Director’s Turn
By Len Bauer
PSIA-E Alpine, Level III
AASI Snowboard, Level II
Director for 20 years
30+ years at teaching
U.S. Ski Coach Assoc.

It is always a little sad when the snow melts and we stop sliding down the hill. But seasons change, and it is time for spring and a new beginning.

I would like to give a big thanks to Dwayne who is a great help to me, and Shannon who is always there for the kids, that takes time to help and be there for all the kids. It is a team that makes Sugar Mountain Ski and Snowboard School the best it can be.

When I look around and see people like Gordon, Dwayne, Bill, Charles, John, Justin, Jim, Andre, Aaron K, Aaron M, Witold, Doug W, Doug M, Ross, Wendy and ZT talking to each other about lessons and how we should teach and ski and snowboard and make it all safe and spread the fun of teaching and most of all learning each day, I rejoice. That’s what makes us the best in what we do each day. The people who work here at Sugar is why we are the best. Not only the instructors but our desk people who talk on the phone to the parking attendants, to our lift people, to our snow makers, to our rentals, to our food people, to our patrollers, to our owner Gunther Jochl who lets us come play in his house during the winter. Thank you!!

From the Top
By Witold Kosmala
PSIA-E Alpine, Level III
K2 Ambassador

Our newest Level III addition to our team of instructors this season, Jim Hanson, said “Everyone keeps saying how bad the year was, but I met a lot of great people, had a lot of great lessons, and made a lot of turns.” Indeed, we did the best we could with what Mother Nature has provided. After all, we opened our slopes on November 12, 2011 and closed in mid March. March was so busy in skiing that some important events had to be scheduled at the same time, like Vail American Ski Classic and NASTAR National Championships at Winter Park, CO. In Vail, the Race of the Legends was won by Patrik Järbyn of
Sweden, a just retired Alpine World Cup racer. In Winter Park, our own Sarah Dockery was in the highlights being the second fastest lady and getting silver. Congratulations! Now is April and some of the best skiing is still going on. I hope you practiced up and are ready for whatever conditions are thrown at you.

Here are many of us Sugar Mountain bees ready to inject the “love for skiing and riding” venom into our guests.

Patrik Järbyn of Sweden wins the Race of the Legends in Vail.

Peak Performance
ALASKA! Yes, now the days are longer and snow is waiting. Opportunities are endless, all the way from beginner’s slopes to heli-skiing on various terrains. There is no one that knows more about skiing in Alaska then Chris Anthony. Check out his article and his photos in this publication and visit his website: www.chrisanthony.com.

CALIFORNIA! A dream place of everyone in the world, including skiers and riders. Here is a recent photo from Mammoth Mountain. But, like every other area, Mammoth Mtn. provides guests with terrain of their choice, it does not have to be a drowning powder. Their terrain parks and half pipes are among the best. Look at Kaya Turski, slopestyle skier from Montreal who won the 3rd consecutive gold at Winter X Games last February. She trains at Mammoth Mountain. In 2011 Kaya was added to the inaugural Canada Freestyle Ski Association National Slopestyle Team that will be heading to the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games where the sport of slopestyle skiing will make its Olympic debut. Kaya says “it’s really a dream come true for slopestyle skiing and halfpipe to be in the Olympics.”

2012 PSIA and AASI National Team Tryouts are this month. Alpine, Adaptive and Nordic Team tryouts will be held at Snowbird, Utah on April 22–26. The Snowboard Team and Alpine Freestyle Specialists tryouts will be held at Copper Mountain, Colorado on April 8–12. Jim Hanson plans on being at Snowbird and will give us a full report in our next publication of Peak Performance.

What else are we leaving out? Oh yes, NORTHWEST. On April 14, there will be the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Seattle. Among several inductees will be Eva Twardokens who is a two-time Olympian and 1985 World Championship bronze medalist. Eva is featured in the article in this publication.

There is a lot going on currently in the snow sports and I hope you will check out these as well as many other activities. Don’t forget Europe and other distant places around the world. If you cannot attend, at least watch and/or read about them. There is also dry-land training going on. Jump in and get involved. Try perhaps local bicycle rides. Unfortunately, our next issue of Peak Performance will not be until July. Please, write me at Kosmalaw@bellsouth.net. Also, check out all previous issues of Peak Performance that are posted and downloadable from my web page found at www.mathsci.appstate.edu/~wak/.

My son, Konrad just makes them look so good, doesn’t he? Take good care, and again: Happy Easter!!

Main Course

Living the Dream:
Enriching our Human Experience on the Slopes

By Justin Grimes
Ski Instructor

As appeared in the Avery Journal Times

Morocco, Russia, France, Spain, Turkey, Great Britain, Germany, Israel, Portugal, Taiwan, China, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Venezuela, Mexico and Peru make up the list I kept this ski season of where my foreign students came from.
As I have researched and written about before, High Country tourism greatly benefits from the explosive population growth of the Piedmont region in the Southeast known in tourism as drive traffic. But I wish to spotlight the fact that the High Country ski resorts draw an international crowd--that in my experience over the years--is growing exponentially.

Do you think the founders of our High Country ski resorts imagined attracting an international audience initially? I doubt it.

These international visitors enhance our collective community; naturally sharing their human experience, introducing the colors of lives lived in different climates under varied political structures, languages, myths, arts, diets and beliefs.

And in return, we share our hospitality, our dreams, our music and beautiful mountain environment. A win-win benefit for all made possible by the dedication and sustained annual investments the owners and managers of our ski resorts have made in infrastructure, especially in snowmaking equipment, creating a product that attracts the world to our doorsteps.

