-nw.org](http://www.psia-nw.org), About Us, Service Awards or through the office. You'll also find the detailed criteria for each award and examples of past recipients.

It is gratifying to see the faces of the recipients as the awards are presented. You'll be happy to know that you played a role in recognizing their excellence!

## Service Awards

### Rookie of the Year

What a great way to recognize a rising super star!

### The Ken Syverson Instructor of the Year

Don't you know someone that shares your passion for the sport and inspires others?

### The Art Audett Outstanding Service

We all give our all, but there must be someone that stands out!

### The Jean Lyon Service to Youth

The one you remember when you grow up!

### The Larry Linnane Skiing Legends

Let's not forget those that have demonstrated their commitment for this sport over the years!



*Symposium is all about fun! Photo by Wayne Nagai*

## Sun Valley Stages Shuttle Bus Service



Sun Valley Stages have provided service to Sun Valley Resort and the Hailey/Ketchum area for over 20 years. Call their friendly customer service representatives today to make your shuttle reservation. Bus service from Boise Airport to the Sun Valley Inn will be available during the Symposium weekend.

Cost of a one-way ticket will be \$50. Advance tickets may be purchased by calling toll-free 800-574-8661 or 208-733-3921. Get more information online at [www.sunvalleystages.com](http://www.sunvalleystages.com).

## 73rd Anniversary

Sun Valley Resort celebrates its 73rd Anniversary this year. Doors first opened on December 21, 1936.

## Roundhouse Gondola

New this Winter is the Roundhouse Gondola whisking you 2,000 vertical feet in 8 minutes.



(continued from previous page)

## MORE ALPINE TOPICS

**Tip to Tail** – Your tracks will tell the tale. This clinic will explore the art of carving in a safe and fun atmosphere. Learn to ski clean, efficient turns, tip to tail while exploring the hill.

**The Balance Enigma** – So you thought you were in balance ... what is balance, when are you in balance, how do you enhance balance, how do you identify balance? This and many other questions will be addressed as you work through different drills to feel where and when you are in balance and what to do when you aren't.

**The 'Eyes' Have It** – Don't cast your ballot or be satisfied with only the effect. Make your vote count for identifying the root cause. In this movement analysis clinic you will learn to differentiate between cause and effect by developing your eye to unveil the cause.

**The Games We Play (when teaching kids)** – Using the "The Children's Skiing Games Reference" and "The Children's Snowboarding Games Reference" manuals we will put together some great new game ideas that help you teach with a purpose but make it fun at the same time!

**UB30** – You need to be 30 or under to hang with this group. Without the older dudes you will explore the mountain with your peers and work on skill improvement, tactical choices for given situations and understanding the how and why.

## SNOWBOARD CLINIC TOPICS

**All Mountain Riding** – Challenge your riding with an upper mountain tour de jour. Learn tactics and technique to ride a variety of terrain in the mountain environment.

**Low-Fly or High-Fly Freestyle** – Come find out what the park is all about or push your skills to the next level. Groups will be split based on ability and comfort levels. The group(s) may be a mix of skiers and snowboarders, depending on sign ups.

**Rippin' it Girly Style** – Taught by top female clinicians. It's fun to ride with the girls and not always worry about embarrassing the boys because you outride them. Come work on your personal skill development while enjoying the pacing and camaraderie found when riding with this girl's only group.

**Trench it Out** – Get your corduroy carving legs ready and come rip it up. This clinic will explore the art of carving in a safe and fun atmosphere. Learn to ride clean, efficient turns while exploring the conditions of the day.

## TELEMARK CLINIC TOPICS

**Freeheel Fest** – Take the latest movement patterns from the national level and work to develop your skills to maximize your efficiency. Expect an all mountain clinic with the objective of maximizing your versatility with modern equipment in the conditions of the day. Saturday only.

**Movement Analysis** – This clinic will cover cause and effect and help you in your movement analysis skills to find the root cause of what you are seeing in your student's skiing.

**Tele For All** – An introduction to telemark with a twist. It will emphasize a progression that takes full advantage of the skills already honed in efficient alpine skiing to enjoy the telemark experience. Take the latest movement patterns from the national level and work to develop your skills to maximize your efficiency. For new and cross-over tele'ers. Sunday only.

## TRACK CLINIC TOPICS

**Classic Skills and Movement Patterns** – Identify and learn how to analyze the skills and movements in student's skiing. Learn drills and exercises that work towards improving the student's skills. Saturday only.

**Classic Improvement** – Building your skills on your path to being a better skier. Sunday only.

**Skate Improvement** – Building your skills on your path to being a better skier. Saturday only.

**Skate Skills and Movement Patterns** – Identify and learn how to analyze the skills and movements in student's skiing. Learn drills and exercises that work towards improving the student's skills. Sunday only.

## FAMILY INFORMATION

**Tour the Hill** – Join us for a tour of Sun Valley and a lot of fun. We'll cruise around the hill and familiarize you with the runs you're comfortable on. For ages 13 and up; must be able to navigate easy blue terrain.

**Sun Valley SnowSports School** – Sun Valley is offering a 20% discount on lessons for your kids. For lesson information and to make a reservation please call 208.622.2289 or you may also visit their website at [snowsports.sunvalley.com](http://snowsports.sunvalley.com).



## Spring Symposium Event Application

### Participant Information

☐ update my records with this info

☐ Alpine ☐ Snowboard ☐ Telemark ☐ Track ☐ Adaptive

Name	Member #	Discipline	
Email Address	Snowsports School	Certification Level	
Mailing Address	City	State	Zip
Primary Contact Tel #	Secondary Contact Tel #		

### Fee and Event Details

#### Event Options

- ☐ **FREE FRIDAY** \$FREE  
Slide with clinicians on Friday. If you wish to attend you must be registered for Symposium Sat or Sun Clinic.
- ☐ **TWO-DAY INSTRUCTOR PACKAGE** \$160  
Includes Registration Fee, 2 Clinic Days and Souvenir. (No lift tickets or Banquet)
- ☐ **ONE-DAY INSTRUCTOR PACKAGE** \$85  
Includes Registration Fee, 1 Clinic Day and Souvenir. (No lift tickets or Banquet)

#### CHOOSE CLINIC TOPICS ON REVERSE SIDE

- ☐ **FAMILY CLINIC** \$50 PER PERSON PER DAY  
Must be able to navigate easy blue terrain (No lift tickets or Banquet)

Family Member Name ☐ Alpine ☐ Snowboard

Family Member Name ☐ Alpine ☐ Snowboard

Family Member Name ☐ Alpine ☐ Snowboard

### Banquet and Souvenirs

#### Additional Options

- ☐ **SAT. EVENING BANQUET** \$40  
Dinner, Dessert and non-alcoholic beverage  
☐ Chicken ☐ Vegetarian
- ☐ **SOUVENIRS** \$15/EA  
One souvenir is included in your registration. Additional souvenirs may be purchased at the event, but are limited to stock on-hand.

**LIFT TICKETS** \$30/DAY  
Lift Tickets must be purchased at the Resort. PSIA/AASI Members who are attending this event pay \$30 per day for discount tickets. Only family member(s) listed on the roster will qualify for discounted lift tickets.

Family Member Name

Family Member Name

Family Member Name

### Payment Details

#### Event Fees

SUB-TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

LATE FEE \$20 (if after March 25, 2010)

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TO AVOID A LATE FEE, registration is required BY MARCH 25, 2010.** If space is available, you will be assessed a \$20 late fee. If you are injured and are unable to attend your event, we will deduct \$10 per day cancellation fee from your refund. REFUNDS REQUIRE A NOTE FROM YOUR MEDICAL PROVIDER.

MAIL WITH CHECK TO:  
**PSIA-NW**

11206 Des Moines Mem. Dr., #106 Seattle, WA 98168

FAX WITH CREDIT CARD PAYMENT TO:  
**206.241.2885**

QUESTIONS? CALL OR EMAIL:  
**206.244.8541**  
**office@psia-nw.org**

### LIABILITY RELEASE FORM (you must sign this release before attending any PSIA-NW event):

Recognizing that skiing/boarding can be a hazardous sport, I hereby RELEASE AND FOREVER DISCHARGE PSIA-NW, PNSIA-EF, PSIA-I the host area and agents and employees of each from liability for any and all injuries of whatever nature arising during or in connection with the conduction of the event for which this application is made. Applicant hereby relinquishes and assigns to PSIA-NW, PSIA-I and PNSIA-EF all rights to the use of Applicant's name and likeness or pictorial representation in photographs, motion pictures or other representations concerning Applicant's participation in said Event.

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Credit Card Payments

CREDIT CARD NUMBER (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

EXP. DATE

X

YOUR SIGNATURE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**FRIDAY** – Your FREE ski and ride day. Clinic groups in less formal settings with a variety of clinicians available! You must be registered for Symposium to attend and sign up in advance to take advantage of this free day!

