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Official Newsletter of the Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors
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In this issue

Introducing the Callaghan Valley
Lessons learned from students
Safety tips
Tele tales

Letter from the Editor

Turning the tables – the teacher becomes the learner

It was a moment of serendipity this month when I opened my inbox, and found two articles from CANSI instructors detailing experiences where they learned as much, or perhaps more, during the lesson than their clients did.

Don't misunderstand – I'm not suggesting I was happy that they were poor instructors. In fact, I believe quite the opposite. The articles from Henry Madsen and Peter Grey are great illustrations of the very best we can offer as instructors.

Their ability to keep an open mind, adapt to the situation, and keep the clients' needs and goals first and foremost are some of the traits that I believe make great instructors. There is a time and a place for manuals and standardized formats. They provide the essential core or base from which an instructor can draw. But sometimes, whether a class is successful is rooted in the instructor's willingness to drop those lessons, think on his/her feet, and just roll with it.

These stories typify times when drills, manuals, and pedagogy have to take a back seat, and the emphasis put on ensuring the client simply experiences the sheer joy of being outside and standing on skis. By doing so, Henry and Peter were able to participate in experiences that sound like they were as energizing for them as for the students.

Learning from our students doesn't have to be as dramatic as these examples. I'm sure I'm not alone in saying that occasionally a student describes a drill or movement in a better way than I had ever managed before, and I have been happy to use that



Sherryl is looking forward to summer and warm sun

description on the next group of students. As they say in my pottery studio, the best ideas are stolen ones, and I'm not too proud to steal.

The key is in being open to the lesson. For a future issue, I'd like to have some stories not about successes, but about failures, or near failures, and what you learned from them.

So, kudos to Henry and Peter for sharing their stories, and I hope they resonate with you the way they did for me.

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Telemark skier longs to free her heels on Friday

by Kim Rapati

It's Monday, but I can almost taste it. The memory from just three days ago lingers, smiling and giggling at me from around the fuzzy bits of my mind. I can't help but smile and giggle too...

This year, I have suddenly and happily been welcomed into a tiny, old school, goodtime family; the telemark ski community of Thunder Bay. Smack in the middle of the school year, the winter in Thunder Bay can sometimes drag on and induce a bit of eat-sleep-school-essay-test depression.

This year, that all changed when I discovered a hidden gem within Lakehead University: The Northshore Telemark Ski School (NTSS). This is my new reason to explore the slopes; this is why I have become addicted to Friday, the night I can let it all

go. I am far away from any stress or boredom out there, with my heels flying free, throwing down a bouncing rhythm all it's own on the mountain slope

My initiation into the tele community was like lightning – I instantly caught the bug! I felt like a completely new skier in a completely new place. I didn't think there was much to it, but once I got the hang of tele, I realized the magic.

Most of the time, on my regular alpine locked-heel-loafers, I slip into a zone all by myself; I ski on the mountain and that is pretty much it. But, with my

toes strapped in my teles, suddenly a new world is illuminated!

First, the other tele-skiers on the hill are immediately alerted to my presence by their 'tele-buddy-sense' and migrate towards me. Now we become instant comrades, joke about the face plant I just joyously experienced, and chat about some



Kim, Hollis, Kyle and Andrew hamming it up at Sondre Norheim night

mutual tele friend we inadvertently share.

And then I ski.

But I don't just ski the mountain – I ski *with* the mountain, painting my own rhythmic tune into the line I carve. Once at the bottom, I crave that fluid motion, the smooth feeling of a good hard tele, and I can hardly wait to get up the lift. Seriously, it is too much fun. It is like skipping compared to walking – the feeling instantly conjures up a smile and a bubbly, happy feeling from nowhere.

The Northshore Telemark Ski School (NTSS) is

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the culprit of my Friday-night addiction. I don't know how it did it, but NTSS and telemark skiing has revitalized my love for downhill snow sports at a time when I felt my passion had become completely stagnant.

Yes it's true, NTSS featuring Rich, Pete Carson and a whole assemblage of blurry hula-skirted free heelers, are the ones who first brought me over to experience the original and true downhill skiing last year on a magical starry night.

The greatest joy I can get is from passing on my newfound skill to some unknowing soul who may be saved like I was. And now that I'm a part of it, I am pretty much in awe of how rad NTSS really is.

Every Friday night, the Northshore Telemark Ski School's seven instructors (four who are certified – thanks Glenn and Paul!), along with a whole collection of excited 'tele newbies', pile into a couple of cars and head out to ski the night away at Loch Lomond. NTSS is the only club of its kind that I know of in Canada!

We provide memberships for \$5, rentals for \$5, a



Kim shows off her free heel ripping style

discount on lift tickets and FREE lessons every Friday night over at the greatest teaching hill in Thunder Bay. That is one insane deal. The only other way to do it (say if NTSS was not in existence in some hideous parallel universe) would be to rent them for \$18 from the Outdoor Recreation Depot, or purchase a pair online and then teach yourself.