Those past investments proved their worth this season as Mother Nature threw us a curveball winter. I’m calling this season the ‘Year of the Snowmakers’ because without them, the approximately 110-day-season would not have happened.

I’m never happy when the season ends, I’m melancholy. I love teaching and the camaraderie of my fellow instructors and favorite mountain employees; we are family, an annual cast of characters bound together in beautiful powder, crud, storms, occasional rain and Carolina blue sky laughter.

And I miss my morning view from the mountaintop, a communion with nature that settles my restless spirit.

But, I am comforted. Next season will come and we will celebrate our profession again, work, play and learn together. In the meantime, I can remember the many highlights of this season like my 82-year-old beginning student, a retired Navy officer who shared her philosophy with me on one of our lift rides. “You got to keep growing,” she said as she lamented the recent death of a friend that didn’t. “You can’t give up.” Good advice from a lady who completed the Appalachian Trail in her seventies.

And the five ballet dancer friends from Atlanta (aged 5,6,7,8 and 9) who were all dressed alike, had natural balance, picked up skiing immediately and as my director said, “Those little ones looked like a magical Chinese dragon making turns down the mountain in unison.”

And Lucia, the 9-year-old from Columbia who had never seen snow and struggled in her first lesson, almost giving up. Thankfully, she didn’t and on her third day of classes, she rejoiced in standing on top of the mountain with a shout of joy I wish I had recorded for you readers to hear. “I’m coming back,” she exclaimed with smiling big eyes when we parted; her proud parents hugging me, too.

Birds serenade from outside my open window. “Spring is here,” they sing, “Keep growing.”

Until next season, good fortune to all.

Eva Twardokens,
Part 1 – Growing Up on Skis

By Becca Borawski

Anyone who has been around since the early days of CrossFit is familiar with the name Eva Twardokens, or more familiarly, "Eva T." Eva was one of the original CrossFitter back in the Santa Cruz days and the star of many old CrossFit videos. In fact, Eva is one of the women in the now infamous “Nasty Girls” video. For many “Nasty Girls” was the spark for their CrossFit journey.

What most people don't know is Eva had a long and accomplished athletic career before she ever found CrossFit.
A second generation Olympian, Eva is the daughter of an accomplished fencer and began her own career as a skier at an early age. In fact, as she explained, she got quite the jump-start, she discovered, when she asked her father when she actually began skiing:

I read this book called *The Talent Code* and my dad read it, too. We were talking about the difference between genetics and conditioning. So, when we were having this conversation, I said “Dad, what do you say to people when they ask you when I started skiing?” And he said, “Well I tell them minus nine months.” He said, “Your mom skied through the whole pregnancy, and I think that had an effect on you.” He said, “You were born and we took you to the mountain and as soon as you could hold your head straight up your mom put you in a backpack and skied with you.”

It wasn’t until she was three that Eva considers she officially started skiing and then at the age of eight she began competing.

My parents being eastern bloc Europeans, they were both always having me do something. As soon as I could walk, my dad would try to get me to do as many types of movement and sports as I could do. But skiing was it – that was their thing. I was three years old when I really started and started competing at eight in freestyle. Then I moved on to racing when I was twelve. I made the U.S. Ski Team when I was 16 and once I made the team it was basically my new home. I travelled eight months of the year with coaches and other athletes, and I wasn’t home. It was a quick departure from the usual teenage years of going to high school and going to the prom and all that stuff. After that it was just a press to be the best in the world at skiing.

And while Eva may have given up some of the pleasures of her teenage years, she earned herself a spot on the U.S. Ski Team for 12 years and competed in two Olympic Games, Albertville and Lillehammer. She won six National Championships, a World Championship Bronze Medal, and was a World Technical Skiing Champion.

I was known as a giant slalom specialist, but I made the U.S. Ski Team officially in downhill. In the beginning I did all the events – downhill, super-G, giant slalom, and slalom, but I blew my knee out and my surgeon restricted me from downhill. So then I started to do shorter turns and shorter turns and I basically ended up on what we call the technical team on the U.S. Ski Team, which is slalom and giant slaloms, and then I did some super-G. In Albertville I did three events for the Olympics and in Lillehammer I only did two, slalom and giant slalom.

In 1995, at the age of 29, Eva retired from skiing. For a while she would do announcing for ESPN and Outdoor Life, but she knew the life-span of that career would be limited, waning as her retirement took her further and further from her competition days. To learn a quick trade and be making steady money, Eva put in a couple years of schooling and became a dental hygienist. She also crossed paths with Greg and Lauren Glassman at a local gym where they were teaching spin class and became a private training client of Greg’s.

I retired and it was like, “Why do I need to go to the gym now?” You want to stay in shape but you’re like, “Why?” And it was mostly for aesthetics and my health and I was working out at the gym by myself after I retired, but I didn’t really have a direction. Then I started taking some spin classes Greg and Lauren were teaching and I loved...
their spin classes because it was all intervals and I was into that. I knew about training and I didn’t want to go to a spin class and crank on the wheel and push on the pedals, I wanted something more. I loved his spin class so much he was like, “Hey why don’t you work out with me?” So I finally had the time and the confidence in him because I liked what he did in the spin class, so I had a training session with him and we did tabata squats, we did a little gymnastics, and we did a very short workout, and I was hooked.