<b>Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> - Clinic Topics run 9-3</b>	<b>Sunday, April 11<sup>th</sup> - Clinic Topics run 9-3</b>
<i>Select your Saturday topics from the list below (Please mark your 1st and 2nd choice)</i>	<i>Select your Sunday topics from the list below (Please mark your 1st and 2nd choice)</i>
<b>Adaptive Clinic Topics for Saturday</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Intro to Adaptive	
<b>Alpine Clinic Topics for Saturday</b>	<b>Alpine Clinic Topics for Sunday</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> All Mountain Skiing	<input type="checkbox"/> All Mountain Skiing
<input type="checkbox"/> Beyond Level III	<input type="checkbox"/> Beyond Level III
<input type="checkbox"/> Challenge Your Concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> Challenge Your Concepts
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's Real vs. Ideal Movements	<input type="checkbox"/> Children's Real vs. Ideal Movements
<input type="checkbox"/> Drills for Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Drills for Skills
<input type="checkbox"/> How to be Offensive	<input type="checkbox"/> How to be Offensive
<input type="checkbox"/> Legends	<input type="checkbox"/> Legends
<input type="checkbox"/> Low-Fly or High-Fly Freestyle	<input type="checkbox"/> Low-Fly or High-Fly Freestyle
<input type="checkbox"/> Shake and Bake	<input type="checkbox"/> Shake and Bake
<input type="checkbox"/> Ski Like a Girl	<input type="checkbox"/> Ski Like a Girl
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Bumps or Big Bumps	<input type="checkbox"/> Small Bumps or Big Bumps
<input type="checkbox"/> Tactics for the Senior Skier	<input type="checkbox"/> Tactics for the Senior Skier
<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching with a Focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching with a Focus
<input type="checkbox"/> Tip to Tail	<input type="checkbox"/> Tip to Tail
<input type="checkbox"/> The Balance Enigma	<input type="checkbox"/> The Balance Enigma
<input type="checkbox"/> The 'Eyes' Have It	<input type="checkbox"/> The 'Eyes' Have It
<input type="checkbox"/> The Games We Play (when teaching kids)	<input type="checkbox"/> The Games We Play (when teaching kids)
<input type="checkbox"/> U B 30	<input type="checkbox"/> U B 30
<b>Snowboard Clinic Topics for Saturday</b>	<b>Snowboard Clinic Topics for Sunday</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> All Mountain Riding	<input type="checkbox"/> All Mountain Riding
<input type="checkbox"/> Low-Fly or High-Fly Freestyle	<input type="checkbox"/> Low-Fly or High-Fly Freestyle
<input type="checkbox"/> Rippin' It Girly Style	<input type="checkbox"/> Rippin' It Girly Style
<input type="checkbox"/> Trench it Out	<input type="checkbox"/> Trench it Out
<b>Telemark Clinic Topics for Saturday</b>	<b>Telemark Clinic Topics for Sunday</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Freeheel Fest	<input type="checkbox"/> Tele For All
<input type="checkbox"/> Movement Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Movement Analysis
<b>Track Clinic Topics for Saturday</b>	<b>Track Clinic Topics for Sunday</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Classic Skills and Movement Patterns	<input type="checkbox"/> Classic Improvement
<input type="checkbox"/> Skate Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Skate Skills and Movement Patterns
<b>Family Clinic Saturday</b>	<b>Family Clinic Sunday</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tour the Hill (13 and up)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tour the Hill (13 and up)



# SNOW PRO TIPS



## Pick a Stance Width and Stick with It

Alpine tip by Karin Harjo

Here is a quick way you can clean up your own skiing and also help to improve the skiing of your student by a very simple focus. Keep your stance width consistent throughout the arc and transition of a series of turns.

Over the years there has been a great deal of discussion over stance widths: narrow, wide, open, closed, etc. The truth is we need to have the ability to use any stance width to accommodate the terrain, speed and turn size/ shape we are skiing. Given these variables sometimes it requires a narrower stance and other times a wider stance. What creates adaptability in our skiing is the ability to pick stance widths to derive a desired outcome. A consistency in stance width throughout the arc of a turn will allow the skier to be more versatile in their skiing.

To keep it simple let's focus on parallel turns. So what does a consistent stance look like? When the skis, feet and legs stay the same distant apart and for the most part parallel relative to each other throughout the arc. In Figure 1 a consistency stance is displayed in this skier performing medium radius turns.



Figure 1. Consistence stance through the turn. What are the visual cues?



Figure 2. Inconsistence stance through the turn. What do you see happening and what is causing it?

So what does an inconsistent stance look like? In Figure 2, while staying with the medium radius turn on groomed terrain, you can begin to see stance inconsistencies. In this sequence we see the greatest inconsistency in stance at the apex of the turn. What does it look like? The skis are diverging. What caused this? The upper body rotates away from the outside ski and the skier tips to the inside at the apex of the turn, drawing the weight off the outside ski. As a result the outside ski will track straight and away from the desired turn the skier is attempting to make.

Here are a couple of key things to focus in on when watching for an inconsistent stance:

1. If you see an inconsistency in stance width where does it happen within the arc of the turn? At the initiation (edge switch), apex (shaping phase), or transition?
2. What does the stance inconsistency look like? Do the skis diverge, converge, get further apart from each other, get closer together?
3. Do the edge angles of both skis match each other and are the feet and legs relatively parallel in attitude to each other?
4. If there is an inconsistency within the stance width throughout the turn, what is causing that to happen? Or why does the skier need to make that adjustment in their stance?

When working on your own skiing or that of your student it may be as simple as drawing attention to when, within the arc of the turn, the stance inconsistency occurs. Then telling them to focus on staying consistent at that point to affect a positive change.

In most circumstances this "focus" may not be enough. Identifying these visual cues of stance inconsistencies will give you a good starting point from which to create change. From there spend time working on the 'cause' of stance inconsistency you observed and a significant change will be in store for you or your student! ❄️



Karin Harjo is a two-term member of the PSIA-NW Technical Team and is currently coaching for Mount Bachelor Ski Education Foundation, at Mt. Bachelor, Oregon. Email her at [kluvs2run@hotmail.com](mailto:kluvs2run@hotmail.com)

## Got a Tip?

If you have a useful tip you'd like to share with your fellow snow pros, we'd like to feature it here.

Snow Pro Tips are 300 to 400 words long and can be submitted with or without supporting photos. All disciplines are welcome to participate as well as any Children specific tips which are featured in the Children's section of this publication. All we ask is that you include a little bit about yourself for the tip credit and your smiling face.

Snow Pro Tips will also be posted on the PSIA-NW website where more space is available for you to expand upon and share more information.

Thank you to this issue's contributors: Karin Harjo, André Heiber, Charlie Wolff, Rick Brown, Steve Hindman, Amy Ohran, and Jodi Taggart.



## Can I Get a Hand for Powder?

Alpine tip by André Heiber

It's getting to the time of year where we can hope to get some new deep snow in which to play. One of the greatest challenges in powder and crud is getting students to effectively distribute weight between their feet. More than once, I have confidently taken a student into a lovely pitch of fluffy snow only to have them either balance on the outside foot (and cart-wheel their way down) or lean and tip to the inside. What happened to all the good practice we just did lengthening and shortening the legs?

When this happens, I like this simple hand drill to give them the sensations I want in their feet. Acquiring an even-pressured feeling in the far more sensitive and adaptable hands first will pave the way for creating it in their feet.

Hands Can be Feet:

- Stand face-to-face with your student holding hands in front of you and touch the palms of both your hands to theirs with light-medium pressure.
- Tell them that their mission, should they choose to accept it, is to maintain that same level of pressure throughout the drill.
- Shorten and then lengthen your arms together and then independently. Let them explore what they need to do to maintain constant and equal palm pressure.
- Guide them through the thought process of pressure lightens: extend the arm / pressure increases: flex the arm.
- When they are able to do that, have them close their eyes and imagine that their hands are in fact their feet. Run them through the drill again and have them focus on feeling the pressures remain equal on both feet.
- Once they have that new feeling to search for, they'll be set up to succeed at doing it in a turn.

By using the hands, you've turned a previously unavailable sensation into one that is tangible and repeatable. ❄️

André Heiber is a trainer for the Summit at Snoqualmie, PSIA-NW Divisional Clinic Leader, and Level III Alpine and Telemark certified. Previously he's been teaching skiing in Utah and Colorado for the past 19 years. Email him at [andre.heiber@gmail.com](mailto:andre.heiber@gmail.com)



## Are You a Praying Mantis?

Telemark tip by Charlie Wolff

How often have you been skiing down the hill and felt threatened for your life by the skier waving and jabbing their poles down the hill? Many of these jousters make me fear impalement – like I'm their next shish kabob.

As a telemark coach, I see this jab-stabber in a position I like to call Praying Mantis. If this was a yoga pose it would definitely be called "center-of-mass-behind-the-asana." You've probably seen the move, where the skier's upper body is rotated down the hill with their elbows bent close to their ribs with poles pitched forward ready to stab the next turn into submission. The skier tends to brace against their front leg, and their center-of-mass is not balanced over both feet. In this position the skier has lost their ability to effectively manage pressure control movements.



