

PSIA/AASI  
NORTHWEST

Fall 2010

Issue #1 2010/11 Season  
PNSIA-EF

# snOWsports instructor

## Avalanche

BURIED ALIVE BUT LIVED TO TELL

## Fall Seminar

THE SEASON OPENER

## Snow Pro Tips

TIPS & TRICKS FROM YOUR PEERS

## Season Guide Inside

2010/11 EVENT DATES & DESCRIPTIONS





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Sean Bold, Crystal Mountain Snowsports  
School Director and PSIA-NW Alpine  
Examiner having a run for himself at  
Crystal Mountain. Photo by Jeff Caven



## EXAM SPEAK

by Chris Thompson, PSIA-NW Certification Vice President and Alpine Examiner



Certification affirms a knowledge and experience base for instructors, their employers, and the public at large. Certification represents a declaration of an instructor's professional competence and enhances employability and career advancement. Certification; we know what it is, but why do we have it in the first place?

### A brief history

Prior to the formation of Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) in the 60's, the ski schools throughout the United States were typically directed by Europeans who brought their own national ski school technique and methodologies with them. You could take lessons at any of a number of ski areas at that time and be forced to learn completely different techniques. Most of the ski areas were, and still are, located on United States Forest Service (USFS) federal property. The USFS is a "partner" in the ski industry with the Special Use Permit (SUP) holders.

In the early years the USFS maintained a day to day presence with a USFS Snow Ranger on site to help guide management decisions. All operational procedures, from brochures to price structures, had to go across their desk for eventual approval by the District Ranger. The USFS concerns reflected equitable, judicious use of public lands. One of the issues they faced was the inconsistency in ski lesson programs. This was perhaps a subliminal but important force in the development of PSIA.

As a condition of the SUP the USFS recommended the instructors be properly trained to give ski lessons not unlike the requirements to have trained or certified lift operators to operate their public aerial transportation. This coupled with the various European countries' national ski schools led to the certification program as part of the forma-

tion of PSIA. The original Official American Ski Technique set the standards for the then three levels of certification in the US – Registered, Associate Certified and Fully Certified.

PSIA is comprised of nine geographic regions. Each of the regions has their own separate exam guides based on the national standards. In our division, we have discipline specific certification guides – Alpine, Snowboard, Nordic (telemark and track) and Adaptive, which are available for download on the psia-nw.org website.

Each discipline is accountable for the upgrade and maintenance of the respective exam guides. Approval of changes comes from the Board of Directors through the Certification Vice President. All disciplines have been diligent, constantly updating exam content and operations.

Adaptive completed substantive changes this past spring. Snowboard upgraded this past operating season. The Nordic community is continuously editing to meet contemporary changes and needs. Alpine upgraded the Teaching and Professional Knowledge module last season and are undertaking a change to the Skiing module beginning this operating season. Not change for the sake of change, but to meet technological industry wide changes.

The skills concept is the backbone of the American Teaching System (ATS). It is the basis by which the examiner staff grades the skiing at all levels. Therefore, the Alpine exam guide has been edited to reflect skiing performance at each of the levels through the ability to ski a variety of terrain, conditions, turn shapes, speeds. Each skiing level is also required to be able to work through a variety of more task oriented exercises focusing on specific skills realizing that it still takes a blend of all four of the skills: Balance, Rotary, Edging and Pressure.

An additional change to the skiing module this season is the examinees discussing the elements of the prescribed tasks with the examiners. Previously, an examiner would read the task description, check for understanding, perform the task and move on. This season, examiners will be ask-

ing technical questions of all examinees. This will include the general skiing as well as the versatility type tasks. The goal is twofold: examinees will ideally come to the exam better prepared and the examiners result sheets will have more clear analysis and goals.

Training Directors (TDs) are current with the exam process. If there are additional exam oriented questions, examiners and divisional clinic leaders are always available. If you do not have an examiner or DCL on your staff or located at your home area, staff email addresses are listed on the psia-nw.org website. Additionally, the website provides access to resource information that will better prepare you for your certification endeavors. Hope this helps in your quest to become certified, be it an entry level certification or the long term goal of a Level III certification. ❄️

Chris Thompson is the PSIA-NW Certification Vice President, an Alpine Examiner, Founder and past Head Coach 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)

## 2011 CALL FOR CANDIDATES

by Mary Germeau  
PSIA-NW Executive Vice President



### PSIA-NW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Northwest members are encouraged to get involved and run for any position on the Board of Directors that is up for election in their region. In order to run, mem-

bers (and incumbents wishing to run again) need to meet the candidacy requirements, complete and submit an Announcement of Candidacy to the PSIA-NW office via fax, e-mail or "snail" mail to be received on or before 4:00 PM, December 31, 2010. Candidacy requirements require a member be a Certified Level II or III or, a Certified Level



I with two years of membership, in good standing. This person must also be working in or have a nexus with the region in which he/she wants to run for a directorship.

Positions are for three (3) year terms and require attendance at two (2) board meetings per year plus other events and committee work, as needed. As usual, one third (1/3) of our Directors come up for election in the spring each year. The statements for re-election submitted with the Announcement of Candidacy will be noted in the Newsletter and published in their entirety on the website.

Positions to be re-elected this winter by member ballot for seating at the 2011 Spring Board meeting are:

Region	Position	Incumbent
Snoqualmie	1	Jack Burns
Snoqualmie	2	Molly Fitch
Snoqualmie	3	Ed Kane
Stevens Pass	3	John Weston
Crystal Mt.	1	John Eisenhauer
Mt. Hood	1	Tyler Barnes
Bend	1	Larry Murdoch*
Bend	2	Donna Sanders*
Blue Mountain	1	Kay Stoneberg
Mt. Baker	1	Jake Bobst*

**\*Special Notes:** Larry Murdoch, Bend Position 1, was elected for a 1-year position last year. Donna Sanders, Bend Position 2, was appointed after the Spring Board meeting to fill Jim Fields position and she will need to run this year for her position. Jake Bobst, Mt. Baker Position 1, was appointed after the Spring meeting to fill Karen Moldstad's position and will need to run this year for his position.

## MEMBER SCHOOL REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Regional Member School Representatives are also up for election each year on a rotating basis; the term is three (3) years. A person wishing to run for one of these positions must be a Certified Level II or Level III and a Member Snowsports School Director in the Region in which he/she wants to run. There are currently four (4) regions in PSIA-NW. The Region I Directorship is up for election this year. The Member School Directors eligible to run for this Region I position are from Snowsports schools in the Snoqualmie Pass Region, the Stevens Pass Region, the Crystal Mt. Region and the Mt. Baker Region. The Member School Directors in their Region elect the Representative for their Region by mail-in ballot.

The current Director of Region I is Mary Germeau, Director of Olympic Ski School in the Stevens Pass Region. The main responsibility of the Regional Representative is to have a fall informational meeting for the Snowsport School Directors in their Region, typically held in October, to prepare the snowsports schools with information for the upcoming season. During the season, further contacts can be made amongst the directors with important updates.

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL CANDIDATES

All Candidates for either the Board of Directors or Member School Regional Representatives (including incumbents) must submit an Announcement of Candidacy in order to be considered an eligible candidate. This announcement should contain the following information: Full Name, Region, Position, Snowsports School, title or position at the school, off-snow occupation, if any, PSIA-NW involvement, reasons for wanting to serve, and your contact details. Candidates may download an Announcement of Candidacy form from the PSIA-NW.org website at this web address: [www.psia-nw.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/candidates/](http://www.psia-nw.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/candidates/). This form will work for both positions—just check the correct box(es). On the following page you will also find an abbreviated form you can use as well.

This Announcement of Candidacy will be used in communications in the General Election so members in the region for which the candidate is running may read a statement about them and their reason for wanting to serve. Regional Member School Representatives are elected by mail-in ballot by the member school directors in the region for which they wish to serve. For more information about additional requirements contact your Regional Board Representative or the office. ❄️

*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)*

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## SHINY, NEW WEBSITE

by Tyler Barnes

PSIA-NW Communications Vice President



In August we quietly turned on the new [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website. It was a matter of flipping a switch really; no ribbon cutting, no champagne, no fanfare. And it may seem like a non-event of sorts, but the new website provides some great new features and is doing some heavy lifting behind the scenes.

### Post Comments on Articles (please)

Just like on PBS, you can “continue the conversation on-line” at [www.psia-nw.org](http://www.psia-nw.org). All featured and contributed articles published in the newsletter beginning with the Fall 2009 issue will appear on individual pages of the site where you can post comments. This will be a useful way for readers and authors to connect to get clarification on the topic, post a “great job” note or alternative perspective. This type of two-way communication is important as your comments become part of the communication process. Back issues dating back to 2003 are available for download in PDF format.

### Interactive Event Calendar

There is an event calendar under the Events menu that displays all the events for a given month in a calendar view, with links to more information about the event like cost, location, educational credits and specific details. Website users can click through the various months to see what’s available and subscribe to the calendar using the Real Simple Syndication (RSS) link, which will import the calendar items into your personal calendar like iCal (mac) or Outlook (pc). Or if you prefer a list view, the complete alphabetical event list is available at your finger tips as well.

### Who We Are

In the Who We Are menu all the PSIA-NW Member Services Staff, Board of Directors, Examiners, Clinician Staff, and Technical Team members are conveniently displayed with their photo, home area, email addresses, etc. This is a great way to put the names, faces and contact info of the people who dedicate time and resources to make your experience with the organization positive and meaningful.

### On-line Job Postings

Any advertiser who submits an employment ad for publishing in the newsletter also has the listing posted on the Jobs section of the website.

While this is not a new feature, we have spruced up the presentation and created individual pages for each job listing. This is a great value for our advertisers and a convenient feature for our members who are looking for new venues for sharing their passion for the mountain experience.

### Photo Gallery

The photo gallery is probably one of the most visited pages on the website. The photo gallery pages have been improved by sorting the photos by event, then allowing you to click through the album one by one to view the photos in an overlay window. Also, more notable for the webmaster(s), it is much easier to post the photos quickly so we can get them uploaded to the website sooner for your viewing enjoyment.

### Site Architecture and Functionality

The website is now in a frameless architecture which allows the path to the webpage to be linked directly. The latest news items appear on all the pages of the site in case you miss them on the homepage. The site also has a RSS feed so if you want to keep abreast of new posts that appear on the site, subscribe to the RSS feed. We also have a twitter account if you want to subscribe to that too. Tweet, tweet.

Project volunteers include Rick Lyons, PSIA-NW Technical Team, Examiner and Alpine Clinician, who volunteered by helping organize and move content over from the old site. John May, PSIA-NW Alpine Clinician, also helped with the initial discovery phase of the site structure and organization, comparing our website organization to that of all other divisions. Mark Schinman, Secretary and Second Vice President and past webmaster was also instrumental in helping maintain the old site during the transition to our new site.

When I am not teaching skiing I am a web-and-print designer/developer based out of Hood River, Oregon, and have been in this line of work since 1996. I have volunteered well over 500 hours on the website project alone, and have leveraged open-source software to make this project both viable and sustainable.

Without the volunteer efforts of devoted members with special skills the high-quality of PSIA-NW member benefits would not be possible. Thank you volunteers! ❄️

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*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. No job too big or too small, just shoot an email off to [tyler@509design.com](mailto:tyler@509design.com)*

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### SUBMISSION DEADLINES

For more info go to  
[www.psia-nw.org/newsletter](http://www.psia-nw.org/newsletter)

#### Fall Issue (Sep – Nov),

Ad Reserve by August 1  
Articles, Snow Pro Tips by August 15

#### Winter Issue (Dec – Feb),

Ad Reserve by October 1  
Articles, Snow Pro Tips by October 20

#### Spring Issue (Mar – May),

Ad Reserve by January 1  
Articles, Snow Pro Tips by January 20

#### Summer Issue (Jun – Aug),

Ad Reserve by May 1  
Articles, Snow Pro Tips by May 20

### CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES

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.



## FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



In this issue Jeff Caven's cover photo is a preview of the season to come! The photo taken at Crystal Mountain is of Sean Bold, PSIA-NW Examiner and Clinician laying down some tracks on fresh corduroy at his home turf, where he is the

Snow Sports School director.

Jeff Caven got into photography back when he was known as a "Full Cert" Ski Instructor. Action ski photography is fortunately part of his business and he knows a good turn when he sees it. Jeff's clients include, Sturtevant's, Summit at Snoqualmie, Sun Valley, Crystal Mountain and VisitRainier.com. Get more info on Jeff's work at [www.resorthotelphotographer.com](http://www.resorthotelphotographer.com) or shoot him an email at [Jeff@ResortHotelPhotographer.com](mailto:Jeff@ResortHotelPhotographer.com) or by snail mail at 1933 Commerce St. Studio 301, Tacoma, Washington 98402.