Eva, unlike most of us, had the advantage of her competitive years and life-long athleticism to build her CrossFit success upon. That career taught her an intensity and focus she feels the vast majority of people cannot even comprehend.

I don’t think people understand when you’re in a sport like ski racing. You’re not sitting at home and getting on a plane on the weekend and going to a race. You are living it. You’re living out a suitcase, going from hotel to hotel. You’re with the ski team in Europe most of the time because that’s their number one winter sport and you’re in their venue most of the time. …It was eight months of the year of my life not home and doing something that took focus and, well, put it this way – the feeling you have before you do Fran, for you CrossFitters out there, I had that for probably 17 years. You just can’t relax. That’s the type of intensity on a moment-to-moment basis it takes to make it to the Olympic Games.

And while many people may not have realized the depth of her early accomplishments, and she may be known for her CrossFit videos, in her mind her greatest accomplishment remains her skiing career.

Recently I got inducted to the Ski Hall of Fame. It helped me look back and really reflect on my ski racing career. I think, to my fault, I forgot about it. Watching the CrossFit Games come around has made me also reflect back on my career as an athlete and what it took. I think being an Olympian is my biggest accomplishment. Being a two-time Olympian is my biggest accomplishment. That took more than I think anyone can even imagine. It was a lifetime’s work. And most of that lifetime I was a child.

I look at the big picture and when you meet another athlete, a fellow athlete that’s been to the Olympics, you’ve got this bond that’s very intimate, as far as .001 people make it to the Olympics and .001 know what it takes, unless you coach someone to the Games. The only people who would really be able to conceptualize it are my mother and father who watched it and my father who is an Olympian, and these people, you have a special connection with them. And I wouldn’t trade it for anything. People say, “You didn’t get to go to prom and you didn’t have a normal life,” and I say, “No, I didn’t, but I had a different and exciting life.”

Next time learn more about Eva's discovery of CrossFit, the truth behind “Nasty Girls,” and how she purged her Olympic demons by winning a national title in Olympic weightlifting.

To follow Eva's workouts here on Breaking Muscle follow this link:

Becca Borawski (pictured on the right) found her way to a career in health and fitness through Martial Arts and CrossFit. Originally a music editor for film and television, Becca started studying Martial Arts in 2000. Though she started with traditional Martial Arts it was not long before she discovered Mixed Martial Arts, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, and Muay Thai. She started working with professional MMA fighters, building websites, working on fight promotions, and producing videos.

In 2005 Becca discovered CrossFit and became a student at CrossFit Los Angeles. In only a couple of years she became CrossFit Level III Certified, earned an NSCA-CSCS, left her career in the film industry, and dedicated herself full time to coaching.

Becca is now living in Portland, OR where she has taken both of her careers and all of her passions and combined them into one job – Managing Editor of BreakingMuscle.com.
Select Your Slopes

By Gordon Carr
PSIA-E Alpine, Level II

This is an article with some hints for all you parents and “someday-to-be-parents” of 4-6 year old children who want to ride the “big people” bicycles. “I’m too big to have training wheels! I want to ride a big bike!” It is also for grandparents and “someday-to-be-grandparents” who frequently are the bike riding trainers! I’m revealing a trade secret and a sure-fire method to have those 4 or 5 or 6 year olds up and riding the bicycle in under two or three hours!

Bet you thought this was going to be about skiing or riding what with the title and the fact that this is a snow sport newsletter! Nope. We’re heading into summer soon and a whole new generation of tricycle motors will graduate onto the “big people two-wheeler.” For most parents, grandparents, and yes, the kids too, making the transition to the two wheeler can mean hours and days of frustration, tears, running behind the bike holding the seat, tumbles, scuffles, and barked up elbows and knees! When teaching my 3 kids years ago and eldest grandson years ago also (how can that be? I guess I should have said “…my 3 kids MANY years ago”) I experienced all the above mentioned episodes and frustrations and band-aid sessions. “Don’t let go, Dad, until I tell you!” (of course they never tell you to “let go”, and if they had, with my panting exhaustion from having run ½ a Boston Marathon holding them up by the bike seat, I probably wouldn’t have heard them.) There had to be a better way.

I came upon this secret remedy, by accident, when my youngest grandson was visiting. He picked the one day to make the leap to the two wheeler when we didn’t have a kid sized bike at the house and the only possibility was a very old baby sized two wheeler with training wheels. Plus it was so old that one of the peddle’s bearings was rusted tight and wouldn’t turn with the crank! But necessity being the mother of invention, (and to keep a 5 year old from melting down) I removed the training wheels, took off the peddles and visualized not only running ½ a Boston marathon, but doing it stooped over holding the low seat!

But in less than an hour Hootie (yes I know a strange nickname for a grandson; but, my childhood hero was Hoot Gibson.) was asking for the peddles to be replaced even if the rusted one rotated and popped his foot up and off each revolution. He said he could handle it; and, he did!

What was the secret…how come the miraculous “Grampy-heart-attack-avoidance” steep learning curve? It was a combination of using of the correct equipment and selecting the proper learning slope. By the way, since this success, I have passed this tip on to at least 20 parents and grandparents all of whom reported “miraculous success” at how quickly their child learned to balance.