This is a difficult, costly, inconvenient, and most likely unsuccessful alternative to choose. There would probably be a much tinier group, if not an altogether extinction of tele-skiers in Thunder Bay. For a sport where the equipment is nearly un-rentable and instruction is difficult to drum up, I think it is a true gem and a great asset to the community.

Not to mention the crazy theme nights that makes the telemarkers in Thunder Bay so well

known. Feel free to come out to Loch Lomond any time next season and indulge in a wonderfully addictive Friday night with a crowd of free-heels and good vibes.

I ski with the mountain, painting my own rhythmic tune into the line I carve. Once at the bottom, I crave that fluid motion, the smooth feeling of a good hard tele...

The high turn-over rate of university students, which is usually disastrous for clubs and organizations, is actually pretty cool for NTSS. Since tele is easy to pick up, and the tele family is such a tight, supportive network, it actually means that NTSS works quite like a little tele factory; sucking in the newbies and spitting them out all over the country, injected with the love and passion of tele-skiing already.

I feel sometimes like NTSS is the mother ship for young new telemark babies, raising them to love the sport and sending them off into the world to further learn and grow. And so, just like you can probably find a Lakeheader in a tree planting crowd, you will most likely find an NTSS alumni among any group of tele-skiers ripping down a mountainside.

Free your heel, free your mind my friends!

- Kim Rapati NTSS Instructor (waiting impatiently for the next snowy Friday night...)

Please join the Northshore Telemark Ski School on Facebook for more info or email krapati@lakeheadu.ca!



Instructor profiles

This issue, the entire Northshore Telemark Ski School Instructor Team 2008 from Thunder Bay, Ontario is featured, because they were brave enough to send in the goods - pics and print and irreverence!

Andrew “El Capitano” Mason: Telemark Level 1



Home Ski Slope: Blue Mountain originally, but Loch Lomond will forever hold my heart.

Introduced to Tele: February 2004 – I had the honour of being taught by Shea Nemham.

Favourite Theme Night: ‘The Bathing Suit Run’ in the winter of 2004.

Favourite Slope: Sparsely treed and lots of fluff.

Equipment: K2, World Piste with G3 Target bindings and I rock the Scarpa T1.

Famous Hillside Quote: “You may recognize me from such films as ‘The Rise and Fall of the Anti-Telemark Ski Club’.”

Fun Facts: Andrew also shares his love of sliding patrolling the slopes at Loch and coaching young XC skiers.

Peter “Power Cat” Carson: Telemark Level 1



Home Ski Slope: I grew up at Mount Washington Ski Resort.

Introduced to Tele: December 2005

Favourite Theme Night: ‘Sondre Norheim Night’ is by far the best night – I can truly be myself.

Favourite Slope: Blackcomb Back Glacier

Equipment: 180cm long Karhu Bulldogs

Famous Hillside Quote: I let my skies speak for me.

Fun Facts: Pete likes to rock it long and hard on teleskis!! That’s important.

Paul “Classy Carvin” Cooper: Telemark Level 1

Home Ski Slope: Mansfield in Southern Ontario.

Introduced to Tele: Winter of 2005.

Favourite Theme Night: I LOVE ‘Neon Night’.

Favourite Slope: Whistler, B.C., the Flute Bowl to be specific.

Equipment: Bandit X.

Famous Hillside Quote: “ALLLL-Right!”

Fun Facts: Paul graduated from Lakehead ages ago, but still hangs around – just for NTSS! Thanks Paul.



Kim “Real Rippin” Rapati: Telemark Level 1



Home Ski Slope: Talisman in Southern Ontario

Introduced to Tele: Hawaiian Hula night in 2007 at Loch Lomond, Thunder Bay

Favourite Theme Night: Ninja Turtle night! Cowabungaaa

Favourite Slope: At Loch Lomond – The Giant is always good for a thrill.

Equipment: NTSS rentals... hopefully that will soon change.

Famous Hillside Quote: “Eat it, Alpine!”

Fun Facts: Kim coaches alpine racing as well and will be making up the Telemark Instructor team next year along with Josh and Krista!

Josh “Juicy Jazz” Roy

Home Ski Slope: Calabogie Peaks in Southern Ontario.

Introduced to Tele: Winter 2006

Favourite Theme Night: “the Toga Party” which hasn’t actually run, next year

Favourite Slope: North Face, Mount Everest

Equipment: Head Fiber XT 100 – sweet NTSS rentals, never done me wrong, always treat me fine. Boot-wise, Scarpa T2.

Famous Hillside Quote: “Can’t ski standing still.”

Fun Facts: Josh is also known as NTSS’s future Head Honcho! Woooo!



Krista “Can’t Stop” Patterson

Home Ski Slope: Calabogie Peaks in Southern Ontario.