## PSIA-NW DONATIONS BY MEMBERS

A special thank you is extended to members who made financial contributions to the PNSIA Education Foundation for the 2010/2011 Season. Listed alphabetically are the following donors:

*Catherine Bath, Ellen Bierman, Cynthia Bradshaw, Inger Brandal, Thomas Chasse, Jean Christ, John Derrig, Hugh Dunklee, Jay Eacker, Randy Elder, Joan Elvin-McAree, Chuck Friedel, Kent Golding, Willie Grindstaff, Russell Hart, Karl Haugen, Libby Hillis, Kirsten Huotte, EP Brock Jaffarian, Jeff Johnson, Knight Phil, Bob Lee, Mark Little, Michael Ludden, James MacCready, Caron MacLane, Richard Mario, Lane Mc Laughlin, AB McClaran, Nick McDonald, Anne Meixner, Per Otto Melleberg, Debra Metter, Lana Miller, Debra Norum, Piotr Oczkowicz, Brandon Orstad, Henry Parker, Leigh Rabel, George Roach, Chad Rosenstein, Martin Rues, Glenda Schuh, Neli Stewart, Kay Stoneberg, Charlie Strasser, James Takara, Kevin Tanski, Susie Thorness, Joe Turner, Nanci Vivian-Peterson, Richard Vuori, Alice Walter, Michael Welch, Kyle Whitham, and Melody Yamada.*

*Tyler Barnes receives award presented by George Bailey. Photo by Barb Darrow*

## PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE AWARD

George Bailey, PSIA-NW Awards Committee Chairperson, submitted our publication to the Apex Awards for consideration. In the Spring of 2010 the 22nd Annual Apex Awards for Publication Excellence Competition judges reviewed more than 3,700 entries and selected our newsletter for one of the awards. The NW Snowsports Instructor newsletter was awarded one of the 2010 APEX Awards for Publication Excellence in the category "Most Improved Newsletters & Journals." George presented the award to Tyler Barnes, Communications V.P. at the Fall 2010 Board of Directors meeting.



## ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANDIDACY

Must be submitted by mail, fax or email to the PSIA-NW Office no later than 4:00 p.m., December 31, 2010. This is the minimum required to announce candidacy.

☐ Yes, I would like to be a candidate for the election of the Region I Representative on the PSIA/AASI-NW Member School Committee. To be a candidate for this position, I understand I must be a minimum Level II or III Certified member in good-standing and be a Member Snowsports School Director.

☐ Yes, I would like to be a candidate for the PSIA-NW Board of Directors. To be a candidate for this position, I understand I must be a Certified Level II or III, or Certified Level I for two (2) years, member in good standing.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Snowsports School \_\_\_\_\_ PSIA Member # \_\_\_\_\_

Off the snow occupation (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

PSIA-NW Involvement \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s) for wanting to serve on the Board of Directors \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Candidates may download an Announcement of Candidacy long form from the PSIA-NW.org website: [www.psia-nw.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/candidates/](http://www.psia-nw.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/candidates/)

# avalanche

## buried alive but lived to tell

by Tara Seymour photos by Jeff Seymour



*The Schönbiel Hut on the north side of the Matterhorn near Zermatt, Switzerland*

**T**he trip began like any other trip to Europe, with a lot of jet lag and anticipation for the upcoming adventure. We were anxious to get on our skis and out of the crowded town of Zermatt, Switzerland. The Matterhorn looming in the view of every street reminded us we were definitely in the Swiss Alps. The weather was nice and we were staying two days in town to acclimatize to the mile-high elevation. We spent the first day getting to know our touring group consisting of three mountaineering guides and four clients: two friends, my husband and me. We were all very excited and determined to make this trip amazing and safe!

The Haute Route a.k.a. the “high route” has been a huge part of the history of skiing and mountaineering in the Alps. This was something that I had

personally wanted to ski for over ten years and now I was standing in the shadows of the Matterhorn with excitement that caused my stomach to swirl. After much cheese fondue and poor Swiss wine we made our way to bed.

The first day of acclimation included skiing the huge and endless terrain of Zermatt with its many ski areas. With my PSIA Level III Certification and ISSA international membership, I was compensated at nearly all resorts. The day was not spent free skiing, but rather assessing each other’s skiing skills in a variety of diverse conditions, steeps, etc. Time was spent starting and stopping in certain places and very specific distances apart in preparation for the high country. All of this was conducted while wearing our outfitted 25+ pound backpacks. Part of the day was also spent reviewing usage of our avalanche beacons and transceivers. Knowing the abilities of your peers can be a life or death situation in climbing and backcountry skiing. Our three American guides were very helpful, qualified and knowledgeable in all the safety precautions necessary when navigating these mountains. I felt very safe in their hands.

Typically this route can be completed in 8-10 days. Our first day on route was not perfect; it was very windy and sub-zero all day but was both challenging and rewarding. It was necessary to use crampons to make the ascent to the first hut, and with day one finally over, I had already been pushed out of my comfort zone on more than one instance.

Those not familiar with the Haute Route, this ski-touring trip consisted of skiing up and down mountains for long portions of the day, in various conditions from wind pack and breakable crust to the “light and fluffy” we were hoping for. Some days high winds would attack in gusts while other times would remain at a steady speed of 20 m.p.h. or more suited to windsurfing than ski touring. Regardless of the snow conditions all the days were very cold and long with the huts as a physical and mental end goal. The final approach to the Bertol hut was “totally insane” one of which we had to climb a near-vertical craggy face to get to the hut that was perched on the edge of a precipice. The final relief was closing the hut door as if being inside would somehow render our precarious locale harmless. The huts were usually warmer inside than outside and typically had some sort of edible food and wine as dinner for the weary. The dinner conversation always revolved around the incredible mountain landscape and the phenomenal skiing.

Just as we knew that the sun would rise, snow fell frequently accumulating overnight. On the morning of the fifth day of our adventure across the Alps, we awoke to more than 16 inches of snow that had fallen during the night. The wind was gusting up to 60 m.p.h. Typically we would start our day out around 7 am, but on this day we waited and debated. The guides poured over maps and conversed among themselves. Finally at 10 am the weather cleared a bit, the sun peeked out,



*The Bertol Hut perch*



and although it was still very windy, at least we were off to the next hut.

The wind was truly an issue. We were cold and the snow was being blown all around, creating poor visibility. We considered turning back, but we all decided to keep moving forward. The thought of turning around felt like failure to us. The guides led us up the first col between two peaks then across a large glacier. As we approached the next col, the winds increased as they funneled through the gap. The guides requested we remove our skis from our boots and carry them part way over the col. At this point we could see nothing due to snow being blown up the slope. Pitch, length and terrain were all a mystery to us.

The guides dug a quick pit to check the snow conditions. In an effort to get some relief from the wind, the guides built a snow anchor from skis and rope. We were then lowered down about 100 feet to a rock outcropping. We were hoping to lower out of the wind a bit more and get down far enough to see what the slope was going to be like for our descent. The four clients went first with one guide at the bottom, helping us off the anchor, and the other two at the top getting us hooked in.

With all four of us standing on a rock island in the middle of the huge valley, we heard the most horrifying sound you would ever want to hear. So loud it silenced the wind, "CRACK!" The sound of an avalanche!

The sound was terrifying for only a moment. Then blown off the rock island by hurricane force wind, flying through the air, hitting the ground hard, I was really scared. Flying again in the air with

snow engulfing me, the first thought any parent would have, was of my kids. How could I possibly leave them orphans? I did not know if my husband was caught in this nightmare as well, or maybe he was fine. Finally the turbulence was slowing after what seemed like an eternity that inevitably lasted less than a minute all together. I felt the power of the snow settle around me and I could move nothing. Panic now overcame fear.

Getting my wits together I could see light about two feet up, or so it seemed. I tried to move, but could not. I tried to conserve breath, slow down, not panic. Could I move something? Yes, my left wrist! It was partially free. I started using my fingers to dig towards my face. I had about three inches of air around my face and knew that was not going to last long. I kept digging quickly making progress slowly. I was under about 4 minutes when I heard muffled noises. I tried to scream, but snow fell in my mouth choking me. Relax. I knew that they had found me. My beacon had worked.

An airway was dug out of the snow and I knew that I was alive, and my children would still have a mother. I did not feel any major pain, but knew that the adrenaline had kicked in. It took ten minutes to carefully dig me out. My rescuer and good friend told me that my husband was okay and was being dug out, but that the other two were still not found.

Freed from my would be tomb, the ordeal had really just begun. There were two more people buried somewhere. I joined the search. We found the next person 200 feet below me with severe injuries and needing real help. The last person was found another 200 feet down slope and had been buried

*Make-shift shelter for avalanche victim*



for six minutes or more. Again we had a major injury and needed help. With all accounted for the lead guide, whose skis wear lost somewhere in the avalanche debris, was able to piece together enough ski equipment from the scattered and lost gear. He took off immediately for the next hut on our destination about 10 km away on his make shift touring setup. Our lost gear was the least of our concerns as we prepared temporary shelter for the injured.

Then we waited. It was three hours before we heard the Air Zermatt choppers. When they

*(continued on next page)*

*The avalanche was a R4/D5 with adjacent slopes sliding as well contributing to the destruction; we are lucky to be alive*



*The avalanche started here*

*We were here*

*Additional fracture line contributing to the avalanche magnitude.*

*Note additional fracture line contributing to the deposition field.*

*We ended up here - 1,000 vertical feet below*

(continued from previous page)

arrived it was far too windy for them to land near us, so the Swiss guides aboard the helicopters skied up to us and extracted the injured to the landing zone where the choppers could lift them out safely. The Swiss Mountain Guides were truly amazing to see at work.

The weather had lifted enough to visually approximate the ordeal. We slid down more than 1,000 vertical feet, over two rocky cliffs and lived to tell about it, due to the swift actions of our team in locating the buried using transceivers, and successfully digging them out in time to avoid suffocation. Not everyone is as lucky.

## Avalanche Safety Basics

If caught and buried in an avalanche you are more likely to be found if you wear a beacon. A beacon is only useful if the members in your party know how to locate it using a transceiver. You should also always carry a shovel, probes and in most cases be wearing a harness. When traveling in the backcountry, the side-country (special areas that are part of a resort's permit area but may or may not be well avalanche controlled), or even in-bounds at your resort, any open slope between 30° and 45° may be at risk of sliding. More Difficult (Blue Square) terrain has a slope of typically 20° to 30° while Most Difficult (black diamond) terrain has a slope of typically 30° to 40° and Expert Only (Double Black diamond) terrain is typically 40° or more.

Even small avalanches are a serious danger to life, even with properly trained and equipped companions who avoid the avalanche. Between 55 and 65 percent of victims buried in the open are killed, and only 80 percent of the victims remaining on the surface survive.

Research carried out in Italy based on 422 buried skiers indicates how the chances of survival drops very rapidly from 92% within 15 minutes to only 30% after 35 minutes where victims die of suffocation to near zero after two hours where victims die of injuries or Hypothermia.

Historically, the chances of survival were estimated at 85% within 15 minutes, 50% within 30 minutes, 20% within one hour.

## Avalanche Info

Avalanche starting zones generally occur on slopes between 30 and 60 degrees. They can run, and even accelerate, at pitches between 15 and 30 degrees especially when confined, such as the terrain in a narrow canyon. When the slopes hit 15 degrees or less the avalanche will generally decelerate to a stop, leaving huge amounts of debris in the deposition zone.

In terms of size, avalanches are measured on "R = Relative size to path" and "D = Destructive Force" scales from 1 to 5, 5 being the largest and most destructive. The avalanche we were caught in



Air Zermatt and the Swiss Mountain Guides rescue team at work

was classified as R4/D5. In the United States and Canada and the following avalanche danger scale is used. Descriptors vary depending on country.

## Avalanche Danger Scale

**Low (green):** Natural avalanches very unlikely. Human triggered avalanches unlikely. Generally stable snow. Isolated areas of instability. Travel is generally safe. Normal caution advised.

**Moderate (yellow):** Natural avalanches unlikely. Human triggered avalanches possible. Unstable slabs possible on steep terrain. Use caution in steeper terrain.

**Considerable (orange):** Natural avalanches possible. Human triggered avalanches probable. Unstable slabs probable on steep terrain. Be increasingly cautious in steeper terrain.

**High (red):** Natural and human triggered avalanches likely. Unstable slabs likely on a variety of aspects and slope angles. Travel in avalanche terrain is not recommended. Safest travel on windward ridges of lower angle slopes without steeper terrain above.

**Extreme (red/black border):** Widespread natural or human triggered avalanches certain. Extremely unstable slabs certain on most aspects and slope angles. Large destructive avalanches possible. Travel in avalanche terrain should be avoided and travel confined to low angle terrain well away from avalanche path run-outs.

## In Summary

I am sharing this story to inspire my fellow members of PSIA to inspire you to get backcountry and avalanche education, both for you and your students. It is important that our members become more aware of the dangers of avalanches in the backcountry, side-country and even within our own ski area boundaries, as many snowsports enthusiasts are seeking out the backcountry experience. I love to ski the backcountry still, and take all the precaution when doing so.

Most of us ski and ride at resorts that control the dangers of the avalanches; however avalanche control does not completely remove the danger of avalanche, it just reduces it. It is my belief that if you work in the snowsports industry you should attain your Level 1 Avalanche training. Some ski areas in the Northwest and beyond require in-

structors to wear beacons, while most general public don't even know what they are.