First, from my observations in “suburbia kiddy heaven” over the years, we parents and grandparents tend to buy the “perfect bicycle” for our little darlings. The seat is adjusted just right so the child can peddle and use the brake when necessary and we really want the child to understand the brake so he can stop. But with this setup, what the child typically CAN’T DO is touch the ground with both feet flat on the pavement! And worst, if they can, the peddles keep whacking them in the back of the ankle or leg whenever they do touch the ground! So the first ingredient in this secret remedy is: “select a bike with a seat low enough so both the child’s feet touch flat on the pavement; now remove BOTH peddles”. Realize that this is not THE bike… it is a learning tool only and may be replaced in just a week! One from the Restore Store or an old bucket-of-rust left over from earlier times, if small enough, is more than adequate.

Second, and this is crucial, you must locate the proper learning slope! Again from my observations over the years, most parents go out of their way to find a perfectly LEVEL learning area, worrying unnecessarily about the child being able to maintain control and not go speeding to perdition. RATHER YOU MUST GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO FIND A PAVEMENT SLOPE WITH A SLIGHT AND CONSISTENT PITCH. Gentle, yes, but with enough pitch so the child and bike will move easily; but also gentle enough that the child can stop when she wishes with the friction from both feet dragging flat on the road. Think about it; if the pavement is perfectly
flat, you either run behind the bike to get it moving or the child HAS to use the peddles to move. Learning about balance is not about propulsion, yet… it is about balance! I have found that deserted shopping mall or grocery store parking lots are perfect. They have a slight pitch to promote drainage, they are usually long enough for the child to experiment with a decent “balance ride” and when deserted after store hours they are protective of the child’s safety from usual street traffic.

Once the child is confident he can stop with his feet anytime he wants (and without the peddles hitting the backs of his legs), you’re off to the races. Guide and show the child how to stop with their feet and how to lift their feet briefly to balance while moving slowly down the pitch. In my experience they quickly begin to experiment with moving and picking up their feet. Remember they REALLY, REALLY want to learn to ride like the big kids. With practice confidence builds and the feet begin coming off the pavement for longer periods of time. Instead of running ½ the Boston Marathon, your biggest task is to stand on the sidelines shouting encouragement and praise! Don’t let the child get too tired. A quick break accompanied by a few shared giggles and the child usually begs to get back to the practice. Do NOT rush to put peddles back on…let the child tell you when they want to try peddling. Be prepared for a brief set-back and if it occurs just remove the peddles again. With peddles on still stick to the gentle learning slope where “peddle use” is not the focus… let gravity provide the slow ride. Brake use is the first “peddle on” learning task. Many children will have mastered brake use on earlier bikes with training wheels, and this can be a very short skill to learn. I’ve taught 3 in addition to my youngest grandson and watched 3 or 4 others using my system. A couple of wobbly braking runs and presto, the kid starts peddling without being told. Now it is just practice and maybe a time to move to a bit more level pavement so the child doesn’t get going too fast. But the kids seem to intuitively feel in their body that the faster you go, the easier it is to balance. Now it is just mileage.

So you combine a graduated learning approach with emphasis on the fundamental skill of balancing and slowly introduce one skill task at a time using the proper learning equipment on a deliberately selected learning slope…. uhh……reduce the fear factor by selecting a good learning slope, focus first on balance, add skills sequentially using correct equipment…uhh…hmm…maybe this was about teaching skiing and riding after all! Like learning a sport where proficiency in other sports can transfer positively, maybe teaching one sport can have a positive transfer to teaching other sports?

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER

Racing

What We Can Learn From Ted Ligety

By Chris Anthony

The best alpine skiers in the world visit Beaver Creek every year for the annual Birds of Prey World Cup. The site is known for it one of the most prestigious and difficult downhill's on the circuit. But the Giant Slalom venue on the same hill is no picnic.

For the last couple of years The US Ski Team's Ted Ligety has been the number one Giant Slalom skier on the world cup circuit. What he is doing on skis at the moment is defining the sport in that category of skiing. So naturally watching him do what he does can be used as a teachable moment.

Most people might think that ski racing and recreational skiing have nothing in common. When in fact it is the foundation for the technique and the turn at the highest level. Watching these athletes ski can be used as a model for the average recreational skier. Even more relevant is that their technique can be translated from skiing hard snow conditions over to powder. In fact I always tell people if they can create a perfect carved turn on hard snow conditions with the right equipment the reward of "the turn" is much like arcing a perfect turn on a steep Alaskan powder slope. The collateral bonus to acquiring the proper technique also translates into control of what you are doing on the slope, which equals safety.

Lets look at one of Ted Ligety's winning runs on the Birds of Prey and try to break it down.

Peak Performance
What is making Ted Ligety so amazing is his confidence to create huge angles more aggressively and consistently than anyone else on the world cup circuit. His ability to create massive angles and to generate power directly to his edges on the snow so he can create a clean fast and precise turn where he dictates and not the slope he does better than anyone at the moment. It’s like having a precision sports car. The angles Ted creates start well before the crossing the fall line where he rolls his angles (thus his skis) onto edge and starts to push into

the front of his boots. The result is the ski start to deflect (bend) from the tip into an arc (the beginning of the turn). He is doing this with so much confidence and power that even on the bullet-proof snow conditions of a world cup slope his ski start to track into a turn. (If he is doing this here just imagine what he could do on a recreational groomed slope. Or imagine what you can do following the steps described so far.) As the skis begin to track into an arc, Ted keeps the pressure into the front of his boots until the skis track come around to the apex of the turn. As you can imagine a ton of energy is stored with this amount of energy being generated. Once the skis come around to a point where he will make it to his the next gate he begins to release that energy and actually generates speed. While he is doing all of this take a look at what his upper body is doing. I always tell everyone that skiing is done in the lower extremities with the upper body just along for the ride. In other words keep it quite and square, facing the primary goal.