Introduced to Tele: Winter 2006

Favourite Theme Night: I always rock out on “Tight and Bright”

Favourite Slope: I was loving Lutsen runs this season!

Equipment: Riding good old rentals.

Famous Hillside Quote: “Screw safety – that’s my motto.”

Fun Facts: Krista has been alpine racing since she could walk and she will also continue stellar telemark instruction with NTSS next year!

Return of the Winter Hunter

by Karen Messenger

In the summer of 2006, I ventured off to New Zealand to teach skiing at the Snow Farm. I originally planned to stay one ski season. Two ski seasons and one cycling trip later (a year and a half), I decided it was time to return to Canada last November.

Upon arriving in Vancouver, I was reunited with Sarah, an old canoe tripping buddy. It is necessary to note at this point that the peanut butter is not a popular item in NZ, and the ultimate combination of peanut butter and chocolate is absolutely unheard of.

Sarah asked me if I knew what it was that makes a Canadian a Canadian. "Yes," I replied. "Yes, I do."

At least I felt I did. And to me, feeling is knowing. After catching up on some missed sleep from the flight, I decided to take a wee walk about. And then it hit me - I needed to do something ritualistic to commemorate my return to Canada, the motherland. Some kind of ceremony.

So, I frolicked in the freshly fallen leaves along the way to the nearest PetroCanada station and bought a king sized package of Hershey Peanut Butter Cups. I headed past the Molson Brewery in the direction of what I thought was Stanely Park, in search of the perfect place to indulge in what I now know to be a Canadian delicacy. I found the spot down by the water, situated directly across the bay from a proudly flying Canadian flag.

As I bit into the first cup, the song, "My country is my cathedral, the northern sky my home, they all call it Canada, but I call it home," came into my head. Thank you Girl Guides.

After finishing the cup and the moment, I proceeded along the beach (and yes, it was a procession in my mind). I came upon a line of Canada Geese, also moving in a procession, slowly making their way up the beach. I sat on a piece of driftwood beside the

enormous Inukshuk and indulged in the second cup, ever as glorious as the first.

I looked up to see a float plane flying in front of the snow covered mountains. Next, I dipped my hand in the water. It was freaking cold. This was the final confirmation that I was, indeed, back in Canada.



Another float plane cruised by. A dog in a doggy sweater. People wearing toques, not beanies. Maple leaves on the ground. Cars driving on the right side of the road. Yes. This is home. Toonies and loonies. Hockey. Dogs that understand bilingual commands. Darkness that falls at 4:30 on a November afternoon (although there didn't seem to be much contrast between high noon and dusk in Vancouver). Crisp air. Tim Horton's. CBC. Maple syrup. Friends and family.

When Sarah greeted me with a hug at her door at 6:30 that Wednesday morning, tears came to my eye. People I love. My roots. And even being able to use the word "root" without meaning something quite different than the underground part of a tree. I will continue to travel, but I love Canada and will always call it my home. Then it was onto the third cup and the walk back.

Karen was inspired to follow the winter, so she took up residence in Canmore, Alberta and instructs for Trailsports at the Canmore Nordic Centre.

The instructor also learns when teaching the disabled

by Henry Madsen

When an opportunity arose to introduce a number of disabled children and adults to the world of cross country skiing, my initial reaction was to focus on the obstacles. After all, the students included blind adults, paraplegics, a Down's syndrome teen and a number of teens with attention deficit disorder (ADD), (severe ADD).

But I took on the task, and recruited a number of colleagues who could help with the various challenges. The program at Goldbar Park in Edmonton this March was enormously successful, and we learned more than the students during the program. A few of the more important lessons are described below.

For our ADD students, the simple solution was activity. There was no need to explain exercises or refine technique. In fact, the more the instructor spoke, the less the students listened. It quickly became apparent that games and challenges were going to be much more successful than drills or skill analysis.

Games such as Tag, Soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, and Follow the Leader, were interspersed with safe downhill on two skis, one ski and with small jumps. We worked on jumping over lines of food coloring on the snow, and other challenges to build balance and confidence. Many



One of Henry's students tries out the sit ski

of the activities were made up on the spot!

It is worth remembering that activity based learning is not a strategy unique to ADD students. As instructors we should always focus more on activity than on dialogue. The reinforcement of this simple principle, speak less, do more, benefits all our programs and our students.

For our blind skier, one instructor and one volunteer worked together. At one point, we all skied "blind." The awareness of body position, weight shift and core stability

are immediately apparent when sight is restricted. The importance of reading the trail for dips (where your kick wax is less likely to engage) or for slight turns becomes even more obvious when you cannot see the trail or feature.

The slight opening of the hip to enhance weight transfer becomes more apparent when you rely on kinesthetic awareness. Sighted skiers can enhance their technique and skill by "skiing blind" as an exercise. Be aware of trees and hills and other skiers of course.