As members of the snowsports education profession, I contend, it is our responsibility to know as much about basic avalanche safety as it is to teaching a basic parallel turn. ❄️



Tara is a PSIA-NW Alpine Clinician and Training Director at Mt. Bachelor Ski Resort in Bend, Oregon. She has been an instructor at Mt. Bachelor and member of PSIA for 16 years. Email [tarrahbeth@aol.com](mailto:tarrahbeth@aol.com)

Post comments @ [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org)

## Avalanche Related Info & Links:

Alaska: [www.alaskaavalanche.com](http://www.alaskaavalanche.com)  
Idaho (northern): [www.thesnowschool.com](http://www.thesnowschool.com)  
Montana (western): [www.missoulaavalanche.org](http://www.missoulaavalanche.org)  
Northwest Weather & Avalanche Center: [www.nwac.us](http://www.nwac.us)  
Oregon: [www.i-world.net/oma](http://www.i-world.net/oma)  
Oregon (central): [www.coavalanche.org](http://www.coavalanche.org)  
Washington(central): [www.mountainmadness.com](http://www.mountainmadness.com)  
Washington (western): [www.mountainsavvy.com](http://www.mountainsavvy.com)

**Editor's Note:** There is a well photographed and documented naturally occurring avalanche that happened during the Winter 2009/2010 Season at Mt. Hood Meadows. It was a very large avalanche (R4, D4) that started outside the permit area, however traveled more than 2.5 miles and nearly 6,000' vertical feet well into the resort area stopping 200 yards from the bottom terminal of the Heather Canyon chairlift.

Go to this link for more information: [www.skihood.com/Community-and-News/Meadows-Blog/Posts/2010/01/Anatomy-of-an-Avalanche](http://www.skihood.com/Community-and-News/Meadows-Blog/Posts/2010/01/Anatomy-of-an-Avalanche)



## BALANCE IS THE KEY TO EFFICIENT SLIDING

A Senior Moment by Ed Kane

It is well documented in skiing and snowboarding literature that balance is an important element of skiing and riding skills that we try to improve as we work with our students. In my mind, the importance is clearly indicated by the fact that the Skills Venn diagram that depicts the relationship of each skill is surrounded by the circle that represents Balancing Movements. When we are younger we tend not to notice the fact that, as the day goes along, we tend to feel a bit tired.

However, as we age, this becomes more noticeable and we tend to go out only in the morning and retire to the hot tub in the afternoon rather than trying to achieve the “vertical feet skied goal” that we used to be able to accomplish. Over the years, I have found that it is still possible to ski 20,000+ vertical feet in the day, stay on the mountain until the lifts close and not need the hot tub to relax my stressed muscles at the end of the day so I can really enjoy the mountain environment the next day. The secret is that as we age, we become cleverer in what we do to compensate for deterioration in our former stamina and capabilities. In my own case, I have found that honing my balancing movement skills has led to much more enjoyment on the mountain.

So really, why are improved balancing movements important to our ultimate enjoyment? Bottom line is that when we support our weight using our skeletal structure we fatigue much more slowly. On the other hand when we have to use both the skeleton and our muscles to maintain balance the latter fatigue, burn more calories and create lots of lactic acid all of which leaves us feeling uncomfortable both during our day on the hill and afterwards. To avoid stressing our muscles we must develop the ability to use efficient balancing movements both statically and dynamically while moving down the hill. Less stress on the muscles during each run results in more runs and vertical feet each day.



Fig.1: Candi in Tree pose

There are many ways to improve our balancing movement skills. One of the most popular in the sports community is to engage in a regular Yoga regimen. The easiest way to start is to enroll in a class and get some coaching before going off on your own. However, that usually takes a commitment of time which a lot of us don't have considering our busy lives. There are some alternatives however that we can integrate into our daily activities with a minimum of additional time commitment.

### Here are some ideas:

1. When drying your feet after showering stand on one foot without supporting yourself on the shower walls then step out of the shower with the dry foot and do the other.
2. Stand in the middle of the room on one foot when putting on your socks in the morning.
3. When standing in the fast food line, lift one foot off the ground and balance on the other for 30 seconds to a minute. Repeat on the other foot, etc. for as long as you're in the line.

There are three relatively simple exercises and Yoga poses that are quite helpful and easy to do. I generally do them in the morning prior to putting on my shoes. Figure 1 is the Tree pose, Figure 2 is Single Leg Extension, a variation of the Warrior pose that is designed to increase leg strength as well as balance, and Figure 3 is Standing Knee pose.

### The Tree Pose (Fig. 1 above)

- Raise arms over head, inhale and shift balance to one foot.
- Lift other foot and lightly place alongside the thigh just above the knee.
- Hold pose for 30 seconds to 1 minute while inhaling and exhaling deeply.
- Place raised foot on the floor, exhale and repeat on the other side.
- Work toward 10 repetitions.



Fig. 2: Candi in a Single Leg Extension pose. As she practices her strength & balance will improve and she will be able to extend her leg and torso more horizontal to the ground

### Single Leg Extension: Warrior III (Fig. 2)

- Place arms at shoulder height in front of body, inhale and shift weight to one foot.
- Lift other foot so that thigh is parallel to ground and hold for 1-2 seconds.
- Move foot behind body, exhale and hold for 1-2 seconds.
- Move foot forward to starting position, inhale and repeat 10 to 20 times.
- Repeat while balancing on the other foot.



Fig. 3: Nanci Standing Knee Pose. As she improves her strength & balance she will be able to hold her thigh more horizontal to the ground and keep her spine and standing leg more vertical

### Standing Knee (Fig. 3)

- Stand with arms at side and shift weight to one leg.
- Inhale, lift other leg so that thigh is parallel to ground and grasp knee with hands.
- Hold pose for 30 seconds to 1 minute while inhaling and exhaling deeply.
- Put leg down, shift weight and repeat with other leg.
- Work toward 10 repetitions.

Special thanks to Candi McIvor and Nanci Peterson-Vivian on their impromptu demonstrations of these poses “on-snow” at Ullr Ski School.



Ed Kane is a Snoqualmie Region Board Representative, past PSIA-NW President and is currently the Training Director for Ullr Ski School. This photo by Wayne Nagai.

Post comments  
@ psia-nw.org

# SNOW PRO TIPS



## FUNCTIONAL TENSION

Alpine tip by Jeremy Riss

We all know that a quiet and stable upper body is one of the keys to strong efficient skiing and in no place is this more true than when skiing steep terrain and soft snow. One key to a stable upper body is having the correct amount of tension in your muscles. If you are too relaxed you will get knocked off balance by changes in terrain and snow conditions. If you are too stiff you will be rigid and unable to continue moving your body through turns.

There has been quite a bit of published material this last season on pole use, and the way a skier holds, carries and swings the pole can have a positive effect on their ski/snow behavior. Something that has really helped me find the right amount of tension in my muscles or “functional tension” is how I grip my poles. Gripping your poles firmly with all four fingers will create some tension throughout your arms and core and stabilize your upper body. If you maintain this grip on the pole and functional tension in your muscles, your upper body will naturally move as you swing your pole creating flow of your body with your skis.

If you find yourself having a hard time maintaining all fingers gripping the pole try putting your thumb on top of the pole and only gripping your pole with your fingers. This will make it easier to break the habit of relaxing your fingers as you swing the pole because doing so will cause you to drop your pole. Keep in mind that gripping the pole with just your fingers, with your thumb on top of the grip, is just an exercise to discover the correct sensations. Utilizing a braking or stabilizing pole plant with your thumb on top of the grip may not be too practical or effective.

Gripping the pole correctly and creating functional tension in your muscles is a key for all skiing, but making the change will especially improve your skiing in steeper terrain and softer snow. ❄️



Jeremy Riss is the Ski & Snowboard School Manager at Mt. Hood Meadows Ski Resort, is a member of the PSIA-NW Technical Team, and is a Divisional Clinic Leader. You can reach Jeremy at [Jeremy.Riss@skihood.com](mailto:Jeremy.Riss@skihood.com)

Post comments  
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## EQUAL ANGLES AT THE ANKLES

Alpine tip by Kate Morrell

Ski technique revolves around a strong balanced stance over both feet. That being the case, it is important that throughout the turn, we try to keep the angles of both ankles and shins the same. In other words, what one lower leg and foot do, the other lower leg and foot does the same. For a better understanding of what I mean, you can do the following. Stand up on a relatively flat surface and bend both ankles the same amount. The angles at the ankles are the same, as well as the angles of your shins. When a skier possesses the ability to do this, not only does it help maintain appropriate balance over both feet during the turn, it puts them in an ideal position at the transition between turns.

Skiing with both ankles flexing and extending together can be uncomfortable at first if you are not used to skiing like that, especially for those of us who learned to ski with our weight primarily on the downhill ski with the uphill ski basically unweighted and doing its own thing. There are a couple of things you can do however, to help incorporate those movements into your own skiing.

The first one is good old fashioned side slipping. From a stopped position with your skis across the hill, release both edges and begin slipping slowly. Focus on your ankles flexing the same amount with weight on both feet. The hips and shoulders should be tilted to match the pitch of the terrain, and the hips and upper body should be slightly countered at about a 45 degree angle to the hill. It is important to keep the uphill ski in check and not allow excessive uphill ski lead. This is difficult because the more natural, comfortable position, is to allow the uphill (or inside) foot and leg to move ahead of the downhill foot and leg. The importance of keeping tips somewhat even becomes readily apparent when we move to the new turn. If the uphill foot is leading, the center of mass has to travel a greater distance to pressure the front of the new outside ski resulting in a longer turn transition. With the feet more even and ankles flexed the same, the time it takes for the center of mass to move forward pressuring the new turn is drastically reduced. This allows the skier to ski much more arc to arc with a minimal flat spot between turns. Exactly what your equipment has been designed to do.

The next step for the purposes of this drill, is to develop a turn using pressure and edge. While

side slipping, pressure the uphill ski while it is on its uphill edge, then move your center of mass in the direction of the new turn while simultaneously rolling the knees and ankles. During the weight transfer, it is important that the new inside ski maintain snow contact and the ankle is flexed. This will make it easier for the new inside ski to track and arc evenly along with the outside ski. By the time the skis reach the fall line, try to have both skis weighted concentrating on that inside ankle flexion. There should be just enough pressure on your inside ski to leave a track in the snow that matches the path of the outside ski. As the turn is completed and your skis are pointed the other direction, check your alignment and move right into another side slip ... lather, rinse, repeat.

As the skier gets more confident in this drill, minimize the slipping portion and move sooner into the turn, while increasing terrain difficulty.

Note: Ankles flexing at the same angle can easily be incorporated into many drills. ❄️



Kate Morrell is a 2-term PSIA-NW Technical Team member, Alpine Clinician and coaches the Buddy Warner Team for White Pass Ski Club, White Pass, Wa. email her at [kmorrell@hevanet.com](mailto:kmorrell@hevanet.com)

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## FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK(ER): THE POCKET GLOSSARY

Alpine equipment tip by Peter Kray

Rocker technology is blowing up ski and snowboard design this season, with more aggressively turned up tips—and often tails—that make it easier to pivot in any conditions, and keep more of the effective edge of a board off the snow until you really need it.

But as ingrained as this concept is for snowsports manufacturers, most folks on snow still aren't familiar with it. To make it easier for instructors to explain, and maybe understand, PSIA-AASI developed this quick cheat sheet of why, and how, rocker is such a slopeside hit.



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

**Reverse Camber:** By inverting the arch of camber—put your hand flat on a table and point your fingers to the ceiling to demonstrate this—skis and snowboards get a surfier feel, and a quicker edge-to-edge pivot.

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

**Early Rise:** Primed for even more innovation in future seasons, this is a designed rise from the tip of a ski or snowboard that extends into the shovel. With an infinite possibility for adjustment and fine-tuning, it reduces the effort required to initiate a turn, with a pre-bent flex for improved edge control. Need a little more info in order to roll with rocker? How about this?

**Best Metaphor:** Rocker is often described as resembling the hull of a ship. The raised bow breaks the water, making it easier to steer because of the decreased resistance.

**Best Dryland Demo:** Put your hand flat on a table and move it back and forth. Feel how your fingertips catch? Now point your fingers to the sky and do it again. Voila! Less resistance. Turn your hand on its side now, and you've got full contact. Send your best demos and metaphors to: [5050snowpro@thesnowpros.org](mailto:5050snowpro@thesnowpros.org).

And be sure and read the full story about the anticipated impact and history of rocker in the Fall Issue of 32 Degrees magazine. ❄️



Peter Kray is the PSIA-AASI special projects editor and acquisitions editor for 32 Degrees, with a particular focus on emerging snowsports trends, on-snow innovations, and the PSIA-AASI 50/50 Project. Kray skis, telemarks, and snowboards out of Santa Fe, New

Mexico, and is the founder of Shred White and Blue ([www.shredwhiteandblue.com](http://www.shredwhiteandblue.com)), a media and apparel company celebrating American boardsports. Photo credit: Blake Jorgenson



## FADE TURN SUCCESS

Snowboard tip by Steve Frink

**Goal: Zero wipeouts before both feet are strapped in.** I try to get people in a directional sideslip on their own before their butt ever hits the ground. This keeps their confidence and their spirits high. Wiping out before you are “really snowboarding” makes the rest of the lesson appear pretty daunting.

**Tip: Go slow and avoid hill creep.** When students are getting their first sliding and doing the fade turn they should be going slow enough to easily step off the board and stop. We want to show students they can change direction using their feet. If they get on an edge and the board turns they are successful, move on. Later you can do a fade turn that more accurately imitates what they will experience unloading the lift and work on some ‘combat’ offloading skills. By then they’ve had more practice and their skills are ready.

**Avoid Hill Creep:** Hill creep is when students keep moving further and further up the hill as they wait for their turn to slide. Then they come down the hill with way too much speed and wipe out. This requires constant vigilance and good demos. Demo at the speed you want to see and start where you want them to start. ❄️



## FIRST EDGE CHANGE

Snowboard tip by Steve Frink

**Goal: Set up for success when you are making that first full turn.**

**Tip: Get confident with the lower half and line up and twist for the upper half.** Practice garlands until students can get into and out of the fall line, now they are confident with the lower half of the turn. Students who try to turn too soon get their weight on the back foot and auger in.