The movements that Ted is demonstrating on the race course with those conditions are to the highest level. And just as car engineers demonstrate by testing cars at the highest level. The fact is the movements, techniques and engineering is beneficial to keeping the everyday driver safe and efficient.

Hope you enjoy watching Ted’s run on:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56HKSJ5FN8M&feature=share

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Chris Anthony, a Big Mountain skier is a Colorado native and longtime Vail resident. For a good portion of his life, Chris competed at an international level, including World Cup, as well as traveled as an athlete and on-screen personality with the Warren Miller Film Team. Chris has filmed with the legendary action sports production company for 23 years and continues to do so currently. His feats are displayed in the annual Warren Miller feature film as well as numerous television programs and documentaries such as "Warren Miller Global Adventures." Chris is a former Alaskan Extreme Skiing Champion, a veteran of 9 World Extreme Skiing Championships, and US Heli Ski Association Level 3 Mechanized Ski Guide.

Between film shoots and sponsor appearances Chris manages specialized ski programs under his company “Chris Anthony Adventures” in Alaska, Italy and Colorado. Additionally, Chris co-hosts the “Camp of the Superstars” every August in Portillo, Chile. Also, Chris is available for speaking engagements. His website is www.chrisanthony.com. Chris, thank you for sharing your article with us as well as the 2 photos on the next page.
These two photos of Chris, as well as the one of Ted in the article above, were taken by Cody Downard. Cody Downard is a photographer for many occasions that can be found on codydownard.com.
35 Meters of Irony

By Ted Ligety

2006 Olympic gold medalist and three-time World Cup giant slalom champion

This is reprinted from Ted’s Blog found at http://www.tedligety.com/. We gave him a suggestion of moving to rockered skis. Ted encourages concerned people to read a letter written by David Dodge to FIS officials pertaining to new ski regulations that was copied from www.skiracing.com onto his website. David clearly illustrates how increasing the length and increasing the sidecut radius for competition GS skis from the current 185cm minimum length and 27m minimum sidecut radius to 195cm minimum length and 35m minimum sidecut radius will effect the athletes.

As anyone who’s read this blog or follows ski racing knows; I am very against the FIS imposed 195cm 35m ski rules for next year. Try as, myself and others have to fight FIS’s decree, FIS has stuck to their phony science and held their ground in not being dissuaded by the mass populous of ski racers, parents and knowledge of ski engineering experts (which FIS is not). Since the battle has shown to be futile, I (and Head) have focused on developing skis for next year on which I can win. This week I have been testing the second generation of Head 35m skis, in Hinterreit, and (...) I am faster! Significantly faster! HA! Ironc!? (Perhaps even more ironic is the word on the hill is the company behind the rule changes; Atomic, is struggling to make the new skis work).

This poses an interesting scenario, now that I’m faster and theoretically should or would want to race on these FIS deemed “safer” skis, would FIS allow me to use these skis? (They are currently illegal since they are too narrow). One would think since FIS has been quoted (see quote below*) as saying their decision to change the equipment regulations was at least partially to protect themselves of liability, thus they should allow athletes to use next year’s “safer” equipment if the racer saw fit. Otherwise, are they not liable if they do not allow a racer to ski on the “safest” equipment available and that racer were to get injured. As of now, FIS has stated that next year’s skis are not legal for racing this year. Rules are the rules and at some level I accept that but (me not being a lawyer) does that not open FIS up to liability?

(*Quote from FIS official Bernhard Russi referring to why the ski rules were put in place and FIS’s liability. “We could have said, ‘No, we don’t do anything,’ but then we would have gone against safety,” said Bernhard Russi, a former downhill great from Switzerland who is chairman of the FIS Alpine Committee. “If the scientific people and the experts say, ‘If you want to go in the direction of safety, then you have to do that,’ and if then FIS says, ‘No, we don’t do that,’ then we have a problem. We probably even have a legal problem.”)

Despite being faster on the new skis I still believe that FIS has no place to creating equipment regulations. These rule changes may benefit me but by benefitting me, someone else is losing out. That is unfortunate and unfair. Regulations should not be in place that could in a sense pick winners and losers. It opens the door for the system to be corrupted which ski racing has been. I’m guessing the news of myself and some other racers being faster on the new equipment will displease FIS, and goes to further discredits FIS’s study.

As to how the new skis felt; they for sure do not turn as easy, they lock onto the edge hard, are slightly smoother through small bumps, take more muscling and twisting of the ski (manual pressure as opposed to body position), recoveries are slower, there is less energy out of the turn and are far more tiring to ski on. (It will be difficult for young FIS athletes to safely ski on these skis since they don’t have the size and strength of WC athletes and the difficulty in turning/arcng 35m skis will drain the fun out of racing). It will be interesting to see where the injury numbers go, especially since there haven’t been any injuries in mens’s World Cup GS this year.
Skiing Tips

Coaching Tactics & Techniques

By Denis Donnelly
Bill Fuge
Witold Kosmala

Here are some notes we put together from Brian Whatley’s PSIA-E event on Feb. 8-9, 2012 held at Bristol Mountain, NY. This was not a usual ski workshop. In this 2-day long event we discussed and experienced unbelievably many things, including:

- teaching styles
- choosing appropriate activities
- numerous ways of providing feedback
- class management
- recognizing student’s abilities and desires
- recognizing student’s learning preferences
- recognizing student’s motivation, attitude and values
- going down racecourses
- performing racers’ movement analysis.