Teaching our paraplegics gave all of the instructors an appreciation for the upper body strength, dedication and stamina of sit-skiers. If instructors have the opportunity, they should try to ski on a sledge, where double poling is the only option. You will quickly reinforce the difference between engaging your abdominals versus your arms. And an added bonus is the laughter that you are sure to experience, also a great abdominal workout!

Our instructors learned a lot, but the most important lesson was the reinforcement that disabled children and adults are better identified as children and adults with a disability. On the snow, we were all enjoying the activities and learning from each other.

Disabled student gives instructor best ski lesson ever

by Peter Grey

This is a story of one of the most rewarding lessons of my teaching career, the outcome not one of great strides in developing technique but of the pure joy of being on skis.

Some years ago, I spent my winters as a ski bum at our local ski resort, Searchmont. Amongst many different duties there, I was the Nordic Director and as such was responsible for any school groups who were interested in cross country skiing.

One fine winter morning I had a class of one. Easy I thought, take the kid out, show him some stuff and go skiing. Turns out the young fellow was physically disabled and was very limited in his movements. As we got our gear on, I was wondering what to do with him.

Regardless of his limitations, he was very keen to get out and enjoy his time. I can not remember what the cause of his disability was but his body was quite rigid and his arms would not straighten. This all together limited each stride he could take to about 6 inches at a time.

The area I used to teach was all the way across the resort base and it took us almost an hour to get there, but it was a glorious March day and weather was not a concern.

Because of his limitations, I determined that there was nothing I could show him about moving on cross-country skis, but at the end of my practice track was a small hill, enough to glide about 25 to 30 feet off of once you got going. I asked if he wanted to try and go down that hill. His eyes lit up and the challenge was on. That tiny hill became our Everest for the day.

One unique characteristic with new skiers, or those that have a fear of moving on skis, is that they tend to throw their weight back to compensate for the forward movement of the skis. This young man was no different and as soon as the skis began to

move he would throw himself back and land hard on his ass.

But he kept getting up.

I used all my teaching experience to get him to keep his weight forward and balance as the skis began to move. Up and down the hill we went. I was picking him up over and over, and before long, I was sweating and down to a t-shirt in the warm March sun. Hours went by and then it began to happen - first just 5 feet before he fell, then 10 then 20, and we were almost there.

It was a lot of work for both of us but we were having a ball. He was so going to do this and he just kept going, laughing all the way.

Then it happened. I pumped him up and said, "Okay, this is it, you are going all the way. I am going to shout at you all the way down so you stay forward on those skis."

Off he went, it was all in slow motion, as he picked up speed I yelled "stay forward, hands forward" over and over, the skis sung as he swept down the hill and as he came to a stop he was still standing.

We both looked at each other and started yelling and screaming and jumping up and down, I ran towards him and gave him a high five and knocked him right on his ass!!

We laughed even harder as I picked him up. He did it, and he was so excited and could not wait to tell everyone what he had accomplished. An hour later, we were back at the lodge, tired, wet, hungry and happy. Some time later, he wrote me a letter telling me what a wonderful time he had.

I have taught a lot of people how to ski, but that day was unforgettable and is still the best ski lesson I ever had. Days like that remind me why I teach.



Peter Grey takes a break to enjoys some hot liquids in the lodge

Peter is the North Eastern Ontario Representative for CANSL. He is a level III instructor currently working out of Stokely Creek Lodge, Goulais River, Ontario.

Let's Go 'Hopping' with Jack Sasseville

by Michael Lalonde

Imagine the sight of a group of CANSI instructors hopping on skis just for fun!

This is exactly what we did at the CANSI 2008 National Seminar. Jack Sasseville, a Level V X-C coach, delivered a session on the evolution on skating. The on-snow session consisted of teaching progressions of the double poling 'broad jump' and the 'hop' skate in one-skate and the two skate. What follows is information obtained from Jack's presentation and a briefing from Dave McMahon, a former biathlete and cross-country skier and film producer.

The double poling broad jump and hop skate dates back to between 1988 and 1991 and nothing has changed in elite racing since then. The technique is only now reaching the masses and many coaches because of television coverage of sprint events.

Teaching the aggressive broad jump and the

'hop' skate is probably best left to intermediate and advanced skiers and children at the 'Learning to Train' stage (9-12 yrs old) and Training to Train (11-16 yrs old) of the LTAD model, as long as the skier is proficient in the fundamental movement skills (including jumping) and the core skiing skills.

In Jack's session, we experimented with offset, rotating much less at the hips and the torso. Jack introduced the image of 'saddle' legs in free skating and offset. And, although flexing at the ankles and knees and compressing at the torso is not new, it was a common theme that Jack emphasized in double poling and for all of the skating manoeuvres. Many of Jack's ideas of 'saddle legs', ensuring that the skis are moving to the side before touching the snow, hips forward and maintaining a forward

orientation of the torso and hips, are beneficial to skiers of all abilities.