**Get Lined Up: When they are ready for the top of the turn start them traversing.** The key to success here is getting the board going in a straight line before they try to turn. Not straight down the fall line, we just want the tip and tail going through the same snow. From here they can change edges without hanging up. If they are skidding when they change edges the edge will catch and they will eat it.

**Twist: First the front foot switches to the new edge.** If they switch both feet together the edge will catch and they will eat it. Near the fall line

they can switch edges with the back foot and finish the turn just like they’ve been doing in the garland exercise.

That is a lot of words to explain why it works but all you have to say to your students is “get the board going straight and then switch edges one foot at a time.” ❄️



Steve Frink is a PSIA-NW Snowboard Examiner, Clinician, Stevens Pass Snowsports School Manager, and Stevens Pass “retro day” contest winner. Feel free to email him at [stevefrink@gmail.com](mailto:stevefrink@gmail.com)

Post comments @ [psia-nw.org](https://psia-nw.org)



## TELE BASICS: LEAD CHANGE

Telemark tip by Greg Dixon

Telemark skiers are set apart on our slopes for two reasons: being amazingly fit with glutes of steel and the freeheel that allows for a full range of long flowing movements from one telemark turn to the next. In PSIA speak we refer to the fore/aft movement of the feet from one stance to the next as lead change. The lead change, in telemark skiing, is an important part of creating stability. As one foot moves ahead of the hips and the second behind, a stable platform is created that reduces the amount of faceplants or rear wheelies. To increase your success sliding and time you spend upright, here are a couple of key thoughts:

1. Lead change is a continuous movement. Pace the movement of the feet so that it takes an entire turn to move into and out of your telemark stance. There should be no dead spots where the feet are static and you are holding onto a position.
2. Lead change occurs simultaneously with the edge change. Instead of thrusting your feet straight back and forth, as if you were on a Nordic track machine, work to flatten your skis as the lead change starts, and reengage them as you move through the lead change and the turn. ❄️



Greg Dixon is a PSIA-NW Telemark Examiner and DCL. He teaches for Mt. Bachelor Snowsports School, in Central Oregon. Email him at [dixongregory@hotmail.com](mailto:dixongregory@hotmail.com)

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# Welcome to the 2010-2011 Season in the Northwest


by Kirsten Huotte

PSIA-NW Education & Programs Director



La Ninã: what a season it's predicted to be! What's La Ninã? The Spanish term means "little girl" and what is important to us here in the Northwest is this "little girl" will be bringing with her colder than normal temperatures and increased moisture, meaning lots of snow. And to top off that good news, NOAA predicts La Ninã to strengthen through the 2010-2011 winter season. Looking forward to what Mother Nature and her "little girl" have in store for us. Our season has arrived.

With this great snow fall expectation comes another full line up of events for the season. We received great feedback as to how the layout of the Season Guide worked last season and have kept the format the same. This compact and user-friendly format will make it easy to keep as a reference all season long, plus the newsletter still looks nice sitting on the coffee table. Thanks to Tyler Barnes for all his keen layout skills, we are able to find any event in this easy to read format right here and of course online at [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org).

An icon (  ) is used to denote events where area resorts are able to support the event by providing lift tickets for non-pass holders. Remember this is a member benefit for you only, not your friend or family member. Look for the icon throughout the season guide, and also check online to find additional event support as we'll have more updates during the season.

When reviewing the Season Guide, various clinics and topics are listed which help map out individual roads, pathways or trails on which to continue on in the educational and professional instructor saga, be it in a one-day brush up for the mid-winter blues (blue skies that is), the multi-day event to better drill down on movements, or an exam as a validation of your level development. Remember it truly is about the journey not the destination.

Regardless of the topic, the goal always when attending any event, when learning something new or hearing it said a different way, is to come away with a renewed excitement for teaching and to be inspired to continue to develop as an instructor. In this we are reminded, as snowsport professionals, we are inspiring a lifelong passion for the mountain experience. See you on the hill. ❄️

p.s. Remember this and more is always available online at [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org).

*Learn, Teach & Inspire*

## SINGLE-DAY EVENTS

### Fall Seminar

OCTOBER 16, 23 & 24, 2010  
INDOOR SEASON-OPENER EVENT

A "not to miss" kickoff to the season, Fall Seminar, is the place to be to learn about it for the first time or to hear it again in preparing for the season. This indoor, all day (8:00-3:30) seminar offers many topics for the new instructor or the seasoned pro.

Each year a keynote speaker is brought in for a large group presentation to help inspire you. Offered in three locations around the Northwest, more information is available online. All disciplines welcome as well as non-PSIA members. See pages 21-24 for details.

**1-day event, 1-year credit, cost: \$65**

### Spring Fling

APRIL 23, 2011 IN SEATTLE METRO AREA  
SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

Tailored after its bigger cousin, Fall Seminar, Spring Fling is designed for your end of season wrap up to solidify topics you have been working on during the season or to give you ideas/information to ponder over the summer.

Either way, you won't be disappointed. This indoor session runs from 9-2 with an 8:30am registration time. Topics and more information will be posted online at the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website. Offered in the Seattle area. All disciplines welcome as well as non-PSIA members.

**1-day event, 1-year credit, cost: \$60**

### Single-Day Clinics

DATES, DISCIPLINES & LOCATIONS VARY  
SEE CALENDAR

Choose from a myriad of topics at various locations throughout the division. These one-day offerings are created to help provide you with a brush up in an area of your choosing, and an opportunity to take a clinic near your home or further from it if you so choose. For instance, if the bumps keep beating you, take a one-day "beat the bumps" clinic to dial-in your bump skiing and provide you some tools with which to teach your students. Grab another instructor, sign up and spend a fun day on yourself.

Most topic descriptions can be found on-line at the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website.

**1-day events, 1-year credit, cost: \$60**



# MULTI-DAY EVENTS

## Fall College

DECEMBER 11-12, 2010 - METHOW VALLEY

Ready for lots of skiing and general trackster fun as usual? You'll be exploring the Methow Valley trails again this year led by the top track gurus in the Northwest. What more could you ask for? The clinic topics are broad enough to accommodate your goals and desires: ski improvement concepts and teaching concepts, in both Classic and Skate. And you're welcome to attend either one day or both. We will also be offering the Level I exam for Track on Saturday. A great event to kick off the start of a great season. Track specific.

More information as well as the event application can be found on-line at the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website.

**2-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$120 or  
1-day event, 1 year credit, Cost: \$60**

## Immersion

DECEMBER 31 - JANUARY 3, 2010 (3+ DAY)

FEBRUARY 9-11 (2+ DAY)

BOTH EVENTS AT MISSION RIDGE

You Looking at You – Ready to delve into your skiing? Gain greater insight on *your* movements and the patterns you've developed? Dig deeper in *your* understanding of *you*, how *you* learn and process information and apply it to *your* skiing? If so, this coaching intense session is for you. Led by PSIA-NW Technical Team members and some guest clinicians, the program begins indoors in Wenatchee the evening before the first on-snow day. The on-snow days include indoor evening sessions as well. Supported by Mission Ridge. More detailed information available at [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org). Full 3-day Immersion or 2-day condensed version. Alpine specific.

**First event is a 3-days on-snow + evening event,  
2-year credit, Cost: \$300**

**Second event is a 2-day on-snow + evening  
event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$225**

## Winter Blast

FEBRUARY 7-8, 2011 AT CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN

Come find out why this is our premiere National Demonstration Team event. "What's the National Team?" you say. Our National Team is comprised of the best of the best from throughout the country. They are full time professionals in the field who are excited to come share their passion of skiing with you.

Improve your skiing with PSIA National Alpine Team Members at Crystal Mountain. You'll be treated to breakfast each morning, an après ski with clinicians Monday afternoon and lunch with the group on Tuesday. See what all the hype is about! Small class sizes guaranteed. Special thanks to ASEA for their support in making this event possible in part by a grant from the PSIA-AASI Education Foundation. Also supported by Crystal Mountain. Alpine specific.

**2-day event, 2-year credit, cost: \$310**

## Divisional Academy

MARCH 11-13, 2011 AT MISSION RIDGE

This is a spectacular 3-day event lead by current and past Northwest Technical Team Members and other talented clinicians who will be at your disposal for personal improvement. You will group up with others who have similar goals while you work and play for the next three days.

This year we will be sliding with you at Mission Ridge for a long weekend of "Learning, Teaching and Inspiring." Complete with après ski Friday and video review, a great banquet dinner Saturday evening and a DVD of your skiing/riding experiences - can it get any better? Divisional Academy will forever remind you of the fun you had and the improvements you made during your three days of focused performance. Thank you Mission Ridge for supporting this event. Alpine and Snowboard specific.

**3-day event, 2-year credit, cost: \$305**

## Spring Symposium

APRIL 15-17, 2010 AT MISSION RIDGE

Whoohoo!!! You made it through the season and are ready to celebrate with the rest of the division in saying, "Job well done!" We're ready to put the icing on the cake with this end of the season bash that has been a Northwest tradition for over 45 years! This two day event (three if you participate in free clinic Friday) showcases our talented clinicians in a myriad of clinic choices, ranging from everything under the sun, pun intended.

This year we are heading to the sunshine again at sunny Mission Ridge to celebrate the big La Niña year we will have all enjoyed. Mission Ridge is extending their season just for us and are gearing up for the big party! Event information and topics will be posted in the spring newsletter and of course online at [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org). Clinic topics for ALL disciplines and ALL ages! Come be a part of the celebration and experience Symposium Northwest style.

**2-day event, 2-year credit, cost: \$165**

2010 Divisional Academy @ 49° North Mountain Resort

# 2010-2011 event calendar

	ADAPTIVE	TRACK	TELEMARK	SNOWBOARD	ALPINE	DAY	DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sat	Oct 16	Fall Seminar - Spokane Metro	Gonzaga University
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sat	Oct 23	Fall Seminar - Portland Metro	Mt. Hood Community College
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sun	Ocy 24	Fall Seminar - Seattle Metro	Seattle Pacific University
		✓				Sat-Sun	Dec 11-12	Track Fall College	Methow Valley
JANUARY					✓	Fri-Mon	Dec31-Jan3	<b>Immersion (3 days on-snow)</b>	Mission Ridge
					✓	Sat-Sat	15-22	<b>Interski International Event</b>	St. Anton, Austria
					✓	Mon	24	Drills for Skills: Teaching Beginner Zone Skiers	Crystal Mountain, Mt. Bachelor, Lookout Pass
					✓	Tue	25	Leisure Time Learning	Stevens Pass, Timberline
			✓	✓	✓	Fri	28	Children's Specialist Foundations	Summit Central
				✓	✓	Fri	28	Freestyle Specialist Foundations	Summit Central
					✓	Fri	28	Senior Specialist Foundations	Summit Central
FEBRUARY				✓	✓	Thu	3	Working it Out: Finding the Cause in the Effect	Summit Central
					✓	Fri	4	Smoothing Out the Bumps: Making Bump Skiing Look Easy	Alpentel, Lookout Pass
				✓	✓	Fri	4	Steeps & Off-Piste	Mt. Hood Meadows, Schweitzer
				✓		Mon-Tue	7-8	<b>Winter Blast - National Team Clinicians</b>	Crystal Mountain
				✓		Wed-Fri	9-11	<b>Immersion (2 days on-snow)</b>	Mission Ridge
				✓	✓	Fri	11	Exam Checkpoint Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Schweitzer
				✓	✓	Fri	11	Written Exam Level II & III at 3:30 Pre-registration is required	Schweitzer
				✓		Sun	13	Senior Specialist Foundations	Mt. Spokane
				✓	✓	Sun	13	Tip to Tail: Using Your Edges to Build Trenches	Crystal Mountain, Mt. Bachelor
				✓	✓	Sun	13	Steeps & Off-Piste	Crystal Mountain
				✓		Mon	14	Drills for Skills: Teaching Intermediate Zone Skiers	Stevens Pass, Timberline, Whitefish
				✓	✓	Tue	22	Explore Off-Piste and Steeps	Alpentel
				✓	✓	Fri	25	Exam Checkpoint Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Stevens Pass, Mt. Bachelor
				✓	✓	Fri	25	Written Exam Level II & III at 3:30 Pre-registration is required	Stevens Pass, Mt. Bachelor
				✓		Fri	25	Leisure Time Learning	Mt. Spokane
		✓				Sat	26	Track Pre-Exam Clinic	Summit XC Center
				✓		Sat-Sun	26-27	Senior Specialist 1	Stevens Pass
			✓	✓	✓	Sun	27	Exam Checkpoint Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Mt. Hood Meadows
				✓	✓	Sun	27	Written Exam Level II & III at 3:30 Pre-registration is required	Mt. Hood Meadows
				✓		Sun	27	Rocker vs Camber	Mt. Bachelor, Mt. Spokane, Summit Central
				✓		Mon	28	Drills for Skills: Teaching Advanced Zone Skiers	Crystal Mountain, Mt. Bachelor, Whitefish

BE SURE TO LOOK ONLINE AT [PSIA-NW.ORG](http://PSIA-NW.ORG) FOR MORE DETAILED EVENT INFORMATION LIKE ONE-DAY EVENT DESCRIPTIONS, LODGING DEALS FOR MULTI-DAY EVENTS, CERTIFICATION GUIDES AND MORE.