The study was very intense, but presented and executed in a relaxed way. Since there were 3 of us musketeers, and Coach Brian, we sat together on quad chair lifts and shared ideas, aired questions, and presented solutions. One quad went right over two race courses so we were able to do movement analysis from the air. We were also analyzing racers from the top of the racecourse as well as from the sides and the bottom. We even listened in on the feedback racing coach was giving to his racers. It is so often true that race coaches start with tactics and then move to techniques, where as ski instructors focus on technique and may never even get to tactics. Our group wanted to mix it up. Often a change in tactics will change the technique, thus correcting the technique may not always be most advisable since a different tactic will produce different technical needs. But, if technique is not there, changing tactics is not advisable.

Here are some details of our clinic. We start with Brian’s Four Fundamentals of racing and skiing.

- Center of mass moving “over” a moving base of support.
  - Drills include: shuffling, stepping, and hopping.
- Foot to foot movements (weight transfer, weight distribution, weight re-distribution)
  - Early edge pressure – the timing of the dynamic handoff
  - Weight transfer through the turn.
  - Steps (like 1000 steps) to start turn
  - Early edge set/early edge change drills: ski in performance wedge – set up-hill ski at transition, bellows turns.
  - Drills include: side-slipping, pivot slips, and linked hockey slips. Work this into short radius turns.
  - Divergence may result from a weak inside half, and too much weight on the inside (uphill) ski usually due to lack of adequate angulation.
- Legs turn more than torso.
  - Drills include: decelerating short turns down a corridor, tuck turns.

Correcting common problems:

- To improve early edge set/early edge change drills:
  - Ski in performance wedge – set up-hill ski at transition. (The performance wedge can also be used to work on flex.)
o Engage edges on a command: “Now.”
o More pressure on the inside tip vs. the tail – flex forward.
o Double pole drag to correct stance and prevent inside lean.
o Turn – traverse on flat ski – turn.
o Weight turn 90% on the inside ski and 10% on the outside

• To improve back seat problems:
o Ski backwards to feel the cuff of the boot.
o Ski with the poles behind the butt to pull the butt forward, call them “butt lifts.”
o Skiing “without bindings.” Focus on constant pressure through the sole of the foot, like in surfing.
o Stepping, hopping, shuffling through the whole turn, and “leap” into a turn.
o Leapers, landing on the new edges.

Retraction turns, and also improving long leg/short leg:
  Double pole drag: flex leg joints evenly, hold arms lower but keep in peripheral vision, poles off to the sides at 45 degrees touching gently the snow surface. Now ski dragging the poles. If pressure with a pole against the surface is increased, then too much leaning. As you turn, your skis should come close to one pole and then the other.

Teaching for transfer – this speeds up learning process
  Take something known and translate it to the unknown. E.g. Direction change: How does the student turn walking in boots?

Lateral Learning – related to guided discovery
  Experience the spectrum of possibilities within a movement. E.g. a “body rotator” might try counter-rotation and experiment with the range of options available within a skill set.

Break things up when coaching
  E.g. When coaching pole planting first have them ski with no poles, then with one pole, and finally with both poles.

A few other thoughts:
  Don’t collapse future inside leg too fast to avoid over-rotation.
  Move skis back at turn initiation.
  Legs turn more than torso.
  Flex both ankles.
  Ski into and out of counter, don’t counter to ski.
  To get the proper pole length, put the tip of the pole on the ski and make sure the top of the grip goes to your sternum.

Four elements in skiing:
  Snow, shape, size, speed.

Five general areas that improve Sport Performance:
  • Physical conditioning – stamina, strength
  • Mental game – mind set, fear, group dynamics, confidence
  • Equipment –
    • Technique – fundamentals, basic skills (e.g. balance, long leg/short leg)
  • Concept – what is supposed to happen? Rules of the game, tactics, line, where to turn.

It was an awesome clinic. Great coach, great exchange of ideas, lots of skiing, lots of learning.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Denis Donnelly instructs children, adults and other instructors at Kissing Bridge, Glenwood, NY. He became an instructor in 2002 and is currently level 2 certified in Alpine skiing, Children Specialist 2, and has Master Teachers certification having completed Sports Science and Coaching Performance Skiing and Racing.

Bill Fuge is a PSIA Level II Alpine instructor. He coaches High School racing at Bristol Mountain, NY. Bill’s girls team has won the NY Section V team championships the past three years.

Witold Kosmala is someone you already know way too much about, so no more secrets are given out here.

Health Course

The Bitter Side of Sweet

By Bonnie Church

“Poisons are substances that can cause damage, illness, or death to organisms.”

Based on that definition, sugar might be more aptly classified as poison, than food. It is a substance that lowers our immunity and predisposes us to everything from diabetes to cancer.

If sugar is poison, then we are in trouble. The average American adult is swallowing 22 teaspoons of sugar each day. By comparison, most women should be getting no more than 6 teaspoons a day. For most men, the recommended limit is 9 teaspoons. Some of that comes directly from the sugar bowl; the rest comes from soda, junk food and some unexpected sources such as crackers, yogurt, ketchup, and peanut butter.