Double Poling:

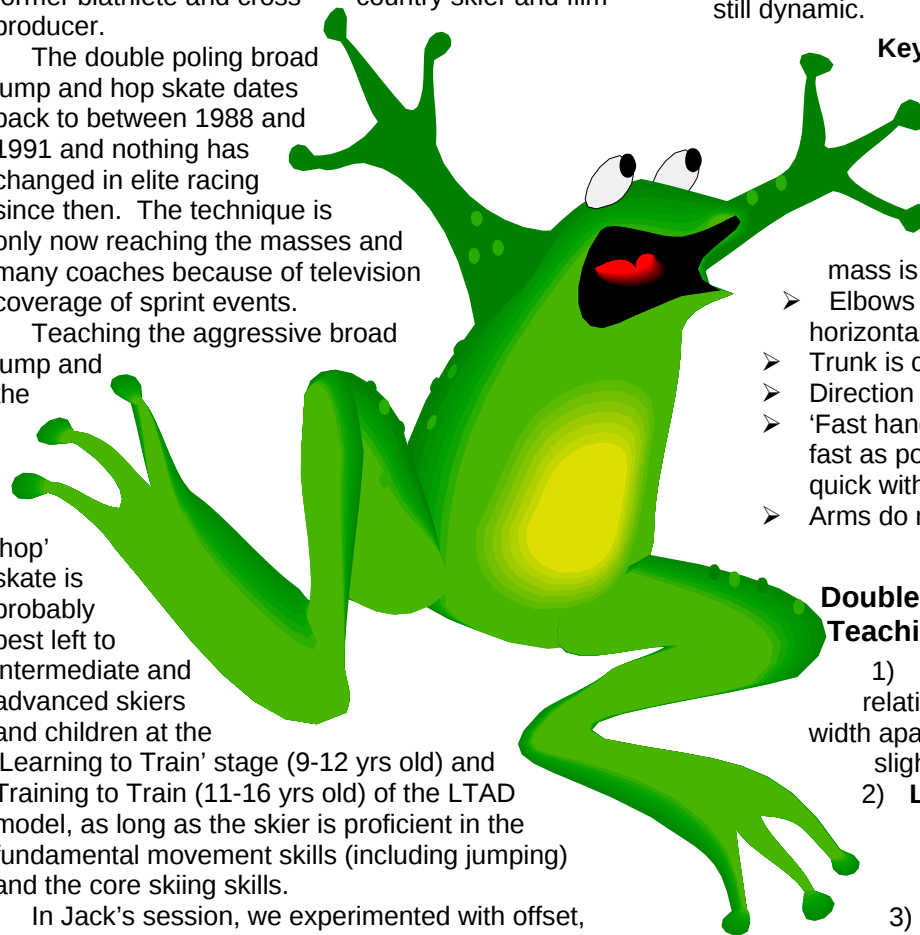
Double poling in sprint events is very aggressive and powerful, resembling a broad jump motion. The tempo is higher with a shorter push phase and a longer rest phase to help the skier recover more quickly. In sprint races, it is common to see skiers becoming airborne as their body moves forward. In distance races, double poling is less aggressive but still dynamic.

Key Technical Points:

- Knees and ankles are flexed as the body moves forward
- Hips are kept forward
- 'High Hands' because the trunk is low and centre of mass is lower
- Elbows flared 30 degrees from the horizontal
- Trunk is compressed
- Direction of the PULL is down
- 'Fast hands' - forearms are straightened as fast as possible (the best skiers are very quick with their hands)
- Arms do not extend past the hips

Double Poling (Broad Jump) Teaching Progressions:

- 1) **High Hands** - Bring your hands relatively close to your head, shoulder width apart and elbows bent 90 degrees and slightly flared.
- 2) **Lock and Load** - Lock the elbows, crunch with the abdominals, while delaying the arm motion because the trunk leads.
- 3) **Up and Over** - Arms and hips move forward, knees and ankles are flexed and 100% of body weight is placed on the poles.
- 4) **Up and Over and go for Gold** - While compressing with the torso the hips go slightly downward. Forearms extend very quickly and go only as far as the hips. Knees and ankles will bend.