# 2010-2011 event calendar

## MARCH

## APRIL/MAY

## JULY

ADAPTIVE	TRACK	TELEMARK	SNOWBOARD	ALPINE	DAY	DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
	✓				Sat	5	Track Pre-Exam Clinic	Sun Mountain
	✓				Sun	6	Track Exam - Level II & III	Sun Mountain
			✓	✓	Fri-Sun	11-13	<b>Divisional Academy</b>	Mission Ridge
			✓	✓	Fri	18	Exam Orientation Clinic Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Schweitzer
	✓				Sat-Sun	19-20	Track Spring Symposium	White Pass
			✓	✓	Sat-Sun	19-20	Exam Modules - Level II & III	Schweitzer
		✓	✓	✓	Sat-Sun	19-20	Children's Specialist 2	Schweitzer
			✓		Sat-Sun	19-20	Senior Specialist 1	Schweitzer
		✓	✓		Sat	19	Level I Exam (Snowboard & Telemark only) \$120 fee includes dues thru Spring 2012	Summit West
		✓			Sun	20	Telemark All Mountain	Crystal Mountain
			✓	✓	Fri	25	Exam Orientation Clinic Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Stevens Pass
			✓	✓	Sat-Sun	26-27	Exam Modules - Level II & III	Stevens Pass
			✓	✓	Sat-Sun	26-27	Freestyle Specialist - Progressive & Advanced	Stevens Pass
		✓			Sun	27	Tele the Rest & Best of the Mountain	Stevens Pass
			✓	✓	Fri	1	Exam Orientation Clinic Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Mt. Bachelor
			✓	✓	Sat-Sun	2-3	Exam Modules - Level II & III	Mt. Bachelor
		✓	✓	✓	Sat-Sun	2-3	Children's Specialist 1	Mt. Bachelor
				✓	Sat-Sun	2-3	Senior Specialist 1	Mt. Bachelor
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mon-Sun	4-9	<b>National 50/50 Event</b>	Snowmass, Colorado
			✓	✓	Fri	8	Exam Orientation Clinic Level III Members are not eligible to attend	Mt. Hood Meadows
✓		✓	✓	✓	Sat-Sun	9-10	Exam Modules - Adaptive I & II only, Alpine II & III only, Telemark I, II, & III	Mt. Hood Meadows
✓		✓	✓	✓	Fri-Sun	15-17	<b>Spring Symposium</b>	Mission Ridge
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sat	23	Spring Fling, Seattle Metro Area	Seattle Pacific University
		✓	✓	✓	Fri-Sun	Apr29-May1	Freestyle Camp	Timberline
			✓		Fri-Sun	Apr29-May1	Spring GS Race Camp	Mt. Bachelor
			✓		Fri-Sun	Apr29-May1	Technical Team Tryout	Mt. Bachelor
			✓		Fri-Sun	8-10	Summer Ski Camp #1 - Improve Your Skiing via Gate Training (race experience not req'd)	Timberline
			✓		Fri-Sun	15-17	Professional Development Series Camp	Timberline
			✓		Fri-Sun	15-17	Summer Ski Camp #2 - Improve Your Skiing via Gate Training (race experience not req'd)	Timberline

**PSIA AASI**  
NORTHWEST  
Education & Certification Event Application

**DOWNLOAD**

**EVENT APPLICATIONS**

Download Event and Exam Applications from the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website. Once completed, you may fax or email the application to the office for processing. Before the event, you will receive a confirmation email with details specific to your event. TO AVOID A LATE FEE, SIGN UP EARLY. Registration less than 14 days prior, is on space-available basis, and assessed a \$15 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.

# SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

MULTIPLE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Specialist programs have pre-requisites. Please see the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website for details.

## Freestyle Specialist

Freestyle Foundations is accomplished by attending and understanding the curriculum of a one-day clinic focused on coaching park, rails, and pipe riding. The Progressive and Advanced specialist certificates are attained through a higher rigor two day process. By meeting the needed program education requirements, candidates will be given feedback of their performance shown for the appropriate level of coaching and riding. Alpine and snowboard. Please visit the website for more information.

**Freestyle Foundations:** 1- day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$65.

**Freestyle Progressive 2 or Advanced 3:** 2-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$125

## Senior Specialist

The Senior Foundations clinic is intended to acquaint the participants with the objectives and material that formulate the core of this training, the senior client. This day clinic will introduce you to the senior client and provide you some basics for working with them. If you want more, PSIA-NW also has the Senior Specialist 1 program intended to develop and expand your knowledge and skills gained in the Foundations course by advancing the applications and theory for teaching seniors in the Beginning to Intermediate zones. Alpine specific.

**Senior Foundations:** 1- day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$65

**Senior Specialist 1:** 2-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$125

## Children's Specialist

Children's Specialist Foundations is a one day educational clinics designed for the snowsport instructor ready to begin the journey into understanding how and why children learn, play and grow the way they do. The curriculum incorporates an introduction to the children's

CAP Model and culminates with personalized goals for the participant's future growth in children's education. Children's Specialist 1 is a two day children's education clinic introducing many ideas and theories on the way children grow, think and learn and how the participant can tap into these resources to help gain knowledge and application as an instructor working with the child specific client learning in the beginner to intermediate zone. Children's Specialist 2 is also a two day educational course designed to take instructor knowledge and understanding of children to the next level. The Children's Specialist 2 involves in-depth exploration of developmental and cognitive theories, the role of creativity, children's learning preferences and motivations. Continue to learn and synthesize how children move and grow and how that applies to teaching, aka playing, on the snow for all skill levels of children from the beginning to advanced zones. All disciplines welcome. Please visit the website for more information. PSIA-NW children's educational curriculum follows the Children's National Standard for education, a certificate based program.

### Children's Foundations

1- day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$65

**Children's Specialist 1 or 2**

2-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$125

## CAMPS Spring GS Camp

APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2011 AT MT. BACHELOR

Spring at Mt. Bachelor, video and review, great coaching and friends – where else do you want to be in late April? Come see why Mt. Bachelor is known for its 300 days of sunshine, high speed groomers and when combined with gates, makes for an awesome GS camp! Thank you Mt. Bachelor for your support. All alpine abilities welcome.

**3-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$255**

## Freestyle Camp

APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2011 AT TIMBERLINE

How often do you get three days of training specific to the park and pipe? The coaches will ease you into the playground and open up the doors to what it is “kids these days” are doing. Video plus video review. Great way to better your own skills as well as increasing your freestyle teaching bag of tricks. All disciplines welcome and helmets recommended.

**3-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$240**

## SUMMER SKIING Summer Ski Camp

JULY, 8-10 OR 15-17, 2011 AT TIMBERLINE

Pristine blue skies, mountain air, amazing views and a snowfield. Experience all this and be skiing in the middle of the summer. Another of our premiere events with the Technical Team and other talented coaches, this three day camp full of tips, tricks and tactics will get you comfortable in the gates, whether your goal is to navigate with confidence or rip with speed. Video, review, social time and a DVD of the event is yours to be had. Come enjoy what all your friends and instructors across the nation are envious of, skiing in the summer at Timberline. Alpine specific – lift tickets must be pre-paid.

**3-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$280**

## Professional Development Series

JULY 15-17, 2011 AT TIMBERLINE

Do you like to keep your skills fresh and challenged in the “off season?” Do you like the idea of skiing from 7am-2pm with the rest of your day free to golf, bike, swim, shop, hike, windsurf or just relax? In this series you'll receive video and review, personal coaching and on-hill training, a small group size full of professional knowledge and of course skiing in the summer, on a glacier. Alpine specific - lift tickets must be pre-paid.

**3-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$240**

## TRYOUTS Technical Team Tryout

APRIL 29 - 1 MAY, 2011 AT MT. BACHELOR

Innovators and top snowsports professionals make up the Technical Team. The team is involved in pioneering new events and helping guide certification among other endeavors. If you'd like to be a part of this innovative group, please tryout. Details about the tryout are forthcoming and will be available on-line.

**3-day event, 2-year credit, Cost: \$210**



# CERTIFICATION

## Exam Checkpoint

MULTIPLE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Scheduled roughly a month before an exam, this checkpoint has a mock exam feel. It will cover both skiing or riding skill assessment and teaching and give feedback relative to where you are on your pathway for your upcoming exam. Alpine, snowboard or telemark. Open to Level I or II members only.

**1-day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$60**

## Written Exams

MULTIPLE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Level II and III written exams - See Calendar for times and locations and/or speak with your School Director or Training Director to see if one will be offered at your school. Preregistration is required for scheduled written exams, like all other events.

**Cost: \$20**

## Exam Orientation

MULTIPLE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Always scheduled the Friday before an exam, this clinic is structured to put you at ease before the exam weekend. Go out with an examiner, get acquainted with layout of the hill, get an idea of how your day will be structured during the actual exam and ask any questions you are still wondering about. Get comfortable with the exam process. Open to Level I or Level II only. Alpine/Snowboard specific

**1-day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$60**

## Exam Modules

MULTIPLE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Level II & III skiing or riding module one day and/or teaching/professional knowledge the other day. The exam is split up into two modules/components - take the entire exam in one weekend or season or split it up and spread it out. Alpine and/or snowboard specific exam modules. Please refer to the Alpine and/or Snowboard Certification Guide(s) for pre-requisites to taking these exams.

**1-day per module, 1-year credit, Cost: \$115 per module**

## Track Pre-Exam Clinic

MULTIPLE DATES AND LOCATIONS

This pre-exam clinic is a must attend in order to get ready for the Track exam. Scheduled two weeks before and the day before each Track exam.

**1-day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$60**

## Track Exam

SUNDAY MARCH 6, 2011 AT SUN MOUNTAIN

Skiing and teaching are assessed in a day long process. Level II or Level III. Pre-exam clinic attendance is mandatory before taking the exam.

**1-day event, 1-year credit, Cost: \$115**

## Telemark Exam

Skiing and teaching over the course of two days. Level II and Level III. Exam checkpoint clinic is optional but encouraged for preparation for the exam.

**2-day exam, 2-year credit, Cost: \$230**

# GO WITH A PRO

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 2009-10 or 2010-11 season. Please Note: If you sign up for this event and do not show up, a \$25 cancellation fee will apply.

Some resorts support this event with lift tickets and as support information becomes available it will be posted online at [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org)

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



## About Lift Tickets

PSIA-NW is grateful for the generous support of our certification and educational programs by the host resorts. Events denoted with a ① indicate that lift tickets are provided to non-pass holders by the host area. Where an event is supported by the host area it is denoted in the event description. Many resorts are able to fully support our educational event offerings, while some are not. Details can be found on the [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org) website regarding specific individual event lift ticket information.



TRACK	TELEMARK	SNOWBOARD	ALPINE	DATE	LOCATION
✓				Dec 13	Methow @ Fall College
		✓	✓	Mar 19	Mt. Ashland
		✓	✓	Mar 20	Schweitzer
		✓	✓	Mar 26	Stevens Pass
		✓	✓	Mar 27	Alpental, Crystal Mtn
		✓	✓	Apr 2	Mt. Bachelor
		✓	✓	Apr 3	Mt. Baker
		✓	✓	Apr 10	Mt. Hood Meadows
	✓	✓	✓	Apr 16	Mission @ Symposium
	✓			Apr 23	Timberline

## Event Fees

### GENERAL EVENTS

Clinics (1-day)	\$60
Divisional Academy (3 days)	\$305
Fall Seminar (1-day)	\$65
Freestyle Camp (3 days)	\$240
Immersion (3 days)	\$300
Immersion (2 days)	\$225
Spring Fling (1 day)	\$60
Spring GS Camp (2 days)	\$255
Spring Symposium (2 days)	\$165
Professional Develop Series (3 days)	\$240
Summer Ski Camp (3 days)	\$280
Track Fall College (per day)	\$60
Track Symposium (2 days)	\$120
Winter Blast w/National Team (2 days)	\$310

### EXAMS

Alpine & Snowboard Exams	
Level II or III Written Exam	\$20
Level II or III Exam Checkpoint	\$60
Level II or III Exam Orientation	\$60
Level II or III Exam Module (per day)	\$115
Telemark Level II or III Exam	\$230
Track Pre-Exam Clinic	\$60
Track Level II & III (one day event)	\$115

### SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

Children's Foundations (1 day)	\$65
Children's Specialist 1 or 2 (2 days)	\$125
Freestyle Specialist Foundations (1 day)	\$65
Freestyle Specialist 2 or 3 (2 days)	\$125
Senior Specialist Foundations (1 day)	\$65
Senior Specialist 1 (2 days)	\$125

### TRYOUTS

Technical Team Tryout (3 days)	\$210
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## 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 \$15 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, you may fax or email the application to the office for processing. Before the event, you will receive a confirmation email with details specific to your event.

## Receive a scholarship

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.

# Thank you Resorts and PSIA-NW Member Schools!

Support has been provided by host resorts and PSIA-NW Member Schools the 2009-2010 season by providing meeting space, great help at events, raffle items and event support through complimentary lift tickets for participants, etc. Without your help and in-kind contributions, our job(s) would be a lot harder! We can't thank you enough!

49° North, Crystal Mountain, Lookout Pass, Mission Ridge, Mt. Bachelor, Mt. Baker, Mt. Hood Meadows, Schweitzer Mountain, Silver Mountain, Stevens Pass, Summit at Snoqualmie, Sun Mountain Lodge, The Summit at Snoqualmie, Timberline and Whitefish Mountain Resort.