Figure 1. The Praying Mantis

Very commonly the skier's outside (downhill) leg is too far down the hill and in front of their body with little or no ankle flex, while the inside (uphill) ski is stretched back behind the skier like a rudder. The unweighted, inside (uphill) ski has little or no pressure; so, it flaps behind or chatters as the skier skids less-efficiently.

What I try to encourage is a more functional stance where the hands are out in front of the body; the shoulders are stacked over the hips which are aligned over both feet, and the poles are in a ready position parallel to the front leg (Tibia Fibula) to help pull the center of mass into the new intended direction of travel.

Ideally I would want to see the skier flex and extend the ankle, knee and hip, and narrow the fore/aft stance. The skier now in Warrior pose



Figure 2. The Functional Stance

will be able to positively affect the ski and turn shape.

One of my favorite drills to help reinforce this balanced position is the tele shuffle. This is simply a quick shuffling of the feet from one tele lunge to the next. I will usually start with a simple traverse shuffling 3-5 times. This drill helps to reinforce the balanced, centered stance while challenging the student to continue flexing and extending the ankles, knees and hip in unison. I can make this more difficult and hone in on those Praying Mantis Pincers by asking the student to hold their poles out in front of them and across their body. Then I will increase the number of shuffles, asking the student to introduce the shuffle earlier and earlier throughout their turn, or until the student can execute the shuffle at any point while skiing.

By flexing the front ankle we are helping to create and reinforce a powerful position that will allow our students the confidence not to jab and stab as they slide down the mountain; instead they will dictate ski snow behavior, and more importantly develop pressure control movements to absorb gnarly bumps or finesse firm icy conditions. ❄️

Charlie Wolff hails from Mt. Hood Meadows, Oregon. He is Telemark Level III and Snowboard Level I certified, and is an Alpine Divisional Clinic Leader. Email him at [charlie.wolff@comcast.net](mailto:charlie.wolff@comcast.net)







## Focus on Skills

Snowboard tip by Rick Brown

As instructors we are faced with any number of challenges on a daily basis. For many of us, the fun and excitement of teaching comes from tackling these challenges. It seems like no matter what we've seen, there is always a new challenge waiting around the corner. Despite these occasional obstacles, it can be easy to get stuck in a rut. It's so easy to go on autopilot when we are teaching yet another beginner lesson. Whether it's the 100th lesson we've taught or the 1000th, it's almost always the student's first. I think the first step to success is to teach every lesson with that in mind.

The next thing I like to focus on is teaching skills, not tasks. We have all been guilty of task based teaching. Tasks are great tools for teaching or for demonstrating skills, but it's the skill usage in each task that should be the focus. For example, teaching a traverse is great as a tactic for getting from one side of the run to another, and can be accomplished in a number of ways, but if we focus on the movements involved and how they affect performance in the board, it will open up a lot

more doors along the way to upper level riding.

Focusing on flexion/extension movements to create torsional flex in the board will move it into a traverse and we will have a skill that will be useful as we move to other tasks. We could also use flexion extension movements to alter pressure from foot to foot which can also produce a traverse, but could add another skill to our arsenal. The movements or skills used to complete the task can be altered depending on the desired outcome or goal. Tasks can also be taught in multiple ways to build different skills.

Every drill that we use and every task we perform is made up of specific movements or skills that will result in specific performance outcomes. Some tasks or drills require one simple movement or skill, while others are made up of more complex combinations of movements or blending of skills.

If we can break down the desired outcome to the specific movement patterns and skills, we can coach to each component individually. Doing so will allow our students to master each component before trying to connect them all together. ❄️



Focusing on skills. Photo by Mike Hamm



Rick Brown is the Director of Skiing and Snowboarding at 49° North Mountain Resort, PSIA-NW DCL, Snowboard Examiner, PSIA-NW Board Member and Snowboard Committee Member. Email him at [thegodfther@gmail.com](mailto:thegodfther@gmail.com)



Land on a flexing leg, glide on an extending leg, then flex to bring the core forward and to prepare for the second extension onto the next ski powered by the push off/kick.



## The Double Pump

Track tip by Steve Hindman

At our fall training, the NW Divisional Track Staff came up with a simple focus to improve our own skiing and to help others – use 2 cycles of leg flexion/extension in each skate or classic stride. It's simple to see and to work with, and using it will keep you and your students moving forward after moving onto each ski and in position for effective poling and the push off to the next ski.

A key is using verbs to describe the cycles: land on the new ski with a flexing ankle, then glide on an

extending leg. At the end of the first extension, you're up and over your poles in powerful poling position. The second cycle moves you to the next ski with a quick collapse of the knee to move your hips over and in front of your foot followed by a quick and powerful push off onto the next ski from your extending leg.

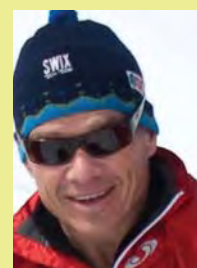
As you watch other skiers, you'll see that many never extend after moving onto each ski, which makes it difficult to move completely onto each ski and robs them of poling and push of power.

When conditions are really slow or the hill is steep, you may need to use the first extension to move to the next ski to avoid stalling out. But when you have more glide, "double pump" on each ski

to keep you and your ski moving forward. ❄️

Steve Hindman is current PSIA-NW DCL for skate and classic and a 12 year veteran of the PSIA Nordic Team. He is the author of *Cross Country Skier: Skills for Fun and Fitness*, published by Mountaineers Books, and is the Instructional

Editor for *Cross Country Skier* magazine. Find out more about Steve at [www.nordicskitips.com](http://www.nordicskitips.com)



Photos by Susan Hindman  
[www.schimages.com](http://www.schimages.com)

## Early Season Training with PSIA-NW Divisional Staff

By Brad Jacobson

On November 14th and 15th, 2009 at Mt Hood, I had the opportunity to ski with members of the PSIA - NW Divisional Staff for early season training, which was an incredible way to start the year. I gained new insight of the skiing and teaching concepts, and a clear picture what the Regional and National staff is working on for the upcoming year. During the course of the weekend, I was able to solidify my existing knowledge, and came home with a new understanding of the concepts and creative new ways of presenting the information to students and colleagues.

The first day my group had the opportunity to work with Chris Thompson founding member of the PSIA-NW Technical Team and PSIA-NW Examiner. Chris has a fun and unique approach to coaching, through encouraging each individual to use self discovery and group discussion. I asked Chris to describe what he focused on during the weekend, and this is what he wrote:

*"As decided at Technical Team training, we focused on stance, alignment, movement and flow. We stayed in the "open parallel" mode, to hold the speed down more than anything else. We actually didn't do any exercises but worked on each other's skiing through changing mental focus and body awareness. To facilitate group involvement we skied in a non-structured rotating line most of the time with an integral part of the goal to be able to observe and comment on peer performance. As we worked on our skiing, we related this back to how we disseminate this information to our staff ensuring understanding with new and returning staff members. I made a strong point of sharing what we did on Friday (at Examiner Training) with both groups so they understood that divisional staff skiing focus and attainment was very similar. We continued to come back to DIRT (duration, intensity, rate and timing) as we focused on stance[ing]; directed movements; pole swing timing; parallel legs/skis; inside half leading outside half; skiing into/thru/out of counter; timing pressure thru transition to ensure maintaining a parallel attitude and good carve."*

It was great to hear it directly from the source, a member of the staff involved in developing the education material for our region. Their goal is to keep the information easy to understand so that we can all share it with our guests in terms that they can relate to, so that skiing is more fun and less complicated.

"Stalancing," a Chris-ism, refers to staying in balance while in motion using stance as a tool. The center of mass should always be over the feet, while achieving this can happen numerous ways, and often we as instructors get tunnel vision thinking the only time a skier is in balance is when there is shin to boot contact and hips are up over the feet.

Chris had our group drop into a tuck and then asked us where our hips are, and then where our center of mass is. The answer was our hips were behind our feet and our center of mass is over our feet, perfect balance. There are numerous possibilities of body position to achieve the desired result of center of mass over the feet and we as teachers should be aware of the center of mass and not just that "perfect pose" that has defined balance for so many of us for so long.

Another point brought up was that instructors can overemphasize shin to boot contact, doing this may lead the guests to being over-flexed for too long restricting the ability to properly use their ankles which Dave Lyon suggested is one of the most important joints in skiing, if not the most important. Chris said that as we move through turns we should be using the entire circumference of the cuff boot to maintain balance, and this is OK as long as the center of mass stays over the feet.

Chris encouraged us to use flexion and extension as a means of "moving forward" and the activity of opening and closing joints while we move into, through, and out of a countered position. Using a stance foundation, and not staying there, the body is constantly moving, being proactive and reactive to stay in balance while in motion i.e. "Stalance."

After skiing on Saturday Dave Lyon a member of the PSIA National Alpine Team and a coach for the PSIA-NW Technical Team, he prepared an indoor presentation to the entire group, focusing on what the National Team is currently developing, "Fundamental Skills Concepts." Below is the outline of the National Team's Fundamental Skills Concepts.