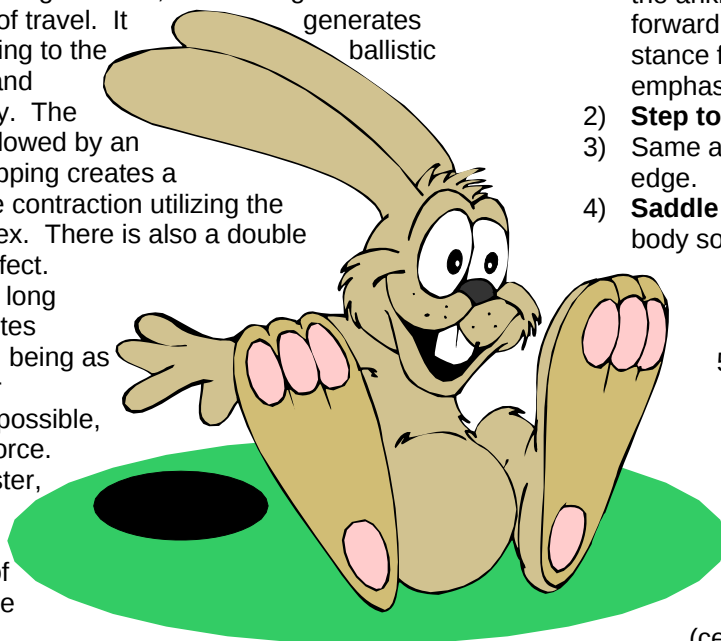
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Hop Skate:

Racers are using the dynamic unweighting ('hop') in two-skate for sprint events to longer races and hopping in one-skate for mostly sprint events. 'Hop' skating is thought to be faster because the ski is initially placed straight ahead, maximizing movement in the direction of travel. It generates more power owing to the ballistic ricochet effect and muscle elasticity. The quick flexion followed by an extension in hopping creates a stronger muscle contraction utilizing the plyometrics reflex. There is also a double push sculling effect.

When skiing long distances, athletes should focus on being as dynamic in their movements as possible, but apply less force. When skiing faster, the force is applied over a shorter period of time to maximize the rest period.



Skating Technical Points:

- Keep the ski moving when it contacts the snow.
- Land on the outside edge of the ski, then roll to a flat ski.
- Body weight is on the back of the ball of the foot.
- Transfer body weight laterally.
- Ski on one ski at a time!
- Leg push is in the direction of the ski.
- Round the shoulders.
- Ankle flexion is very pronounced – stance is low.
- Norwegians use the term 'sharp knees' to emphasize keeping the body in a forward body position (created by flexing the ankles and the knees).
- Very little turning or twisting of the hips and torso.
- Don't step too far forward - keep the centre of the hips forward of the ankles.
- Hip is turned slightly to balance on the glide ski with no twisting at the shoulders.

One-Skate Teaching Progressions:

Without Poles

- 1) **Rock and Roll** - Use flat terrain - place the skis in a 'V' position. With the weight over the back end of the ball of the foot, squat by bending at the knees followed by bending at the ankles. The skier should start moving forward! Have him/her ski maintaining this stance for ten strides. Stop and repeat – emphasize skiing with 'sharp knees'
- 2) **Step to the 'centreline'**
- 3) Same as #2 but ski lands on the outside edge.
- 4) **Saddle Feet** - Foot lands underneath the body so that the knee is over the foot. The ski is moving to the side as it lands on the snow, followed by a lateral leg push.
- 5) **Get Hip** - free skate on a flat ski and open the hip slightly to face the glide ski – on way back glide as long as possible.
- 6) Repeat #5 but body weight is distributed over the length of the foot. Push to the side.
- 7) While free skating, hold a pole vertically over both centres (centre of the chest and the belly button).
- 8) **Follow feet** – look at an object in the distance and think of a pendulum motion where each foot follows the other.
- 9) **Military salute** – hips come forward with arms.
- 10) Simulate the arm motion of one-skate without poles.

With Poles

- 11) On flat terrain, double pole using a continuous motion of the upper body and arms.
- 12) Keep skis parallel with body weight on one ski - double pole in a balanced position.
- 13) Same as above but double pole 3 consecutive times on each ski. Ensure weight is over ankle to mid-foot and the knee is in alignment with the ski.
- 14) Do normal one-skate with hip committed over each ski.

One more little hop to page 12

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Hop Skating

- 15) As the hip and arms move forward, unweight the ski momentarily using a quick motion.
- 16) Same as above but when stepping forward orient the ski parallel to the direction of travel. Practice on both sides.
- 17) Practice hopping while performing the one-skate.

Offset:

The general skating technical points in the preceding section apply to the offset manoeuvre. To avoid unnecessary fatigue it is important to use the joints from larger to smaller, to use a quicker tempo and to always keep the body moving forward. The centre of hips are always forward of the ankles, even when the skier steps ahead. Body weight is transferred using a lateral movement of the body. The recovery ski lands close to the body centreline and flat to the snow to maximize glide - landing on the inside edge creates more friction and a higher pressure, therefore diminishing glide. Both legs push equally and the upper body compresses slightly but does not twist. At the end of the leg push there should be a straight line from the ankles to the shoulders.

Offset (no rotation) Teaching Progressions:

Without Poles

- 1) Hips forward of feet.
- 2) Place ski flat on the snow.