# Back to School : 2010 Fall Seminar

**SUMMER IS OVER. FALL HAS FALLEN, ALONG WITH THE LEAVES AND RAIN IN THE LOWER ELEVATIONS. THE FIRST DUSTING OF SNOW HAS ALREADY FALLEN ON MOST NORTHWEST PEAKS. WINTER AND THE 10-11 LA NIÑA SNOWSPORTS SEASON ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER. AS IN THE PAST, FALL SEMINAR WILL BE OFFERED IN THREE LOCATIONS, MAKING THIS SEASON-OPENER EVENT MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE TO ATTEND.**

Whether you are a Fall Seminar regular or a new participant, it is our goal to help you kick off your season with the latest and greatest information, and get your mind ready to keep up with your legs. We look forward to welcoming in the new season with you!

Registration and refreshments for this indoor event begin at 8:00am. At registration you will receive a packet of information along with your name badge, on the badge will be your room assignments. Classes begin promptly at 8:30am.

We are continuing to offer Fall Seminar to non-members. Please feel free to invite a non-member

from your school to join you or someone who is interested in teaching this season and see why Fall Seminar is such a great pre-season educational event.

Like regular members, non-members will need to register and pay the event fee to participate. Additional applications are available for download at [www.psia-nw.org](http://www.psia-nw.org) or by contacting the PSIA-NW office at 206.244.8541. There is also an application on page 24 of this newsletter.

## **SPOKANE METRO**

**OCTOBER 16, 2010**

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

## **PORTLAND METRO**

**OCTOBER 23, 2010**

MT. HOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## **SEATTLE METRO**

**OCTOBER 24, 2010**

SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

## **FALL SEMINAR KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

### **Dan G. Tripps** **Seattle University Professor,** **Ph.D. Sports Psychology**



Dan G. Tripps is an author and professor who has devoted his life's work to understanding the psychology of achievement and to helping individuals find greatness professionally and personally.

In his two books, *In Search of Greatness: Attributes of Achievement and Lessons for Life* (Town Books, 2002), and *The Heart of Success: Conversations With Notable Achievers* (BainBridgeBooks, 2001), Dr. Tripps helps readers place their life journeys in perspective. He believes that people need to embrace the notion that they do not become great simply because their achievements have been broadcast on television or reported in the local paper. Based on his personal interviews with 160 acclaimed performers, athletes, and intellectuals, Dr. Tripps identifies qualities that ordinary individuals can develop in order to achieve personal greatness.

Dr. Tripps is Executive Director of the American Institute of Sport and affiliated human performance laboratory, and Chair of Seattle University's Department of Sport Studies where he teaches the Psychology of Leadership and Achievement. He has also been a guest lecturer on university

campuses throughout the United States and has served as a consultant to education, business, and government, providing training for senior level managers, nurturing organizational leadership, and enriching employee skills.

In his early career, Dr. Tripps coached more than forty nationally and world-ranked athletes and guided high school, college, and U.S. national teams to championship competition. He continues to assist elite level performers as a practicing sport psychologist. From 1980-1984, Dr. Tripps was President & Executive Director of the 1984 Olympic Scientific Congress, the sport science research program affiliated with the Olympic Games. In conjunction with his Olympic duties, Dr. Tripps founded Sport for Understanding, a U.S. State Department contract program that organized the international exchange of athletes and coaches.

During 1984-1986, he served as its first Executive Director and later Trustee through 1992. In 1986, Dr. Tripps established Sports for All, a UNESCO program that brings technical training to teachers and coaches in developing countries. Dr. Tripps remains the U.S. representative to the project.

Dr. Tripps joined the faculty of Seattle University in 2006 after serving as Chair of the Department of Physical Education & Exercise Science at Seattle Pacific University for twenty years. During that time he distinguished himself as a leader in high profile events including the 1987 Washington State Centennial Commission's Pacific Celebration and the 1990 Goodwill Games.

Between 1994-2000, he served as Director of the Raven Project, a joint effort of education and industry to design, build, and fly a record setting human-powered aircraft. In 2004-2005, Dr. Tripps donated his time as a loaned executive to restructure and revitalize Athletes for a Better World, a non-profit agency devoted to returning character and civic responsibility to sport.

Dr. Tripps' speaking engagements have included the Inquiring Mind series of the National Endowment for the Humanities and ceremonies at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. He is a frequent guest commentator on radio, a guest commentator in The History Channel's Top Speed, and currently working as Co-Executive Producer for a forthcoming television show about sport science and technology called SportsTechWorld.

Dr. Tripps has served as editor for ten textbooks in elite human performance, has written dozens of professional articles, and has delivered speeches for a wide range of national and international organizations.

Dr. Tripps obtained his Ph.D. in Sport Psychology from the University of Oregon and M.A. in Education from Stanford University. His undergraduate training was at the University of Southern California and San Francisco State University where he completed a B.A. in English and Social Studies.

# 2010 Fall Seminar Course Offerings

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Creating a Positive

### Learning Experience for ALL Students

As instructors, all of us work hard to create fun, positive, learning experiences for our students but sometimes, even our best attempts are challenged by the attitudes or actions of our students. Up to 10% of all students in the United States have been diagnosed as ADHD. In this class we will define ADHD, describe some common characteristics/behaviors of ADHD students and then share some strategies that help to foster a climate that promotes success and safety for ALL students.

	SPO	POR	SEA
am	✓	✓	✓
pm			

## Bloom's Taxonomy: A Tool to Check for Understanding

Discover the theories of Benjamin Bloom, how his taxonomy, or classification system, can be used to understand and measure critical thinking skills. Bloom has created a classification system to help anyone move beyond the basic ability to recall information and realize they have successfully moved to complex cognitive functioning by utilizing real and consistent measurements; its format helps you determine how to know when the student has mastered new information. Incorporating this taxonomy into your education program can be utilized to meet one of the basic tenants of PSIA: a tool to check for understanding.

	SPO	POR	SEA
am	✓	✓	✓
pm	✓	✓	✓

## Creating the Successful Mindset for your Snow Sports "Assessment"

Explore how to develop the right plan to get yourself mentally ready for a successful lesson, exam or tryout. This class will challenge your objectives, motivations and attitudes and work to establish an overall success strategy towards personal growth in the pursuit of your next level, be it an exam, tryout or in creating a great eight week lesson plan. Material for this class comes from some of the greatest personal development gurus of all time including, Stephen Covey, Jim Rohn, Brian Tracy, Napoleon Hill, Og Mandino, W. Clement Stone and many more. Come change your mindset.

	SPO	POR	SEA
am		✓	✓
pm		✓	✓

## Developing Skill Excellence

Learn to develop peak skills in yourself and those you coach. The morning session focuses on developments and new understandings in the "process" of skill development (of any activity) ... no, it's not about "BERP" but on the how's and why's of methods that set high achievers apart. The afternoon session focuses

	SPO	POR	SEA
am	✓	✓	✓
pm	✓	✓	✓

on the understandings of how master coaches, combined with the right learning environment, utilize these principles to help produce skill mastery in their students. Note: must attend the morning session to attend the afternoon session of this same topic.

## Expert Skiing

"We don't teach beginning skiing. We introduce beginners to the skiing of experts."

Skiing has evolved so much in the last 10 years due to equipment evolutions. What does the sport look like at the top end these days and how does that effect what we coach our students? Three characteristics of experts skiing will be introduced and each component will be explored with discussion, photos, and video. Additional questions will surface and fuel discussion: How attainable is modern expert skiing? Does modern ski instruction promote expert skiing? If it does not, what is the cause of this disconnect?

	SPO	POR	SEA
am			
pm		✓	✓

## Good vs Great Skiing: Advanced Movement Analysis

We may be able to identify "bad" skiing movements, but do we know what great movements in skiing look like? You will by then end of this session. We will review video of inspirational skiers in bumps, powder, groomers, variable conditions, race courses, etc., to identify what makes their skiing great and then take it into an interactive coaching session where you will compare video of great skiers to good skiers. By the end you be able to identify what a good skier needs to do (and why) to become a great skier...not just what they are doing wrong. In addition we will go through some indoor exercises to use to reinforce great skiing movements.

	SPO	POR	SEA
am	✓	✓	✓
pm			

## Good vs Great Skiing: The Beginning's of Movement Analysis

Are you new to movement analysis or would you like to hone your current movement analysis skills? Then this highly interactive, video intense session is for you. We will establish a foundation to identify good skiing movements by watching and studying great skiers in action. We will compare video of these skiers, on groomers and in gates, with video of our common students to identify the movements between good and great skiing. In addition we will explore a host of indoor demos you can try to feel these great movements.

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am			
pm	✓	✓	✓

## The Gradual Release of Responsibility: An Instructional Model

Research shows this produces optimal learning. Teaching is both an art and a science. The Gradual Release of Responsibility gives us a scientific framework, based in research, in which to organize the information we are teaching. Effective teachers know, understand and apply the gradual release of responsibility when embarking upon new learning with their students. In this class, we'll define this instructional model, explore its purpose and the steps necessary to effectively implement this model in our everyday teaching.

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pm			

## Jedi Instructor

"To become a Jedi requires the deepest commitment and most serious mind. It is not a venture to be undertaken lightly."

All of us know that consummate ski pro. What does it take to make a successful, long-term career as a professional ski instructor? It's not a random act dependent upon a "high midi-chlorian count," or strict observance of a mystical invisible force. This presentation will explore the traits of the "ultimate" ski instructor. It will share with you the 7 attainable skills needed to earn Jedi status. We will also discuss where to look for guidance.

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## Learning Partnership with Children: Instructor Behaviors

How instructor actions can effect relationships and learning for children. What behaviors and characteristics do the best children's instructors possess? This class is about how your actions influence learning results you want to see. Be prepared to share your teaching strengths and needs.

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## Learning Partnership with Children: Student Behaviors

With emphasis on the child's perspective we'll explore factors which connect and disconnect kids with instructors. Expect to be involved in discussion based on personal class experiences.

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## Maximize Your Training this Season

Do you want to get more out your clinics/training this season? Let's discuss how we can control and become more responsible for own progress and improvement both as a skier and a ski teacher. Ever heard of the Learner's Responsibility Code? In this session we will utilize the "Vi-

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pm	✓	✓	✓



sual Cues of Efficient Body Movements in Skiing” to create and develop specific progressions for our own improvement.

### Phases of a Lesson

Explore a different way to organize your lessons. This is not a new form of the ATS Teaching Model and Teaching Cycle, but rather a format that helps you organize your time and pacing. These phases can be used sequentially and in order so that the lesson builds to a peak and then eases back down. We will learn the phases and then brainstorm activities for different lesson levels so that you leave with some specific tools for practical application this winter.

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pm	✓	✓	✓

### Shaping a Successful Lesson Environment with Creative Terrain Selection

This session will help participants build learning progressions for their students with understanding and usage in mind. From beginner to advanced we will go over concepts that will help instructors target and utilize specific types of natural and man-made terrain features to simplify and enhance the learning experience for their students. Plan on an interactive classroom experience with situational exercises to solidify these ideas so they are simple to implement in your teaching.

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### Skills and Drills (Alpine specific)

Is your ‘bag of tricks’ getting a bit dated, repetitive or just plain boring? Are you looking for a deeper understanding of tasks and drills and how they apply to skiing standards? Come to this interactive, participatory class and view video of different skiing tasks and exercises. The goal of this class is to help you broaden your base of understanding, possibly introduce you to new tasks and generate discussion of how drills and exercises can assist in changing movement patterns.

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pm			

### Teaching to Critical Demographics to Help Our Sports Grow

This session will focus on teaching tactics that will help women and children (especially kids under 6) find success in snowsports and get connected for life on their terms. Expect to discuss new methodology and tactics to create learning environments and progressions that are easier for the instructor to manage and easier for the student to accomplish. The goal is to create pathways for the youngest clients and support their participation

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pm		✓	✓

by engaging the women who care for them. Snowboarding is a sport that is literally shrinking; to grow we need to refocus on developing a younger client and a more caring learning environment that will support female participation. The golden rule is 80% of buying decisions affecting our largest target demographic (12 to 24 years old) are made by women.

### Three - Dimensional Balance

We will re-define balance and describe how balance is achieved in three dimensional space. Come get off balance.

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pm		✓	✓

### Tips and Tricks (Alpine Specific)

So you’ve been working through the drills, now it’s time for you or your students to take it into real skiing. As you know it can be very challenging to take your skiing to the next level, creating an awareness through tips or tricks can be the difference between getting it and not. Attend this class and we will develop tips and tricks to help you and your students raise their awareness in order to plug those skills into real skiing achieving that next level.

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pm	✓	✓	✓

### Your Body, Your Movements

We will focus on the realization that our body already has the base movements of skiing through walking and running and jumping. Through discussion activity and video each person will have a thorough understanding of how they work and how to transfer those feelings into their skiing. It will also provide a simple, proactive understanding of how the skills concept works for them.

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pm		✓	✓

### What Turns the Skis? Action or Reaction

Left and right then repeat, right? Well, what gets those skis from left to right? We will dissect the turning impetus (that’s right, impetus) and see how this affects our movement analysis with regards to cause and effect.