### Fundamental Skills Concepts

Great skiing is characterized by the skier's ability to have a positive, selective effect on any of the skills at any time, as defined by:

- Alignment of the Center of Mass with the intended line of action.
- A consistent stance width throughout the turn.

- The use of the ankle joint to adjust aspects of fore/aft and lateral balance.
- A strong inside half. The inside half of the body is raised and ahead of the outside half.
- The ability to anticipate changes in your environment both mentally and physically.
- An effective pole swing which complements the movements of the body.

### Rotary Movements

- A stable core that facilitates simultaneous steering activity of the legs.
- Skiing into and out of counter.

### Edge Control Movements

- Progressive and simultaneous edge release and engagement.
- The use of inclination and angulation to determine edge angle.

### Pressure Control Movements

- The use of flexion and extension movements to manage pressure.
- Effective manipulation of pressure along the length of the skis.
- The ability to influence pressure by increasing or decreasing edge angle.
- Pressure being directed toward the outside ski.

Dave joked that really the #1 goal in skiing is to not fall down, which makes perfect sense to me. Dave went over in detail each bullet point explaining exactly what each phrase in the Fundamental Skills Concept is saying.

Chris commented, "It was great to have confirmation on our (PSIA-NW Technical Team) goals through Dave Lyon's presentation of where the National Team is headed."

The second day of training my group skied with Nick McDonald Head Coach of the PSIA-NW Technical Team and PSIA-NW Examiner. Nick talked about the importance of early pressure and commitment to the new outside ski creating a smooth, fluid transition from turn to turn. He also emphasized the importance of an effective pole use that complements the movements of the body.

Nick spoke about the NW Technical Team's observations from video taken at PSIA-NW divisional staff training last Spring, and determined that what made the biggest difference in good to great skiing was a smooth transition from turn to turn; the primary attribute of fluid skiing was commitment to the new outside ski with pressure early in the turn.



Nick guided us in a drill making slow and controlled pivot slips concentrating on the transition from one pivot to the next. He recommended pressuring the new outside or uphill ski during transition. The result was a much more smooth and fluid transition. We then moved on to linking slow open parallel turns, concentrating on early pressure. I noticed changes in the smoothness, and flow in my own skiing after these exercises, and something that I will continue to work on throughout the season.

### What Good Pole Use Looks Like

Chris, Nick and Dave all agreed that great pole use skills complement great skiing and bring it all together. Effective pole use can enhance all of the skiing skills (Balance, Edging, Rotary, and Pressure) as well as fore-aft and lateral balance, timing of progressive body movements for appropriate edging, moving into and out of counter and timing of flexion and extension.

### Fore-Aft and Lateral Balance

Skiing with hands out in front of the body and slightly out to the side ready for the pole swing helps move the center of mass over the feet for fore-aft balance, and the hands held out to the side creates better lateral balance and then you are ready to move. As you move through the turn a pole touch or plant will help the skier re-center after the forces of the turn have pushed the skier to the heels. Planting down the hill at the end of the turn, gives the skier strong lateral balance by creating angulation and increased pressure on the outside ski.

### Timing of Progressive Body Movements for Appropriate Edging

With a consistent pole swing through the turn, the skier can use the movement of the pole swing to time the progressive movements through inclination and into angulation to determine needed edge angle.

### Skiing Into and Out of Counter

If the skier keeps his hands out to the side and plants in the direction of the new turn (strong inside half), he will naturally ski into and out of a countered position. The act of planting the pole in the direction of the new turn or down the hill, the skier's torso is open to the fall-line allowing the lower body to rotate or turn under a quiet and stable upper body.

### Timing of Flexion and Extension

Depending on which pole plant is necessary for the terrain, a blocking pole plant for challenging terrain, or a gliding pole plant for easier terrain, the pole plant times the extension. On a blocking pole plant the plant comes before the extension and at the highest edge angle to help redirect momentum and establish a solid base for ultimate balance. On a gliding pole plant the plant comes after the extension and before initiation of the new turn. This pole plant can also be used to create more acceleration with a quicker extension which is common in ski racing.

### When Not to Plant the Pole

When you are carrying higher speed in medium and long radius turns, pole plants can be eliminated because they are no longer necessary and potentially dangerous. Instead of planting it was suggested that subtle movements with the arms and wrists can help in the timing of body movements.

It was motivating spending the weekend at Mt. Hood with the PSIA-NW staff. I definitely left with renewed energy, and excitement to share with my athletes, guests and the staff at Mt. Bachelor. I also received feedback on my own skiing during the weekend that I will continue to work on throughout the year, skiing with a purpose while focusing on developing new skills.

The PSIA-NW Staff has a ton of energy and enthusiasm and I look forward to skiing with them again. I would recommend to all skiing professionals to take advantage of the opportunity to work with the PSIA -NW staff, it's a great way to increase your knowledge and share that knowledge with confidence. ❄️



*Brad Jacobson is Alpine Level III certified, AASI Level I, USSA level 400 (National Level) and Trainer Director for Mt. Bachelor. Brad grew up ski racing from age 8 through college, competed USSA and was nationally ranked. Currently he coaches for Mt. Bachelor Ski Education (since 1992) and is a full time instructor with Mt. Bachelor Ski School and Snowboard School. Email him at [jake1@teleport.com](mailto:jake1@teleport.com)*

## About Your Divisional Staff

The PSIA-NW Divisional Staff includes Examiners, Divisional Clinic Leaders and Speciality Clinicians from all disciplines. They are individuals from a diverse background who are committed to providing you valuable information about current industry trends and the latest teaching and skiing/riding techniques.

All of your Divisional Staff are required to have the highest levels of certification as well as other requirements, which help to insure you have quality leadership at educational events and certification exams.

### Divisional Staff Requirements include:

- ◆ Level III Certified in the discipline for which they lead clinics for a minimum of two years
- ◆ Have at least a Level I certification in another discipline or have attended a two-day Specialty Training event
- ◆ Have a minimum of 40 documented clinic hours in a ski or snowboard school or race program prior to being eligible to be on staff
- ◆ Have excellent working knowledge of PSIA/AASI manuals, certification standards and industry trends
- ◆ Conduct themselves in a professional manner when working with members, industry professionals and the general public

This is a selection year where all positions on the PSIA-NW Divisional Staff are open to qualified individuals. Everyone is invited to attend, where both aspiring and existing staff members will attend a three day tryout process to become or maintain their role as a Divisional Staff member.

If you are thinking of becoming part of the Divisional Staff or know someone who you feel would be a worthwhile addition, please go to [www.psia-nw.org](http://www.psia-nw.org) then follow the link for Divisional Staff Selection Information.

The Tryout is April 30 - May 2 in Oregon. Applications are due April 1, 2010 at 5pm.

# examine, daignose, then prescribe

building great lessons *by Steve Hindman*



Many factors go into a successful lesson, but all lessons are built around one basic: helping students change their skiing. To do so, observe and evaluate what your students are doing and why they are doing it before you help them with what and how to change. In instructor speak, the what and why is called movement analysis, which requires:

1. A clear understanding of what effective skiing is
2. An ability to recognize what effective and ineffective skiing looks like
3. The knowledge and experience to understand and identify cause and effect

Comparing what you see to a memorized orthodoxy of “the right way to ski” and then telling your student what they are doing “right” and “wrong” is not very useful. What is useful is a clear and concise explanation of why what you see “looks good” or why it matters (or doesn’t) that their hand crosses in front of their chest, or why it matters that their hips are between, behind, over, or in front of their feet, and so on.

To understand the “why” behind what you see, separate the results you observe from what is causing or creating them. I think of this as separating symptoms from the disease when analyzing inefficiencies, but it’s just as important to understand the causes behind effective skiing. Relative to track skiing, what is the skier doing that enables them to kick and glide up any hill? What causes another to slip as soon as the track glazes or the hill steepens? Why can one skier V2 uphill farther than another skier?

In alpine skiing, what causes one skier to skid at the apex while another can cleanly carve throughout the turn? Why can one skier tip their skis onto the next set of edges earlier in the turn than another? In snowboarding why does one rider use their whole body to tip the board on edge while another uses their lower body? What causes another rider to land on their tail and spin out after a jump while another can stomp trick after trick?

Instructors who learn to teach by mimicking master trainers and clinicians may fail to pick up on the continual process of examination and diagnosis they employ to determine why throughout their lessons. Missing this key ingredient in their training, they jump past the “why” to the prescriptive or tactical phase (the “how”) in their own lessons without taking time to determine the causes beneath the symptoms they observe and to develop a strategy before doing drills and exercises. Becoming a skilled practitioner of this type of a moving diagnosis requires a process similar to going to medical school and doing an internship: both study and practice are needed before you get good at it.

A skiing model for skate and classic skiing is used to illustrate this process of examination and diagnosis in the rest of this article, but the same process can be used with a different skate and classic ski model or your favorite alpine skiing or snowboarding model.