With Poles

- 3) On flat terrain, double pole using a continuous motion of the upper body and arms. Crunch the torso and delay using the arms.
- 4) Same as above but the hands finish extending at the hips.
- 5) Hold pole in front of body and keep the centre of the chest and the belly button in a vertical alignment.
- 6) Same as above but use a quicker tempo.
- 7) Same as above but bring the lead hand close to the head to help minimize twisting of the torso.

Conclusion

While watching the Canmore World Cup races I observed what we practiced at the National Seminar. In the men's classic sprints most of the competitors in the final heat did not have kick wax and relied solely on double poling to climb the steep hills. The lone diagonal strider, while keeping up on the climbs, was left behind on the descent to the finish. In the men's skate sprints, the first place skier was hopping in one-skate on all of the ascents.

New venue for National Seminar

The next national seminar will be hosted in the western regions, and attendees will get a chance to check out the new Whistler Olympic Park, locally known as Callaghan Valley. This is the 2010 venue for cross-country, biathlon and ski jumping. (And Sherryl really, really thinks it's fantastic!!)

When: December 4 to 8, 2008

Telemark: December 4 – 5: Whistler Mountain

Tech meeting and AGM: December 6: - Whistler, BC

Cross-country: - December 7-8: Whistler Olympic Park, Callaghan Valley

Those who are interested in attending and/or sharing accommodation may contact Henry Madsen info@mountain.cansi.ca or Mark Simpson at marks@telus.net

For more information, see: <http://www.cansi.ca/en/news/2008/03/000225.php>

Ask A Pro:

Given the low injury rate for cross-country, safety for your students and other users of the ski facility is one of those things we probably get complacent about. This month, Jim Brohman offers some observations and suggestions regarding on-snow safety. He's curious to hear what is happening at other clubs, so feel free to send in your feedback!

Jim: I am a member of the Edmonton Nordic Ski Club (ENSC) and a level II cross-country instructor. Our club skis on city land and have approximately 10 kilometres of lit trails in an undulating river valley.

Our adult lessons are primarily held in the evenings so lighting is often poor and we share the trail system with many ENSC racers and recreational skiers. As a result, the trails can be very busy (and dangerous) if the folks taking the cross-country ski lessons are not aware of the potential hazards.

We are in the process of improving skier safety in our club and the following is a list of current safety practices I follow to ensure skier safety in my classes. A list of our additional proposed safety initiatives follows.

Current:

- 1) carefully select the terrain so that the skiers are challenged during the lesson but not put at risk; also, the lower the temperature the closer we stay to the shelter. Below -20 degrees C is the cut-off.
- 2) instruct students not to stand on the track during the lesson but off to the side and watch for approaching skiers
- 3) I wear a flashing bicycle light on my pack to warn the ENSC racers that they are approaching a ski lesson group
- 4) the lesson set will include a session on dressing for extreme cold
- 5) the pace of the lesson takes into consideration the fitness level of the slowest skier so as not to be too taxing (the faster skiers simply ski extra loops during the lesson)

Proposed:

- 1) have students complete a pre lesson medical information form
- 2) in case of an injury, have students complete an Injury Report form
- 3) ensure all instructors have up-to-date CPR and First Aid training
- 4) have instructors indicate on a white board in the pavilion where their lesson will take place for the benefit of any stragglers
- 5) equip all the instructors with cell phones so they can communicate with each other during the lesson in case of an injury to a student to coordinate an evacuation
- 6) have instructors practice student assessment and evacuation procedures in case of an accident



Jim takes a breather in the trees – and is no doubt hoping for more snow – look at that underbrush poking through! Skiers in Edmonton have to come to Callaghan and see what lots of snow looks like!

CANSI National is on the move

The national CANSI office is looking for a new home and has issued a request for proposal (RFP) for an organization or individual to provide administrative support and function as our national office.

If you know anyone who might be interested in taking on this role, please feel free to pass on the RFP information, which is set out in more detail at: <http://www.cansi.ca/en/>.

CANSI introduces a new certification

by Guy Lavoie

3, 2, 1 – Skier in the course!

It's a start for the new telemark *Coach Entry Level – Trained* certification. Based on the CSCF's Entry level, this new certification will give a solid base and a legal recognition to the coaches working to develop our athletes in this discipline which, let's not forget, presents its own FIS sanctioned World Cup.

The pilot course was held at Ski Mont Blanc from March 28 to 30, 2008 and led by Sébastien Michel, coach of the Canadian Para-Alpine Ski Team. The

participants, from such backgrounds as telemark racing, alpine coaching and telemark instruction formed an odd, but extremely experienced and determined group. Even our trainer had never skied on telemark gear before. The group created exceptional synergy resulting in a beautiful and rewarding adventure!

After three days of hard work on and off snow, many discussions between the participants, lots of laughter and friendship, the verdict was unanimous: this course is a success. All the participants showed improvement in their skiing abilities and a notable increase of knowledge in the area of athlete

development. Even our trainer, Sébastien Michel, looked like a pro on teles after only a few runs.