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**Note: Topics offered are dependent on minimum number of sign-ups and may be cancelled or modified.**

# It's More than a Card



*I have been a member of the PSIA/AASI for 15 years. I have always enjoyed teaching and thought instructing would be a fun part time job while I was in college. I was right! Sharing my passion and teaching people to slide sideways was fun! The clinics and educational events improved my riding and ability to teach others. The certification processes helped develop me as a professional, allowing me the opportunity to travel and work full time in places like Lake Tahoe and several resorts in Washington. I have made many friendships along the way and look forward to seeing them at different educational events throughout the year. In addition to instructing students, I am able to train aspiring instructors how to teach and help veteran instructors prepare for certification thanks to the training I receive from the PSIA/AASI staff, educators and publications. The PSIA/AASI organization keeps me engaged and has made me a lifelong enthusiast for the snowsports industry!*

## Your name in lights!

If you happened to notice in the Summer 2010 Issue we listed the names of all the members who successfully passed an exam last season. Oops! We left out a few, so we want to let you know who these newly certified members are.

From Mt Hood Olympic Ski Bowl they are:  
**Vera McEwen - Level I Snowboard, Travis Mazingo - Level I Snowboard and Janus Kober - Level II Snowboard.** Well done!

## Fall Seminar 2010 Event Application

Name	Email Address	Cert Level	Member #
Address		City	State Zip
Primary Contact Tel #	Secondary Contact Tel #	Snowsports School	

PLEASE CHECK ONE LOCATION

☐ **Spokane Metro**

October 16, 2010

Gonzaga University

Spokane, Washington

☐ **Portland Metro**

October 23, 2010

Mt. Hood Community College

Gresham, Oregon

☐ **Seattle Metro**

October 24, 2010

Seattle Pacific University

Seattle, Washington

PLEASE CHOOSE YOUR MORNING AND AFTERNOON TOPICS

### Morning Topic

First Choice

Second Choice

### Afternoon Topic

First Choice

Second Choice

PAYMENT DETAILS

☐ **\$65 PER PERSON**

☐ **\$12.50 Lunch Option (Seattle only)**

☐ **\$15 Late Fee**

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Your Total

CREDIT CARD NUMBER (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

EXP. DATE

YOUR SIGNATURE

MAIL WITH CHECK OR CREDIT CARD INFO TO:

PSIA-NW, 11206 Des Moines Memorial Dr., #106  
Seattle, WA 98168

FAX WITH CREDIT CARD INFO TO:

**206.241.2885**

Portland and Seattle event applications must arrive 14 days prior (Spokane event 7 days prior) to the event to NOT incur a late fee of \$15. All day-of-event sign ups will incur a \$15 late fee. Late applications will be accepted pending space availability only. No refunds or cancellations unless injured and unable to participate in an indoor session per doctor's note; a \$25 administration fee will be applied to refunds.

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

Recognizing that skiing/boardings can be a hazardous sport, I hereby RELEASE AND FOREVER DISCHARGE PSIA-NW, PNSIA-EF, 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 conduct of the event for which this application is made. Applicant hereby relinquishes and assigns to PSIA-NW 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.

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

**Professional Snowsports Instructors of America – Northwest**

11206 Des Moines Memorial Drive, Suite 106 Seattle, Washington 98168 USA 206.244.8541 (P) 206.241.2885 (F) office@psia-nw.org www.psia-nw.org

*Inspiring Lifelong Passion for the Mountain Experience*



## 2010 NATIONAL STANDARDS

by Kim Petram

This season brings changes to our sport as educational committees representing Alpine and Snowboard disciplines have been working on new or revised National Standards for Alpine, Snowboard and Children programs. The purpose of this article is to help shed light on how the language evolved to the level that you will see in the documents as well as some examples of how the standards have been formatted. The full standards for each discipline can be read at either the National website ([thesnowpros.org](http://thesnowpros.org)) or the Northwest website ([psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org)).

In the last Northwest Snowsports Instructor magazine, Summer 2010, you may recall an article titled "Bloom's Taxonomy, Levels of Understanding." This will be a useful reference to assist in understanding how to decipher the language of the standards. Bloom's Taxonomy is used to assist in determining learning, a specific taxonomy or classification system developed so that educational objectives could be organized according to their cognitive complexity. The National Standards use this taxonomy to establish levels of learning and understanding, i.e. competencies, from the most basic to advanced which subsequently help to organize and define each certification or specialist level.

Hence, for the Snowboard and Children's National Standards, this descriptor will be noted: "The premise of the certification standards is based upon the concepts of 'levels of understanding' that define stages of learning in degrees of understanding. Just as certification is a measure of understanding, levels of certification represent stages of understanding. Candidates will be held to the knowledge and performance standards of the level at which they are testing as well as the criteria for all preceding levels."

For the Children's National Standard, this is noted: "Although not a certification, participants will be expected to meet levels of competency defined by Children's Specialist 1 (CS1) and Children's Specialist 2 (CS2) standards. Participants will be held to the knowledge and performance standards of their current discipline certification level. These standards provide a training focus and represent a minimum competency for specialists at each level of instruction."

There has been work from National to further define concepts such as "certification" "accreditation" or "specialist" and what these terms really mean or represent. Under the Quality Assurance Initiative, they have looked at organizations such as National Organization

for Competency Assurance (NOCA) to assist in defining competency standards, and ways to accredit certifying professional associations. Therefore, for the Children's National Standard, this is noted as well: "The Children's Specialist 1 and 2 credentials follow the standards for a Curriculum Based Certificate program. A curriculum based certificate is issued after an individual completes a course or series of courses and passes an assessment instrument. The content of the assessment is limited to the course content, and therefore, may not be completely representative of professional practice (and therefore it is not as defensible to use this or the knowledge-based type of certificate for regulatory purposes as compared to a professional certification). 2005 NOCA Guide."

All of this is in effort to assure that we all agree, or have a standard, to establish levels of competency and knowledge taught in our curriculum and that there is a unified standard in assessing these competencies. I think we will be seeing more dialogue in the future regarding assessment based credentialing.

**All of this is in effort to assure that we all agree, or have a standard, to establish levels of competency and knowledge taught in our curriculum and that there is a unified standard in assessing these competencies.**

There are commonalities between the newest standards. All start with a table of contents and include categories of movement analysis and technical knowledge, teaching standards, riding and skiing standards and professional knowledge. These standards provide a training focus and represent a minimum competency at each level of instruction.

For example, for the Snowboard National Standard in the section under Movement Analysis and Technical Knowledge Standard for Level I: "The successful Level I candidate will demonstrate the knowledge and comprehension of the Snowboard technical terms, concepts, and models listed below. The successful candidate will also demonstrate the ability to recognize movement patterns in riders that are learning and riding all green terrain, groomed blue terrain, and small freestyle features." And Level III: "The successful Level III candidate will demonstrate the ability to synthesize and evaluate the Snowboard technical terms, concepts, and models listed below. The successful candidate will also demonstrate the ability to recognize movement patterns in riders who are learning and riding all available terrain and snow conditions, up to and including competitive freestyle riders..." and then goes on to list multiple terms, concepts and

models a candidate would be responsible for such as Snowboard STS concepts, service concepts, biomechanics and stance issues.

An example for the Children's National Standard, under Teaching Standards: "The successful CS 2 participant will need to choose appropriate exercises, games, and tasks and teach a safe, effective skill progression that demonstrates the application and analysis and the ability to synthesize and evaluate the following technical terms, concepts, and models..." and then goes on to list many concepts and theories including the Teaching Cycle, teaching with creativity, and topics related to the CAP Model.

For the Alpine National Standard, last updated in 2003, while the Bloom's structure is not used concretely, the intent is in place. For example, with the Bloom's verb identifiers in italics, under the section Teaching: "Specific Skill Requirements for Level I Instructors: Awareness, Understanding and Knowledge: recall the components of the learning environment; identify the components of good teaching; categorize teaching, skiing,

and guest service principles of ATS relative to Beginner/Novice zone students. Application: demonstrate an ability to develop a relationship of trust between teacher and students; identify learning styles and preferences." This is a small sample of what is in the Alpine National Standard, another area of interest to many would be to evaluate the specific skill requirements in the Skiing category.

Exploring the National Standards and reviewing all three of them, even if some are not a discipline you are involved with, will assist in understanding the common language and intent of instructional goals. As we approach the 2010-11 season, having a working knowledge of how all divisions are approaching their training will be a source of advancement in your own "levels of understanding." ❁



Kim Petram is a PSIA-NW Clinic Leader, PSIA-NW Children's Committee Chairperson, and is a Training Director for Fiorini Ski School at Snoqualmie Pass, WA. Email her at [kim@petram.org](mailto:kim@petram.org)

Post comments  
@ [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org)



## CIRCLE TIME

Children's Tip by Tara Seymour

Here is a great way to introduce the "play" portion of the children's teaching cycle, whether it is inside or out. Start by gathering the children by name. Once you have your class, find a place that you can sit or stand in a circle with them. It is fun to have them introduce themselves with a theme like "I am Jenny and my favorite ice cream is ... rasselberry goodle clump." Or maybe, "My name is Jon and my favorite color is ... Rainbow."

After the very brief and quick intro, grab their attention by reading a funny poem or singing a song. They will love this, and you will have their trust for being fun and silly. Pick from examples below or make up your own!

You can also use circle time to introduce children to the funny stiff boots on their feet. Have them hold hands and walk to the left, then the right. You can sing "wheels on the bus go round and round" or "the hokey pokey", both of these songs work on the skills of balance and rotary. Have them use their boots for the wipers on the bus.

Children between the ages of 4-7 are at a cognitive development stage that successfully allows them to learn through play. They are physically strongest when using large body movements like turning the whole leg to create rotary movements like in the wipers on the bus.

Circle time is a great way to get to know your group, develop skills early and above all have fun. ❄️



Tara is a PSIA-NW Alpine Clinician and Training Director at Mt. Bachelor Ski Resort in Bend, Oregon. She has been an instructor at Mt. Bachelor and member of PSIA for 16 years. Email tarrahbeth@aol.com



## WINTER TIME POEM

by Mary Ryer

Icy fingers, icy toes,  
Bright red cheeks and bright red nose.  
Watch the snowflakes as they fall,  
Try so hard to count them all.  
Build a snowman way up high,  
See if he can touch the sky.  
Snow forts, snowballs, angels, too,  
In the snow, so white and new.  
Slip and slide and skate so fast.  
Wintertime is here at last.



## SNOW IS FALLING ALL AROUND

Sung To: "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

Snow is falling all around,  
Falling, falling, to the ground.  
I catch snowflakes on my tongue.  
Building snowmen is such fun.  
Snow is falling all around,  
Falling, falling, to the ground.



## I BUILT A SNOWMAN

Indoor/Outdoor Icebreaker

I built a little snowman. (make large circle with arms). He had a carrot for a nose (point to your nose). Along came a bunny (hold up to bent fingers, make the bunny hop along). And what do you suppose? (shrug). That hungry little bunny (make the bent finger bunny again). Went a looking for his lunch (hop bunny around). And ate the snowman's nose (pretend bunny is eating the carrot nose). Nibble! Nibble! Crunch!

## CONVERSATION ABOUT THE WEDGE

by Terry McLeod and Jodi Taggart

Below is a transcript of an email conversation between Terry McLeod and Jodi Taggart (published with their permission). This conversation is useful for others to read as their dialogue on the Gliding Wedge (GW) and the Braking Wedge (BW) is not uncommon, and displays some perspective and opinions on the use of the wedge when teaching kids or adults.

Another side benefit is to point out that this type of conversation, sharing of perspectives and opinions can now be "interactive" on-line at the new psia-nw.org website, where readers can post questions and comments regarding a particular article on the website. Just go to the website, click on the Newsletter Articles link and look for the same title as in the newsletter, then post your comments at the end of the article. Very cool.

### Here's their transcript:

From: Jodi Taggart  
Sent: Thursday, 05 Nov 2009 1:19 pm  
To: Terry McLeod  
Subject: Technical Team related question

I was just wondering if there has been discussion among the Tech Team or DCL staff in regard to not teaching a BW because it is a defensive maneuver? This came up in our Children's summer work session and I still don't quite understand what is meant by not teaching it. So I was wondering if you have any insight that would help me to understand where we are trying to go as a division on this topic.

Thanks. You can just call me if it is easier.  
-Jodi

From: Terry McLeod  
To: Jodi Taggart  
Date: Thursday, 5 Nov 2009 1:55 pm  
Subject: RE: Technical Team related question

I have no insight. It hasn't been a major discussion point whenever I've been around. If/when it comes up we all tend to say, "yes, it puts 'em in the backseat so we should find better ways". Everyone agrees and we move on. That doesn't really help in terms of how we can best present/teach it to those who are dependent on it for their lesson plan.

The Team is very focused on the importance of fundamentals and a good foundation; everything is boiling down to balance in motion, stance, alignment, flow. I think we would translate this focus down to any level of skier and promote tasks, tactics, lesson plans that best serve developing the primary skill of balance through all phases of a turn (or a straight run for first timers).



You've heard me talk about it for a while now. To me, the definition of a BW is a wedge that makes you sit back. This isn't necessarily true, but if you really want to brake/stop when you're in a wedge position, the best way to do it is to drop your hips back. I prefer to teach slowing/stopping methods that work even when you don't sit back. You may still be in a wedge position that prevents excessive speed, but the real reason you stop is by turning and/or traveling across the hill. Terrain selection is of course very important.

-Terry

From: Jodi Taggart  
To: Terry McLeod

So would you say that there is no way to stop in a wedge position facing straight down the hill without sitting back? Or just that the quickest way to stop is to sit back and most of us wouldn't want to spend the time/distance to slowly come to a stop in a wedge without sitting back.