The pyramid in Figure 1 illustrates a model shared by the Unites States Ski Team (USST) and PSIA for skate and classic skiing. It is based on the concept that a skier needs effective body position before they can develop timing, and effective body position and timing before adding power.

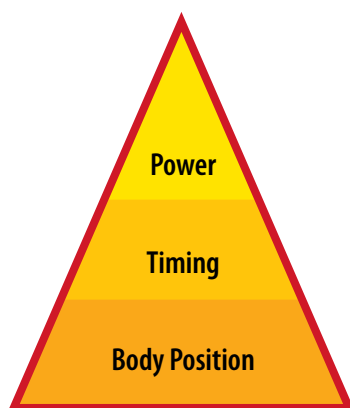


Figure 1. The Skate and Classic Skiing Model

To use the system to determine cause and effect, start by comparing your student’s body position to the descriptions below, then examine their timing, and finally how they create power and propulsion. Be sure to look beneath the highly visible symptoms to ensure the true cause of the problem is not more basic.

With the descriptions of each element as detailed below, use the following checklist to examine, diagnosis and then prescribe drills and exercises your students can use and benefit from:

1. What do you see, what movements and movement patterns do you observe and what results, effects, and outcomes are created by these movements and/or movement patterns?
2. Is what you have identified related to power, timing, or body position?
3. If what you have identified is related to timing or power/propulsion, check the elements below those to help determine cause and separate it from effect. Conversely, if you identify a body position problem, look for a timing or power/propulsion movement or movement pattern that may be causing the body position problem.
4. Once you determine the root cause, decide what you are going to do about it.
5. Clarify your desired outcome before sharing your prescription; if your efforts succeed, how will the student benefit, how will they recognize the change, and how will you know you they have changed?
6. Now move to HOW you are going to change their skiing.
7. Continue to examine and diagnose by repeating this process as you observe their movements as they do the drill you prescribe.



## Two Examples to Illustrate

### Example One

Ineffective poling may appear to be a power/propulsion issue but is often caused by a slow pole recovery, gliding too long before poling, or poling too slowly or deeply. These timing issues result in an ineffective and weak body position when the poles are planted and needs corrected before working on adding power to the poling motion.

### Example Two

A late kick in classic and pushing back instead of sideways during the skate push off may seem to be a power/propulsion problem but is usually a body position problem caused by staying on each ski too long (a timing issue). When this is the case, the skier's center of mass ends up between their feet at the time of weight transfer, resulting in a lack of grip and a weak extension onto the next ski. Encouraging the student to move to the next ski sooner is often the simplest way to improve their grip and push off.

## Visual Cues to Effective Body Position

**In a word: FLOW.** The center of mass constantly and consistently moves or flows down the track. Other ways to describe this are ski with abandon or ski with a forward falling or a dynamic body position.



*In motion to where the next ski will be just after complete weight transfer.*

Visual Cues include:

- Landing on a flexing leg, gliding on an extending leg.
- Landing on a quiet ski (landing smoothly) to minimize excessive up and down motion and maximize the forward motion and momentum transferred from the old ski to the new ski.

- Movement toward the next ski begins as soon as weight is fully transferred onto each new ski.
- Lack of flow interrupters – all movements should contribute to or minimally distract from the overall forward motion down the track. This is a good filter to use when trying to determine if the odd body movement or position is something to worry about.

For Example:

- » Amount of torso twist – twist should not disrupt forward motion. If twist does not disrupt, look for benefit before correcting.
- » Amount of tilt relates to amount of weight on each ski – if skier is 100% supported by each ski with no counterbalancing positions or movements, look for possible benefit of tilting before correcting it.

## Visual Cues to Effective Timing

Effective timing moves the skier to the next ski before it slows significantly and in time to reach full extension prior to pole plant.

Visual Cues include:

- Movement toward the next ski is timed to match the glide available – less glide, quick and direct movement to the next ski, more glide, slower movement toward where the next ski will be.
- Timing of the kick in classic is: Ski Stops, Feet Pass, Weight Transfers.
- Skier moves to the next ski mainly via leg extension from the skate or classic kick.
- Pole push begins simultaneously or after the weight is transferred to the next ski.
- In both skate and classic, leg recovery begins with gravity as the skier relaxes after the kick:
  - » The active forward swing of the rear leg in classic is quick and impulsive, much shorter than the time spent gliding and gripping on each ski, and just in time to catch the skier's body as it moves over and beyond the kicking foot.
  - » Active recovery of the skate ski is directed to match movement of the skier away from the gliding ski and brought forward and beneath the skier just in time to catch the skier's body at the end of the push off.

- Extent and length of each flexion/extension cycle on each ski is adjusted to create time for two cycles of flexion/extension. (First cycle = land on a flexing leg, glide on an extending leg. Second cycle = quick flexion for preload followed by the quick leg extension of the skate or classic kick – the “pop” onto the next ski).
  - » Length and amount of ankle, knee and trunk extension during glide on an extending leg and the depth of the subsequent poling is dependent on the total glide (total time) available on each ski.
  - » If there is no time for two extensions, skier lands on a flexing leg in position for an effective pole push and moves to the next ski with the first leg extension.
- Pole recovery is quick and impulsive and stopped abruptly to transfer the forward momentum of the arm and pole recovery to the ski.
- Core is engaged as poles plant.
- Follow through during poling is dependent on glide available – forward extension prior to pole pull/push on the new ski is not sacrificed for more follow through while on the old ski.

*(continued on next page)*



*Committed to moving to the next ski.*

(continued from previous page)



Push off leg fully extended just as the skier moves to the next ski.

### Visual Cues to Effective Power/Propulsion

- Weight is transferred to each new ski with a quick, precise and powerful movement.
- Classic or skate kick starts with a very quick flex of the knee that brings the hips over and in front of the kicking foot and increases the force of the push off.
- Heel of the kicking foot (skate or classic) stays on the ski as long as possible and at least until skier is committed to moving onto the next ski (i.e., until the skier has moved away from the kicking foot and HAS to move to the next ski to avoid falling onto their side or chest).

- Pressure is applied against the entire edge of the ski during the skate push off (kick). Hips move laterally (roughly perpendicular) away from the edge of the ski to apply pressure against the whole edge during the push off. A good visual is the push off leg should be fully extended just as the skier moves to the next ski.
- Camber of the skis is used like a spring –camber is compressed during the skate and classic kick and then released to move the skier onto the next ski.
- 2 cycles of flexion and extension on each ski as described under timing.
- Forward extension during pole recovery bring skier into a position to maximize initial pole power.
- Body weight loads poles with baskets behind the handles and is used to “pry” the ski(s) forward.
- Pole push comes predominately from core contraction.

To develop your movement analysis skills, spend time skiing, thinking about, and verbalizing the concepts and descriptions of this model or your preferred skiing or snowboarding model to gain a clear understanding of what effective skiing or riding is, the ability to recognize what effective and ineffective movements look like, and to acquire the knowledge and experience to understand and identify cause and effect relationships.

This process of examination, diagnosis and prescription takes time to master and involves a fair amount of trial and error in the learning process. One of the best ways to improve your skills is to observe a master at work. This can be accomplished by participating in a PSIA-NW event that can improve both your skiing and your teaching when you take note of the methods and processes the clinician uses to help you reach your skiing or riding goals. ❄️

Steve Hindman is current PSIA-NW DCL for skate and classic and a 12-year veteran of the PSIA Nordic Team. He is the author of *Cross Country Skier: Skills for Fun and Fitness*, published by



Mountaineers Books, and is the Instructional Editor for *Cross Country Skier* magazine. He currently teaches alpine, telemark and skate and classic lessons as a member of the Stevens Pass Ski School. To purchase the book, access more tips on skiing and teaching, and to contact

Steve, visit [www.nordicskitips.com](http://www.nordicskitips.com) or email him at [steveh@fdalgo.net](mailto:steveh@fdalgo.net)

Photos by Susan Hindman  
[www.schimages.com](http://www.schimages.com)



## go with a pro clinics

This clinic is designed specifically for instructors who took a Level I exam. They can slide into a clinic with a Divisional Clinic Leader (DCL), aka PSIA or AASI Pro for a day of fun, skiing and riding.

It's not all about talk, or books, or dues – it's about having fun and sharing the passion for the mountain experience. Participants can expect to share the day with fellow instructors, possibly from other schools, while skiing or riding with a clinician who shares some information about the organization, the educational opportunities and to help them “Learn, Teach and Inspire” as a snowsport education pro.

Valid **ONLY** for instructors who took their Level I during the 2008-09 or 2009-10 season. Please Note: If you sign up for this event and do not show up, a \$25 cancellation fee will apply.