Sugar is addictive, and now that the holiday parties are over you might find yourself craving sweets more than ever. To help you bust the habit, here’s a simple action plan:

A SIMPLE SUGAR-BUSTING ACTION PLAN:

Stick with this plan for 30 days. You will be amazed at the results

1. Pay attention to your labels. (If the sugar is above 5 grams you don’t want it. Your body cannot break down more than that per meal.)
2. Don’t buy sugary foods. (When you are in the store stay away from these items, so you are not tempted.)
3. Don’t skip meals – especially breakfast. (This shuts down your metabolism and triggers sweet cravings.)
4. Don’t eat sugar for your first meal of the day. (This will trigger you brain to think ‘sweet’ for the rest of the day.)
5. Eat more veggies, and fiber foods. (Once you start eating more of these foods, you will crave them instead of sweets.)
6. Eat whole fruit [not juice] [in moderation] to satisfy your sweet tooth.
7. Drink pure water rather than sweet drinks [even artificially sweetened drinks]. (That sweet taste all day long will keep you addicted to sweets.)
8. Eliminate white pasta, white rice and white bread. (Without the natural braking system of fiber, they break down into sugar rapidly.)
9. Take a walk after dinner instead of eating dessert. (This will also help you promote weight loss. 10-20 minutes after a meal will burn calories and you will forget about the sweets.)

Bonnie Church, CNC, CTLC, CLC – Bonnie is a wellness columnist for All About Women Magazine, a Certified Life and Wellness Consultant and certified Trainer for the TLS Weight Loss Solution. Bonnie has conducted wellness and motivational seminars throughout the US. She served as a writer/consultant for an internationally marketed weight loss system for kids. She recently co-authored, with Lydia Martinez, “Coach Lydias’ No-nonsense Guide to Getting Off your Butt, Out of your Rut and On with your life.” Please visit www.alifenow.com for more information.

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**Turn to Wisdom**

- There is no contentment for a young mind in an old body! *(From Gordon Carr.)*
- The first step to wisdom is silence; the second is listening.
- A minute of thought is worth more than an hour of talk.
- You can win more friends with your ears than with your mouth.
- Put others before yourself, and you can become a leader among men.
- It isn’t hard to make a mountain out of a molehill. Just add a little dirt.

**Thoughts for the Month**

- “Z” turns. What are they, what causes them, why are they used, what should be done to make them more like “S” or “C” turns? Are “Z” turns good or bad?
- Does an empty 18-wheel rig stop quicker than a loaded one?
- Where should you hold your car’s steering wheel, or does it not matter?

Elaborations on last month’s **Thoughts for the Month.**

This is Harald Harb. Can you tell which ski he pressures the most, in which place and how much?

**Answer.** Look how decambered Harald’s right ski is and how straight his left ski is. It appears that his right ski is pressured more toward the tip of the ski then directly under foot. Probably 90/10 weight distribution.

What does this road construction have to do with skiing/riding?

**Answer.** Yes, all roads lead to the slopes, but that was not the idea. When you drive along a construction wall like the one pictured, where do you look? Definitely NOT at the wall because you will drift and hit it. The same is when skiing and riding. When you ski between the trees, or race course gates, you see them, but you do NOT look at them.

Eric Marland is showing his skiing injury. Can you tell what it is?

**Answer.** Shin bang. Ouch!
This and That

TO THE SLOPES, THE ITALIAN STYLE

Did you know that Ferrari came out with their first four-wheel drive car that seats four people? Yes, new 2012 Ferrari F, which stands for Ferrari Four, will hit 62 mph in 3.7 seconds. The whopping great big direct-injection 6.3-litre V12 engine produces 651 bhp at 8000 rpm and will take you quickly to the slopes of your choice. Its estimated city gas mileage is 11 mpg and 18 on the highway, with a sticker price north of $350,000. Definitely for a family in the fast lane. Unfortunately, even though it is such a fast car, you will need to exercise patience. You see, according to Edmunds, they’re already sold out for the first two years. So, don’t hesitate, put down the deposit for the next available model. Surely you will teach a lot of ski/snowboard lessons to pay for this car that will keep you fast on and off the slopes.

While you are waiting for your FF, you can still get to the slopes driving another Italian F car, Fiat 500, but at a little slower pace. Take the whole roof off and enjoy the fresh air.

ARE YOU COUNTING YOUR BLESSINGS?

Don’t you just feel it for these people that lost their homes? And they were the lucky ones. Some lost their lives and others lost their loved ones. On February 29, a deadly tornado went through Midwest and Southeast, killing people and destroying property. Look at some photos.
IF ONLY LEGS COULD CLEAN....

Finally Ted Ligety comes home. I told Ted: “If your legs could clean it up, you would be done by now. Your arms and hands are just not used to working.”

PERHAPS ONE SHOULD THINK TWICE...

Perhaps one should think twice before driving when under the influence of alcohol. One of our ex-instructors, Chelley, has a friend Robyn that got hit by a drunk driver. Her life, and the lives of those around her (like her 6-month old baby Emmeline), changed drastically in a blink of an eye. Can you imagine that Robyn lived even though her car was torn to shreds? Look at the photo taken by her husband Stephen.

NATIONAL DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH

April is the National Distracted Driving Awareness Month. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) calls distracted driving as any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. (Driving under influence of drugs, medication and/or alcohol does not belong to this category and is discussed separately.) Types of distractions include:

- Texting
- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a navigation system
• Watching a video
• Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player
• Listening to loud music

Since texting requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the biggest distraction. Below are facts and statistics given by NHTSA on their webpage: [http://www.nhtsa.gov/](http://www.nhtsa.gov/).