From: Terry McLeod  
To: Jodi Taggart

Answer B

I think you've been with me when I've asked people to stop in a wedge without sitting back and between 0 and 15% of the people can do it. Even on Sky Edge where it's not steep we all sit back because it's a much faster way to stop. Arguably on steeper hills it's plain impossible to stop without leveraging back (Ridge, Upper Midway, etc.)  
**(Editors note: referring to terrain and runs at Schweitzer Mountain in Idaho)**

From: Jodi Taggart  
To: Terry McLeod

Yes on a steeper slope I agree you move back, but why you would do a wedge of any kind going straight down a steep slope is beyond me. Looking at it strictly from a beginner skier perspective on a the gentlest of slopes couldn't you argue that teaching a maneuver that manipulates the size of the wedge for exploration of how a ski might respond -like gliding slower- is worthwhile. Even if you move back some it helps to explore fore/aft movements?

Moving fore/aft seems to be acceptable during other skiing maneuvers.

If making a wedge shape while facing straight down the hill causes us to move back then what keeps us from moving back in a GW? What is the fundamental difference between a GW and BW; or when does a GW become a BW?

Should we only be teaching a wedge maneuver while traveling across the hill? And if so, at what angle across the fall line would a wedge (braking or gliding) cease to move us in the back seat.

From: Terry McLeod  
To: Jodi Taggart

Perhaps part of the answer is in you first sentence; if people have learned the wedge as a stopping mechanism and they end up on a steeper slope (say with their parents after the lesson), then the best survival technique is to lean back to stop or slow down.

I think your description of that teaching scenario is appropriate because you're using it to explore/learn/develop movements. I teach hockey stops to develop movements but I hope that people don't use it as their primary braking/stopping device.

We don't move back in a GW because it's not wide enough to force/encourage us to sit back (an oversimplified answer probably). Difference between GW and BW could arguably be defined as a GW could be maintained indefinitely without stopping. Yes, you can do this while leaning back, just like you can do a straight run while leaning back, and yes, you can come to a full stop in a wedge without leaning back. Clearly I'm not answering your questions but only continuing the discussion.

My Plan A is to teach everything across the hill, wedge or parallel, hence the curving brushes that we set up in The Dish learning area. The angle of traverse is less likely to put you in the back seat when it is flat enough to allow confidence in your ability to stop when desired, by either a balanced wedge or by turning uphill.

From: Jodi Taggart  
To: Terry McLeod

I just don't see how a GW is all that different from a BW if the difference is that a GW maintains speed-going straight down a slope gliding is arguably a version of braking. You can drive your car down a steep grade with your foot on the brake and use it just enough to maintain a constant speed. So are you braking or gliding?

So does a GW become a BW when you actually decelerate from your intended speed? And if so are you doing a BW until you reach your desire speed (assuming your intended speed is slower than what you are at currently), then you are gliding unless you adjust ever so slightly to slow down, thus you are braking and if you continue to do this gliding/braking maneuver are doing a partially bad thing. Gliding=good Braking=bad, and is the only "right" way to adjust speed to cross the fall line while "gliding". If that is all true then maybe the difference between a GW and BW

is simply you are gliding if you can stay centered (no fore/aft movement) and you are braking if you must move aft to control your rate of decent, not sure what it is if you move too far fore.  
Am I making you crazy yet? :)

From: Terry McLeod  
To: Jodi Taggart

You have now forced me to pull out manuals and seek "official definitions." I consulted 3 PSIA published manuals dated 1980, 1996, and 2002 and they were all very similar. BW is a wedge shape with sufficient edge engagement that is used to slow or stop a skier; typically wider than a GW. GW is a wedge position with little friction between the edges and snow, typically narrower than BW. So when performed according to the definition either one is fine and can be taught or used as needed.

My problem is with how the application typically occurs in actual skiing situations, and the problem is seen at any/all ability levels of skier. As the wedge gets wider and the edge angle steepens (barring strange knee/edge manipulations), we all drop our hips back as a way of resisting the additional forces that are creating by the higher edge angle.

This higher edge angle is the one that creates the "extra" braking, hence the term BW. The steeper the hill gets the higher the edge angle needs to be, and in fact, a higher edge angle will automatically result because of the steepness of the hill.

(continued on next page)

Maeli working the braking wedge (at the moment) on Vista Ridge at Mt. Hood Meadows. Photo credit Vince Ready (dad)



**Editor's note about photo right:** Vista Ridge is ideal for practicing a gliding wedge however there are portions of the terrain that may (and often do) require a braking wedge to navigate between gliding wedge terrain, like right where Maeli is now.

(continued from previous page)

If you're standing still on a moderate blue run and then step into a wedge pointing straight downhill, the pitch of the hill will result in much higher edge angles than doing the same thing on the bunny hill. It's also worth noting that if you do this on either hill your body will basically remain vertical (or, plumb if you're a carpenter), because you're standing still and that's generally how we stand (vertical). If you're facing downhill, in a wedge, and remain vertical, the steeper the pitch the more you will be leaning back. But I'm starting to digress into areas that are difficult to type about and much easier to demonstrate and experience when we're on snow.

From: Jodi Taggart  
To: Terry McLeod

Definitions are always a good place to start, but... let's start with totally flat terrain. In this situation one should be able to create a wide (no pun intended) variety of wedges, meaning small to large. This person should not have to move back in order to create the larger wedge, I would assume, because there are no additional forces working on them.

Now put that same person on a very very very slight hill and ask that person to do the same task

while moving ever so slowly (because the terrain allows/dictates this primarily). If that person makes a wedge that is large enough to stop them on THAT terrain will they ALWAYS move aft in order to accomplish the task? I personally would argue that "no they would not ALWAYS move aft in order to stop".

My point being that they have, at this point in their stepping stones of learning, successfully accomplished a BW without creating movements that we have to unteach later. What we have given them is a taste of control which may encourage them to continue with their learning. As they progress they could then learn that using the skill of rotation to turn across the hill to stop would be much better and they should never feel the back of their boots in a wedge (unless they use it as an emergency maneuver) in which case we don't care about stance, balance, blah blah blah, we care about safety :-)

On steep terrain I won't argue your point-yes we all move back, but again I don't know why we do a wedge on steep terrain - unless we want to start talking about a wedge christie move. It's no wonder some people have such a hard time with a wedge christie-if they move into the wedge phase-move back to "brake" and then move across the hill to match skis only to be too far back to make that happen ... that's a whole other conversation.

From: Terry McLeod  
To: Jodi Taggart

I think what you've described is an appropriate teaching situation and a good illustration of why making statements that start with "always" or "never" is a risky thing. I think it's also the type of situation that someone was thinking of when they chose to include wedge change-ups as a Level 1 exam task. Are candidates able to do this maneuver without dropping back, or do they focus on simply making a wider and smaller wedge and forget good balancing mechanics?

I think you hit the root of the problem a few posts ago, "...that the quickest way to stop is to sit back and most of us wouldn't want to spend the time/distance to slowly come to a stop in a wedge without sitting back." My aversion to teaching with the wedge is based on people's inborn impatience which causes them to take perceived shortcuts and consequently develop bad habits.

From: Jodi Taggart  
To: Terry McLeod

I could easily argue that we as instructors tend to teach the "BW" way too far into a lesson; meaning students are being asked to do it on too steep of terrain, but that is a training issue. We haven't yet convinced me that it shouldn't EVER be taught to a beginner.

What if you get that person who needs every single imaginable step to "get it" or at least needs more than "straight to parallel" and a wedge change up is a skill that helps them to progress - thus they learn the skills for a GW and BW? My ultimate point is should we ALWAYS avoid the BW as a stepping stone or should we just try to avoid it?

From: Terry McLeod  
To: Jodi Taggart  
Subject: Re: Tech Team related question  
Date: Sunday, 8 Nov 2009 07:13:02 -0800

I think you've done a good job in the thread of describing appropriate ways to use both GW and BW. A wedge that brakes you to the point of stopping can be accomplished in good balance, and this is certainly a valid teaching tool. I think the wedge as a stopping tool has been relied on too heavily and results too often in bad mechanics. This is particularly true given the variety of ski size/shape developments that have recently come out (the last 5-8 years).



Terry McLeod a PSIA-NW Technical Team Member, Alpine Examiner and Clinician. He is also the Snowsports School Director at Schweitzer Mountain Resort. Email him at [tmcLeod@schweitzer.com](mailto:tmcLeod@schweitzer.com)

Post comments @ [psia-nw.org](http://psia-nw.org)



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# Learn, Teach & Inspire

## CATCHY SLOGAN, EH?

by Garth McPhie

"Learn, Teach & Inspire" is a catchy slogan, eh? Well, yes, that too, but much more. I was reading the latest PSIA-NW newsletter, the NW Snowsports Instructor, and got to the back cover when those words caught my eye, and my mind's eye, too. "Learn, Teach and Inspire." Why these words? What do they mean to me? To you? To PSIA? For our customers and guests? After thinking about these words for a minute, maybe two, here is what they mean to me.

### LEARN

Be a learner. Commit to learning forever, not just until you have passed your last exam. Or until you complete your annual PSIA educational credit requirement. Learn to ski better, more efficiently. Never stop progressing. I have been inspired by many Demo Team members and Technical Team members who are still working on their own skiing ... continuously. They, too, are still in the process of learning to ski better. They are committed to continual learning. It is this commitment to learning that directly affects their effectiveness as instructors and coaches.

Learn to teach better, more effectively. Learn from each lesson, each clinic, each student and client. What worked, what didn't work, what process or progression got us/them to achieve the desired outcome. Take coaching courses and clinics. Immerse yourself in learning.

### TEACH

Be a teacher or coach to your students, co-workers, self, friends, enemies. Teach with passion,

compassion and persistence. Teach because you want to, not because you have to. Teach beginners, teach instructors, teach racers, teach free-style, teach children, teach seniors. Teach it all. Teach what you like, teach what you don't like. Teach because it is your duty, your vocation, your commitment. Immerse yourself in teaching.

### INSPIRE

Be an inspiration. Through your example of commitment to learning and teaching, inspire others. Inspire your students/guests to want to learn. Inspire your instructors to want to learn and teach. If you have a student that only wants to cut lift lines, inspire them to want to learn, to be taught. Immerse yourself in inspiration.

I have been inspired by many individuals throughout my continuous journey; inspired by fellow instructors, coaches, clinicians, examiners, Technical Team members, PSIA Demo Team Members, non-PSIA Demo Team Members, and students. It is my goal to maintain and share my passion for snowsports education. It can be summarized by the recipe: Learn, Teach and Inspire.



Garth McPhie is the Director of Snowsports at Alyeska Resort in Alaska and is a PSIA-NW Alpine Clinician. Email him at [gmcphie@alyeskaresort.com](mailto:gmcphie@alyeskaresort.com)

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## ART OF LETTING GO

by Sean Bold

Don't hold onto the past, but instead look into the future. Gil Haines, an old ski buddy of mine, is very hard to keep up with in steep terrain. His secret, I have discovered, is that he never holds onto his turn too long, but instead releases the skis shortly after crossing the fall line, keeping him out of trouble. Now, this technique in steep terrain takes some guts, but once you figure out the timing of when to release, it will make your skiing more balanced, smooth, efficient, and faster in all types of terrain!

Gil lacks one of the common ineffective tactics I see with skiers today. Many skiers hold onto their turn too long before starting the next one. This often causes their balance to shift back and inside the turn. Pressure on the ski increases throughout the turn and is most predominant after the fall line. By prolonging the turn completion and staying in the zone of higher pressure, the skier runs the risk of letting these forces press them into the back seat. When their Center of Mass (the most central point of a person's weight, in relation to the rest of their body) moves behind the Point of Contact (middle of the foot and ski), the skier increases their chance of getting bucked further

out of balance by the ensuing terrain challenges and variations.

Imagine how much easier it would be if the skier released their turn just after the fall line. By releasing the turn earlier, the skier continues to flow down the hill into the next turn. This new tactic sets the skier up for success by allowing them to stay in balance while they move more down the hill and out of harm's way.

Here is a great tip that you can use to accomplish this goal. Swing your pole linearly down the hill in the direction of travel with a shorter pole cast. You will be able finish your turn earlier because your body will travel in the direction of the new turn. Your pole swing is very much a directional movement. When you swing your pole in a rounded arc with a longer pole cast, your movement is directed more across the fall line. Another by-product of a long pole cast is that you will have to ski all the way around the tip of the pole causing you to prolong the end of the turn. I am no longer a big pole caster and it has helped my skiing immensely. So keep the pole cast short and you won't have to travel as far to start your new turn.

Ok, so that's what to do, now here's how to do it. Grip your pole a little tighter with your hand and don't let your bottom two or three fingers open up

as you swing. This should help shorten the cast of the pole. Be sure not to turn your arm and hand toward the center line of your body while swinging the pole (like closing a door). Instead, just swing the pole from the wrist linearly in the direction of travel, leaving the arm and hand more open to the fall line. Try to target the pole touch about 12-16 inches in front of the toe piece of your binding and about 12-16 inches down the hill from that point. The distance you swing the pole towards your tip and down the hill will vary due to skier height, length of pole, terrain, turn shape, and the speed you are travelling.

Let go of the past and move into the future! By releasing your skis earlier into the new turn, you will maintain better balance and ski faster and more efficiently. You may also be able to keep up with the likes of Gil Haines. ❄️



Sean Bold is the Director of Snowsports at Crystal Mountain and a PSIA-NW Alpine Examiner and Clinician with over twenty five years of experience. He is also on the cover of this issue!

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