**1-day clinic, 1-year educational credit, Cost: no additional charge as the event fee is included as part of the Level I Exam!**

TRACK	TELEMARK	SNOWBOARD	ALPINE	DATE	LOCATION
✓				Dec 13	@ Fall College
			✓	Mar 20	Mt. Ashland, Bluewood
		✓		Mar 20	Mt. Spokane
		✓	✓	Mar 21	Schweitzer
		✓	✓	Mar 27	Stevens Pass
		✓	✓	Mar 28	Alpental, Crystal Mtn
		✓	✓	Apr 3	Mt. Bachelor
✓	✓	✓	✓	Apr 10	Symposium @ Sun Valley
		✓	✓	Apr 17	Mt. Baker, Timberline
	✓			Apr 17	Mt. Hood Meadows
		✓	✓	Apr 18	Mt. Hood Meadows



## Scholarships

Need some help paying for an educational event, exam or manual? The Pacific Northwest Snowsports Instructors Association - Education Foundation (PNSIA-EF) is just the place to find some financial support for your professional development.

### To apply for a scholarship, please follow these simple steps:

1. Be a member in good standing meaning dues are paid and ed credits are up-to-date.
2. Be prepared to write a short article summarizing the event you attended.
3. Fill out the scholarship application form and get the necessary letters of recommendation.
4. Submit your Event Application 30-days prior to the event you wish to attend.

For a complete list of details including an application go to the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website, then choose "Member Benefits" from the menu.

## Signing Up for Events

To ensure events happen as scheduled and avoid late fees, please carefully plan and decide what event you wish to attend, then register at least 14 days prior to the event. This allows the office staff ample time to organize the event, meet its staffing requirements and make the event the best it can be for those attending!

**TO AVOID A LATE FEE, SIGN UP EARLY.** Registration less than 14 days prior, is on space-available basis, and assessed a \$10 late fee per day or per module.

**CANCELLATIONS.** More than 4 weeks prior: Full Refund. 2 to 4 weeks prior: Refund less \$25 administrative fee. Less than 2 weeks prior: No Refund except noted as follows - If you are unable to attend an event due to injury or medical reason, providing a signed note from your medical provider, your money will be refunded LESS a \$25 administrative fee.

Event and Exam Applications may be downloaded from the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website. Once completed, fax or email the application to the office for processing. Before the event, you will receive a confirmation email with details about your event.

## LOOK like a pro, too!

Professional Business Cards ordered directly from the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website! Get professional, affordable business cards customized with your name and contact info. Heavy-duty paper designed for our outdoor teaching environment.

## Are You New? Cool!

Welcome to the organization! There are a lot of really great benefits to being a member, and PSIA-NW has made new membership easier than ever.

Most new members have joined as a result of successfully completing a Level I exam. If you have taken your Level I exam this season or last season, you get to attend a "Go With A Pro - Welcome to the Organization - Let's go skiing or riding for the Day" clinic. It's one of the coolest new benefits that the organization offers.

Essentially you have the opportunity to spend the day with one of our Divisional Staff members who will help show you the way to maximizing your member benefits. See the Go With A Pro schedule on the bottom of page 26 or in the Season Guide published in the Winter 2009 Issue or check the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website.

Member benefits include special discount pricing on many products that ski and snowboard professionals use on a daily basis like skis or snowboards, soft goods like gloves, goggles, clothing, tuning tools, and even cars - yeah, that's right - a pro deal on a new Subaru. Be sure to check out all the special offers available to members like you at [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org).

Members also receive this publication, *The NW Snowsports Instructor*, our home grown mini-magazine which is filled with articles and snow pro tips from instructors who teach side-by-side with you here in Alaska, Oregon, Washington, Northern Idaho and western Montana. It also contains information about the Northwest Division events, exam schedules and other local member benefits. Be sure to check out [www.psia-nw.org](http://www.psia-nw.org) for more information.

You also receive *32 Degrees*, which is the national publication that features articles, tips and information from snow pros from across the country, as well as a complimentary issue of *Ski Magazine* and *Transworld Snowboarding* so you can keep up on what the general public is reading as it relates to the snowsports industry.

For new members, depending on when you joined this season, your annual dues will most likely not be due until June 30, 2011, so take advantage of your new membership for the next 16 months!

## 40+ Year members

Thank you for your years of membership and dedication to the snowsports profession ... all 190 of you! You have paved the way for many of us. We appreciate you!

Randon Arnold, Gordon Arwine, Lee Aspaas, Gordon Ball, Mary Bath Balogh, Hollis Barnett, Chris Bath, Joe Batho, Gary Bellinger, Karl Boldt, Mike Branstetter, Hans Burandt, Jack Burns, Larry Carpenter, Gary Carter, Richard Castellow, Herbert Chin, Linda Christianson, Carol A Christoforo, Robert Church, Elise Clarke, Jerry Coffey, Walter Cook, Jim Coombes, Joe Cornell, Deirdre Daigle, Maxine Daniels, G Kirk David, John Derrig, Dan Dunnigan, Bob Entrop Jr, E Tom Evans II, Ronald A Evenson, James R Farmer, Jeanne Farwig, James Feldman, Eddie Fisher, Herb Flatow, James Fletcher, Tim Flood, Charles Friedel, Buzz Fulton, Mike Gacek, John T Garland, Thomas A Gerber, Dave Gossard, Bud Grasinger, Willie Grindstaff, Peter Gschwender, Chris Hadfield, Bart Haggin, Shelley Sperr Hakanson, Robert Hall, Barbara Hancock, Bill Hancock, Kathleen Hand, Kenneth Sr Hand, Michael Hardy, Doris Harlacher, Joe Harlacher, John Hendrickson, Maryanne Hill, Richard Hirano, Andre Hirss, Reidar Hodneland, Charles Honey, Bruce Hunter, E George Hutton, John Imre, Robert Ireton, Ray Jaren, Sherrie Jern, Roger Jewell, Edward Kane, Doran Katka, Bill Kawahara, Scott Keesling, Charles Keith, Ed King, Bill Klement, Erik Klepp, Louis Kneubuhler, Arthur Laws, Jim Leedom, Bill Lenihan, William Lince, Jim Llewellyn, Roger Lowell, Joy Lucas, Lenore Lyle, Dick Lyon, Caron MacLane, Robert Martin, Patrick McDonald, Stephen McIntyre, Tim McKee, Lee Means, Thomas Means, Steve Melton, Lana Miller, Robert Miller, Samuel Miller, John Mohan, Sheron Mohan, Karen Moldstad, Joyce Momb, Lyle Momb, Ed Monroe, Larry Mork, William Morse, Douglas Morten, John Mulhollan, Chet Murakami, Mike Narver, Rich Nelson, Ronald Niccoli, William Nichols, Peter O'Connor, Jerry O'Gorman, Harold Oglesbee, Alfred Ostness, Henry Parker, Bill Parks, Marlis Pehling, John Perry, Judith Perry, Lee Perry, Douglas Pilcher, Patti Polinsky, Ken Raasch, Leigh Rabel, Edward Raymond, Hans Reifer, Stephen Richter, Harald Riise, Michael Riley, Otto Ross, Charles Roth, Pete Sabin, Rod Satterberg, George W Savage, Alan Schlosser, John Shaffer, Richard Shook, Loren Shrock, Gordon Skoog, Gregory N Smith, James F Smith, Richard J Smith, Heinz Sodamin, Nancy South, John Spencer, Diana Stark, Rick Stark, Tex Steere, Tor Storkersen, James Stovall, William Straley, Joan Sturges, Howard Suzuki, Donald Swanson, Robert C Swanson, Walter Swanson, Michael Sweeney, Lee Tate, Chris Thompson, Ted Tsue, Juris Vagners, Dick Vanderflute, Bert Vanderwall, Al Voltz, Betty Voltz, William Wahl, Jack Weigand, Gordon West, John Weston, Mignon Whitcher, Craig White, Thomas White, Ken Whitmire, Ellis Wickward, Bob Wiesmann, Joanne Wiley, Gary Wilke, Ray Wilston, Glenn Yamada, Jay Yanick and Gary Zimmerman.





## Know Enough but Not It All

Children's Tip by Jodi Taggart

So often we hear from instructors that they don't know what kids are into these days. Thus, they find it difficult to relate to, or connect with, them on a creative basis. For those of us that don't have a handy 6 year old to question in regards to what is "cool" right now I suggest the following tactics to get in the know.

Understand that you don't need a complete working knowledge of an entire line of characters or popular children's products to be in the know, but you should take the time to know a little bit about a lot of things for variety.

For starters, check out the weekly ads in the newspaper to see what stores are promoting in the toy or kids clothing department. Or simply make a lap through the kids departments at a local store making short mental notes as to the characters that are highly visible. Another option is to check out the latest kids movies to hit the theaters or new release section in video rentals or Netflix. If you don't want to watch an entire movie you can usually get an idea by checking out the movie's official website and their promotional trailers. You rarely have to catch all the dialogue to fully understand the movie. Note some details about the characters or movie name and put that in your bank of knowledge for now.

The whole idea is to know just enough to not know it all. Kids love to fill in the details for you. Thus you simply have to say something like, "Now who is the guy that is big, square, yellow and lives in a pear under the sea?"