- In 2009, 5,474 people were killed in crashes involving driver distraction, and an estimated 448,000 were injured.
- 16% of fatal crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving.
- 20% of injury crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving.
- In the month of June 2011, more than 196 billion text messages were sent or received in the US, up nearly 50% from June 2009.
- Teen drivers are more likely than other age groups to be involved in a fatal crash where distraction is reported. In 2009, 16% of teen drivers involved in a fatal crash were reported to have been distracted.
- 40% of all American teens say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put people in danger.
- Drivers who use hand-held devices are 4 times more likely to get into crashes serious enough to injure themselves.
- Text messaging creates a crash risk 23 times worse than driving while not distracted.
- Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent at 55 mph of driving the length of an entire football field, blind.
- Headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held use.
- Using a cell phone while driving - whether it's hand-held or hands-free delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent.
- Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37%.

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<td>Can't some people text or talk on the phone and drive safely?</td>
<td>No, they can't. Research indicates that the burden of talking on a cell phone - even if it's hands-free - saps the brain of 39% of the energy it would ordinarily devote to safe driving. Using a cell phone while driving delays your reaction time as much as having a blood alcohol concentration of .08, the legal limit for drunk driving. Drivers who use a hand-held device are 4 times more likely to get into a crash serious enough to cause injury. Texting drivers are 23 times more likely to get involved in a crash.</td>
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<td>Who are the most serious offenders?</td>
<td>Our youngest and most inexperienced drivers are most at risk, with 16% of all distracted driving crashes involving drivers under 20. But they are not alone. At any given moment during daylight hours, over 800,000 vehicles are being driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone.</td>
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<td>Sending or reading one text is pretty quick, unlike a phone conversation - wouldn't that be okay?</td>
<td>Texting is the most alarming distraction because it involves manual, visual, and cognitive distraction simultaneously. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for 4.6 seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field, blindfolded. It's extraordinarily dangerous.</td>
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<td>Is it safe to use a hands-free device to talk on a cell phone while driving?</td>
<td>So far, the research indicates that the cognitive distraction of having a hands-free phone conversation causes drivers to miss the important visual and audio cues that would ordinarily help you avoid a crash.</td>
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TITANIC RELIVED

One hundred years ago, late on the night of April 14, 1912, Titanic collided with an iceberg in the Atlantic Ocean, south of Newfoundland, Canada. The RMS Titanic was a British registered ocean liner built for the transatlantic passenger and mail service between Southampton and New York. On April 10, 1912 Titanic, the largest vessel afloat, sailed its maiden voyage from Southampton with approximately 2,200 passengers and crew. Four days later, Titanic’s Captain Edward Smith received a warning from neighboring ships that the waters ahead contained numerous masses of solid ice and that approaching ships should proceed with caution. The seemingly unsinkable Titanic, however, plowed full speed ahead. Information on the sinking Titanic indicates that the ship approached a massive iceberg, and although efforts were made to steer clear of the large frozen mass, all efforts were to no avail. An SOS was sent out to neighboring ships. The Carpathia picked up the ship’s distress call and radioed back to let the ship’s crew know they were on their way. Unfortunately, it did not get there on time. The Titanic, equipped with only handful of lifeboats, quickly filled with water and this infamous ship sank to her watery grave, taking about 1,500 people with her.

TAX DATE

The IRS always requires that taxes be filed on April 15th unless April 15th is a Saturday, Sunday, or a federal holiday. In 2011, tax day was pushed to April 18th. April 15th, 2011 was a Friday and Emancipation Day was observed in Washington D.C. that Friday. (Emancipation Day is when US celebrates the end of slavery and citizens’ rights.) Since the next two days were Saturday and Sunday, the tax day was pushed to Monday the 18th. So what about this year? Taxes are due on April 17th, 2012. April 15th is a Sunday this year and Emancipation Day will be celebrated the next day, the 16th, so taxes will need to be mailed by the 17th.

Announcements

Sumiko Tanaka brings home SILVER pin. She passed her PSIA-E, Alpine Level II certification exam last month. Sumiko, it is good to see you happy. We are too. Congratulations!

Zach Dease brings home GOLD pin. We at Sugar still consider him as our own. Here is a picture of Zach (on the right) and his coach, Joel Dewey who is an ETS member not far from elevation to Examiner.
Funny Turn

GRANNY IN A GROUP SKI CLASS

One day I had a very frail looking Granny in my beginner group ski class. She was extremely petite and much older than a normal beginning student. She was the most attentive of the guests in the group and tried extra hard to do exactly what I asked of them and tried to imitate just about everything that I was doing. At one point I asked her why she was taking the class, thinking she might say – better late than ever. Instead she told me that all her grandkids skied and she didn’t want to just sit in the lodge all day long. She wanted to be with them on the slopes sharing life. Way to go, Granny!

By Witold Kosmala

YOU KNOW YOU’RE A SKI OR BOARD INSTRUCTOR WHEN...

• You’re almost depressed when school lets out for the year cuz you know that you still have 6 months until the mountain opens.
• "Pizza" and "French Fry" become verbs.
• You are the shortest of your snowschool and they still give you the 6’ 300lb man.

Mike Hicks, thank you for amusing us with these statements. We can all relate to them. Mike was a ski instructor at Whitetail Resort, PA now for 20 years and going strong. He is an awesome skier and a wonderful person. Mike is a PSIA Alpine, Level III certified trainer for his ski school.

Pet of the Month

Bill Peterson sent me this photo last year. Now I have a great reason to share it with the rest of our readers. This baby deer is probably everyone’s Pet of the Month.