Kids will jump at the chance to tell you that is Sponge Bob Square Pants and he lives in a pineapple not a pear. This is your chance to dive into their knowledge bank and then use something from this conversation to create your adventure on snow. ❄️

Jodi is a PSIA-NW Children's Specialist Clinician and is Alpine III and Snowboard III certified. Email her at [j\\_taggart@msn.com](mailto:j_taggart@msn.com)



## Where Have You Been?

An Indoor Game

Most lunch hours for a children's program really only need to be about 15 minutes long as far as the kids are concerned. However, we need them to stay inside to rest, warm up and fuel up for the afternoon of on snow adventure. So how do you keep the kids from bouncing off the walls in boredom? Try this indoor game.

This is a group activity with the coach keeping track of their answers. Start with a piece of paper with the alphabet written down on one side. Then ask the kids to try to name a place they have been that starts with that letter. See if the group can find something for each letter and don't be afraid to let them get silly about it.

A=Alaska  
B=Bathroom  
C=Chimney (like Santa)  
D=Dribble Town (?)



## Surveyors Tape

Creative Props

So last issue we talked about making a great prop using pipe insulation and colored tape. Add a little surveyors tape to the mix and you can embellish the props even more by adding pom poms.

Take a piece of duct tape and lay it out sticky side up. Then place strips of surveyors tape across the duct tape. The closer you place the pieces together the thicker the pom pom will be in the end. When you are happy with the amount of surveyors tape simply wrap the duct tape around the end of the pipe insulation and you have your pom pom.

Need more color? Check out the website [duct-tape.com](http://duct-tape.com). It even comes in camo!



## A Story for Creativity

Children's Tip by Amy Ohran

Do you freeze up when someone tells you to be creative? Creativity is simply the act of creating something new. Need a creativity boost? Try "story webbing."

You can use this simple group activity during inevitable transition times; chair rides, lunch time, or just catching your breath mid run. Start with a "story phrase" where each group member adds a line to the story. This example is straight up verbatim out of a Children's Specialist Event I led last season.

Here's how it went....

**Amy:** "So, our pirate ship sailed up to this run and..."

**Luke:** "We came upon a frog. He had a gift and a message..."

**Tosha:** "This box is filled with magic sand, take it to the mermaids..."

**Alex:** "Throw the magic sand in the waves and the dolphin will take you to the mermaids..."



**Maryanne:** "The mermaids will get you through the jelly fish forest..."

**Mike:** "At the end you will find the treasure....!"

This took about two minutes and fueled a wildly creative adventure on snow. Or was it a magic ocean? ❄️

Amy is the Mt. Bachelor Snowsports School Director, PSIA-NW Children's Specialist Clinician and an avid climber. She can be reached by email at [aohran@mtbachelor.com](mailto:aohran@mtbachelor.com)





# Play-Drill-Adventure-Summary by Dustin Semb

I enjoy teaching children. They are playful, fall down often, and have short attention spans; just like me. One more reason that I enjoy teaching children is the opportunity to be creative with my lesson, creative lessons usually equate to memorable ones for me. The monotony of teaching beginner adult group lessons every time we head to the hill can get to the best of us. So, I say we should fight monotony and go have some fun.

We all have heard that the best way to teach kids is to make the lesson fun. Many years ago I took an ACE (now called Children's Specialist) clinic and learned a few things; the most important thing that I took away was the importance of making lessons fun. There are many ways to make a lesson fun, and quite a few of them rely on an instructor's innate ability to relate with the kids.

Since that day I have used the PDAS model with students of all ages with high levels of success.

One of the tactics we learned that was geared more towards a learnable skill was the Children's Teaching Model: Play, Drill, Adventure, Summary. Here was something that we could use to make the lesson fun while adhering to a progression that would keep the parents happy, too. I started using PDAS the next day. What I soon discovered was that the children's lessons I taught were fun and the learning curve was high, the adult classes were still a little on the boring side and we always seemed to get to basic skidded turns, but no further.

One day while teaching a father and son I had an epiphany. I was trying my best to teach the dad like an adult and the son like a child, using PDAS and Centerline (yes, I am that old) when I got my students flip-flopped and gave the dad games. He was the first adult student I had for weeks that looked like was enjoying himself and also learned to link turns. I thought "kids learn fast while having fun, why should that be any different with adults?" Since that day I have used the PDAS model with students of all ages with high levels of success.

PDAS works because you can easily tailor a lesson to the student's idea of fun while keeping on track with your plan for improvement. The

idea is that you take a skill and develop a game, drill, and adventure that work on that skill. The personality of each student determines the type of exercises you choose, Chutes and Ladders for some, Stratigo for others. The student gets to play, drill, and challenge him/herself while developing a solid skill set. Without the feeling of boredom there is repetition and practice of a skill.

In addition to the fun aspect, PDAS helps with "grouping" of learning. Grouping refers to our tendency to put like items together then combine those groups in order to create a whole concept. An example of grouping is counting coins. Many of us will group quarters in piles of 4, dimes in piles of 10 and dimes in 2 piles of 10, then count the piles to determine how many dollars we have. Our brain can process things in small groups easier than as a string of ideas. PDAS groups three exercises on one skill together, and then summarizes that skill before moving on to something else. Later in the lesson we can refer to a skill by mentioning one of the exercises we used and that whole segment of the lesson will pop up in the student's mind.

Using the Children's Teaching Model has helped me to provide a more enjoyable lesson for students of all ages and it has helped me breakdown what is being taught into groups that are easier to remember. I took a clinic on how to teach kids and eventually learned that adults group ideas together to remember them.

We should all be taking clinics like the Children's Specialist 1 & 2 (formerly called ACE), the Freestyle Specialist and Senior Specialist training. Specialist training events are focused on one aspect of what we do but reach out and cross over to many other areas including teaching concepts, other snowsport disciplines, and professional knowledge. ❄️

Dustin Semb is an AASI-NW Snowboard Committee Member, Examiner, DCL, Freestyle and Children's Specialist Clinician as well as an Adjunct Professor at the Eastern Washington University Outdoor Programs. Email him at [dustin\\_semb@hotmail.com](mailto:dustin_semb@hotmail.com)



Susanne Grutzner does some hands on teaching at Schweitzer Mt. Resort, ID. photo by Jodi Taggart

## Combining Ideas

"The time has come," the walrus said, "to talk of many things: of shoes-and ships-and sealing wax-of cabbages-and kings."

Combining unusual ideas is at the heart of creative thinking. The ancients mixed soft copper and even softer tin to create hard bronze. Gutenberg combined the wine press and the coin punch to create moveable type and the printing press.

a whack to the Side of the Head





## What I Learned at Technical Team Training

by Nick McDonald

**C**an you teach an old dog new tricks? I sure hope so! I am amazed how much I still have to learn and how fortunate I am to be surrounded by the talented group of individuals that make up the PSIA-NW Technical Team.

The Team gets together at various times of the year for training and workshop sessions. We just wrapped up our midwinter training at Stevens Pass on January 6th. Yes, I did say mid-winter. For the Team, early season training starts in October, when we met indoors at Mission Ridge October 9th - 11th, 2009 to get ready for the upcoming season. Our midwinter training, typically the first Monday and Tuesday in January, is on snow and focused towards the teaching, technical and skiing goals of the team for the division, and themselves.

For the past two years the on snow training has immediately followed the new Immersion Event and the guest coaches from that program have been able to stay and work with the team during this training session. This year we were fortunate to have Michael Rogan of the PSIA National Team with us.

What are the long term technical and skiing goals of the team? There are three: balance, balance and, oh yeah, balance! Balance at the beginning of the turn, balance at the middle of the turn and balance at the end of the turn, then "rinse and repeat." There are actually a few more goals but they all center around the concept of balance (and stance) as it relates to "good skiing."

What did we work on at Stevens Pass? Our specific topic for the two days was to explore the similarities, and more importantly the differences, of situational stance (and balance). Kate Morrell and I spent many hours on the phone and face-to-face discussing the tendencies of different skiing situations, the people who excel in those situations and the preferences they have towards their stance. We surmised from our experiences talking

with people over the years that if you ask someone what a good functional stance is, they would most likely imagine where they prefer to ski and the turns they prefer to make, and naturally come up with an answer based on these preferences, their skiing background and their individual skiing strengths.

As a team we have gone through the exercise of defining a good stance. We found we had to make compromises during the defining process related to the way to make statements that fit the majority of skiing situations. At this last training, we were out to find the differences between skiing situations therefore being able to be more specific about what works and is more efficient.

The plan was to take two different skiing scenarios, participate in a clinic on each scenario by two different team members who excel in those scenarios and compare and contrast the clinics. Since we had Michael Rogan at our disposal we were going to use him for sure. Michael's skiing scenario was off-piste fall-line skiing. The other clinician, Kate Morrell, was asked to lead a clinic on Giant Slalom turns on hard snow. To put it simply, both of these clinicians excel at the given skiing situation they were leading.

We spent day one with Michael where he ran us through the paces of tuning our balance so we could ski the mung, defined as 12-hour old, 14 inch, 27 degree snow, topped with 3 hours of 36 degree rain! We skied this off the top of Kehr's Chair, previously known as Big Chief. It was now 33 degrees and misting. He had us skiing this terrain with a variety of pole-use-tasks like poles behind our back, one pole in the outside hand, one pole in the inside hand, one pole switching hands in the turn transition. He had us take one

*Nick McDonald, Rick Lyons, Stan Aunan and Michael Rogan perfecting the one-ski turn. It's tough.*

ski off and pass one pole around our body as we made turns. Did we fall? Yes. How many times? I lost count! I came to see him as Sgt. Michael Rogan, "Sir, yes Sir! May I have another #\$\$%-kicking exercise to show me how much I need to work on my balance, sir!"

What did I find through all these seemingly torturous activities? One: I had to stay over my feet, meaning aligning my Center of Mass (CM) with the line of action relative to my skis. Two: Make movements to attain and maintain shin contact. Three: I was most successful when my balance point averaged around the middle of my foot.

The next day the stars aligned for Kate, with clear skies and 17 degrees ... and yes, to say it was firm was an understatement. If you have ever been on a clinic with Kate you'll become well acquainted with your traversing skills. We went across the hill on both skis, uphill ski, downhill ski, back and forth, and back and forth, and back again. The results were amazing. I was able to tune-in to where Kate wanted me to balance and how to align my CM relative to my skis and understand why.

We made turns on the outside ski, "box turns" and then we traversed some more with additional coaching from Linda Cowan. Linda had us pick up our uphill ski, turn it over and across our downhill ski in front of the boot and behind the boot (just think it through, you can imagine it). What do you do after that? That's right, traverse some more! With some garland action, balance with more weight on the downhill ski, move more balance to the uphill ski, extend into the turn then back to the downhill ski. Focus on your stance, your direction and your movements. I have never wanted to ski like a girl more, especially these two.

Kate did allow us to put the elements of the exercises into real skiing. What did I find through this day's adventure with Kate and Linda? My balance point moved forward to be successful. A



measure of success being measured as, when following Kate, she did not ski away from me like a jet (Kate) launching off an aircraft carrier (me).

What did I discover over the two days of training? One: Stance and balance are on a sliding scale relative to a given skiing situation. By adjusting and tweaking my balance and stance I have become more versatile and challenged my core beliefs and ideals so they can be broader and stronger. Two: Versatility is important; by improving my performance of the exercises these clinicians led me through I know more about the “depends” when someone give me “it depends” answer to a ski related question.

Some who have read this far may be saying, “Your findings are not breakthroughs. You didn’t need to go through two days of training to come up with those simple conclusions.” Indeed, it’s not rocket science and yes, I knew all this before, but not so well. Going through the process, especially with my teammates, has given me a much deeper understanding of situational stance/balance than

simply discussing it or being told “it depends.”

[ Editor’s Note: In this issue see: Teaching Through Sciencing: Guiding the Ownership of Information by Linda Cowan ].

After ten plus years of skiing (the plus being twenty-eight), I still find myself needing to enhance my balancing skills. Will it ever end? NO. But that’s OK, I have enjoyed getting better at skiing ever since my first day on skis way back when, and it keeps getting better.

If you were ever wondering if there are “magical words” or “secret moves” to becoming a better skier and teacher I hope this sheds some light on the process. The Technical Team members and coaching staff continue to develop our skiing skills, technical skills and teaching skills, so we can develop methods and means to help you develop your skills.

The two days of training with the team at Stevens Pass was invaluable, and I wish it had been a

week longer. Continuing to train is an important part of growth and development. Take advantage of every opportunity. ❄



*Nick McDonald is the Head Coach of the PSIA-NW Technical Team, Alpine Examiner and recent National Team selector. Email him at [nick@pointlavinia.com](mailto:nick@pointlavinia.com)*



## 2010 Technical Team Tryout - April 23-25, 2010

Members of the Technical Team are part of the PSIA-NW Divisional Staff. The Team’s primary focus is on continuing its charter to be an effective research and development group for the division. As well, members of the team are considered as being some of the top snowsports professionals in the Northwest, while some aspire to tryout at the National Team selection in 2012.

The Education, Technical and Certification programs lead by their respective Vice Presidents (known as the ETC) use the Technical Team to spearhead and develop program improvements. Each year the Technical Team has an indoor work session in the fall, at which time they focus on avenues to enhance the PSIA-NW Mission Statement, “Provide high quality educational resources and well defined standards to aid our members in improving their teaching skills to better satisfy the needs and expectations of their customer in the enjoyment of downhill and Nordic snowsports.”

Over the years, this work session has conceived events such as Summer Race Camp, Divisional Academy, Fall Seminar and the newest 3-day educational offering called, “Immersion.” Tools the Team has helped create include all three of the alpine exam task videos, the Northwest Certification Guide and The Feedback Model.

The Team is currently comprised of 8 members and a coaching staff. The term of a team member is 4 years and team selections overlap every two

years to address attrition. Half of the positions for the Team will be open at the upcoming tryout. Due to the work load of the team and the needs of the division the team size will potentially grow over the course of the next two tryouts.

The Technical Team tryout and selection process is based on many aspects including on-snow performance, communication skills, innovation, commitment and desire. While the on-snow performance is the baseline criteria, heavy emphasis is placed in these other areas, which has proven to be successful in creating a unified team with diverse skills and expertise.

If you want to become more involved and influence the direction of snowsports education in the Northwest, please consider becoming a member of this team.

### Eligibility Prerequisites

- Alpine Level III certified member in good standing for the past two years, i.e. dues paid, current on education requirements
- 21 years of age or older
- Hold a Level I certification in another discipline OR hold a Children, Freestyle or Senior Specialty two-day program
- Excellent working knowledge of PSIA manuals, certification standards and industry trends
- Ability to regularly (multiple times a week) access and reply to email
- Primary member of Northwest Division

### Tryout Requirements

- Resume including ski industry related experience as well as experience beneficial to the position outside the ski industry
- Cover letter detailing:
  1. Intent for being on the team;
  2. Why do you want to be on the team;
  3. What do you hope to contribute to the team and the membership if you are selected;
  4. And ability to commit to a four year term and work and/or attend trainings 20 days per year
- Two articles suitable for publishing in the newsletter.
  1. One article to be a personal viewpoint editorial on the Team’s history and what the Team is
  2. One article to be on a Snowsports instruction topic of the applicant’s choice
- Two letters of recommendation
  1. One letter from a PSIA member in good standing
  2. One letter from a professional outside PSIA-NW
- Letter of support from School Director or Manager

## Learn, Teach & Inspire

### Spring dates to remember

#### Multi-Day Events

Divisional Academy	Mar 12-14
Spring Symposium @ Sun Valley	Apr 9-11
Spring GS Camp	Apr 23-25
Freestyle Camp	Apr 23-25
Summer Ski Camp #1	Jul 9-11
Professional Development Camp	Jul 9-11
Summer Ski Camp #2	Jul 16-18

#### Specialist Programs

Children's 2	Mar 20-21
Freestyle Foundations	Mar 26
Freestyle Progressive & Advanced	Mar 27-28
Children's 1	Apr 17-18
Senior 1	Apr 17-18

#### Scheduled Alpine & Snowboard Exams

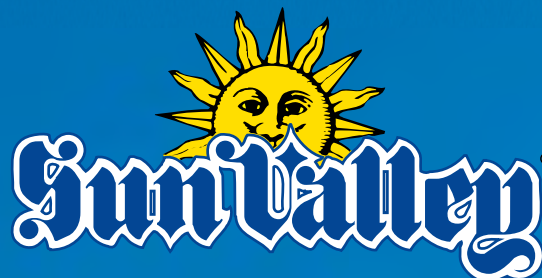
Schweitzer	Mar 20-21
Stevens Pass	Mar 27-28
Mt. Bachelor	Apr 3-4
Mt. Hood Meadows	Apr 17-18

SEE PAGE 18-19 OF THE WINTER 2009 ISSUE  
FOR MORE DETAILS

#### Go With A Pro

Mt. Ashland, Bluewood	Mar 20
Mt. Spokane	Mar 20
Schweitzer	Mar 21
Stevens Pass	Mar 27
Alpental, Crystal Mountain	Mar 28
Mt. Bachelor	Apr 3
Sun Valley @ Symposium	Apr 10
Mt. Baker, Timberline	Apr 17
Mt. Hood Meadows	Apr 17&18

SEE PAGE 22 OF THE WINTER 2009 ISSUE  
FOR GO WITH A PRO DETAILS



**Spring Symposium is  
April 9 - 11**

**It's more  
than a card**



*I have been a member of the Eastern, Central, Northern Rocky Mountain, and Northwest Divisions. For me it's the friendships formed, the camaraderie at the events, and the educational element. I love sharing what I know, and learning from other instructors to add to my bag of tricks. I like to go to at least 2 events per year and feel that if one is to stay current with the sport, membership is a must. By the way the Northwest Division is "tops" in my book.*