Many of the participants were even sad that it was over. But it's only a matter of time until they meet again, since the second part, looking at jumps and skating techniques, which will give the *Coach*

Entry Level – Certified status is already in the works.

This first certification course was the result of the hard work of Norman Thibault from CANSI. Sébastien Rojo from Telemark Canada, Annie Laurendeau and Stéphane Perreault from Telemark Quebec were the first to review the project and

contributed their comments and suggestions. Peter Goodman and Pierre Ruel from the CSCF also provided generous assistance to Norman in the initial development of this program.

Discussions are already underway to hold a course in Ontario and Alberta next season. So check the course calendar on CANSI's web site.

Guy Lavoie is a level II Telemark Instructor and was the Coach Entry Level course administrator



In standard order : Jean-François Lanoue, Stéphane Perreault, René-Luc Morin, Maurice Mondoux, Sébastien Rojo, Sébastien Michel, Marc-André Houde, Glenn Lee, Norman Thibault, Victoria Fletcher, Patrick Gauthier.

Got something to say?

Deadlines for next year's XCitation are:

Issue	Deadline:
Fall	Oct 24, 2008
Christmas	Dec 15, 2008

Issue:	Deadline:
Winter	Jan 24, 2009
Spring	Mar15, 2009

Quebec program turns youths onto tele

One of the big challenges facing the sport of telemark skiing is how to get young people involved. It took some scrounging, ingenuity, and many glasses of wine, and a lot of determination, but Norman Thibault, a Telemark Level III instructor from CANSI Quebec found a way to do it. Norman and two others formed a non-profit organization called "Telemark Laurentides" as member of Telemark Quebec. Read more about how Norm has managed to carve out a growing, successful telemark program at <http://www.cansi.ca/en/news/2008/04/000228.php>



Norman and one of his young converts to tele! With boots in all those colours, who could resist? Who knew tele was so stylin'?

Tales of Telemark Patrolling: from student of necessity to instructor

by Wrae Hill

I began telemark skiing back in 1986 out of necessity. I was preparing for a summer ski ascent of Huayna Potosi (6,090m) in Bolivia, after completing a kinesiology degree. Back then, the gear was basic (lace up Merrell boots and Karhu XCD-GTs), and metal edges were the latest thing! The priests in LaPaz would have approved of my 'prostrated' old school stance.

Twenty years later, the equipment has progressed and so has my enjoyment of telemark skiing and patrolling/instructing at Big White, in the Monashee mountains of B.C. I confess that a few years ago I was less than stylish on telemark skis – over 200 pounds, all grunt and no technique.

I was looking for telemark instruction and could not find any local instructors. I decided to take a CANSI level I course to learn some basics and unlearn some bad habits. That short course at Red Mountain, (with Mark Simpson and eight great free

heelers) along with lots of mileage since has transformed my skiing enjoyment and has improved my effectiveness as a patroller/instructor. The teaching techniques and bag of tricks learned in that course have come in handy many times.

Patroller Instruction

Ski patrol instruction involves accident site management, extrication, toboggan handling and skiing in challenging terrain and manky snow and weather conditions under heavy loads. Effective, all weather patrolling requires grunt and technique. I have applied many of the adult learning principles from CANSI in my ski patrol training of patrollers who use boards, skis, all terrain and telemark gear. All of the CANSI basics are important in toboggan handling in steep, cruddy and icy conditions.

Despite stringent proactive avalanche control, there are inherent risks in our sport. On the morning

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of January 6, 2008, grunt and technique were both put to the test when I heard “Code A” on my patrol radio. A skier jumping into Parachute Bowl had triggered a huge slab which propagated to ground, letting loose a 1 metre deep, class 3.5 avalanche at Big White.

I was nearby, instructing a group of eight ski patrollers. Although “Avalanche rubble 201” was not a topic of that intro CANSI course, the “Crud Christie” helped me get through the 1 metre slab and furniture sized rubble to begin the hasty search. Sadly, one skier (an employee) lost his life in the avalanche.

Tele-ski instruction for fun

Big White’s snow sports school does not offer telemark lessons but Silver Star has a great telemark program. Therefore, I offer small group telemark clinics to mountain staff and ski patrollers.

My most popular telemark clinic is a half day carving/crud camp I call “Skidz are for Kidz.” Pictured below are my kids, Kylie and Alex. Alex began telemarking at age 7 and is now 11 and skiing very well including back country.

Cheers to all CANSI Instructors out there!

Wrae is a CANSI – telemark level 1 and Canadian Ski Patrol Instructor in Big White, B.C.



Wrae “Teledaddy” Hill and his son, “Teleboy” Alex

Get Energized!

Sundae smoothie

This smoothie tastes like a summertime treat! It has everything – fruit, dairy, protein, and of course, chocolate, which in my opinion is a separate, distinct, and necessary food group. Throw the ingredients into the blender, whip it up, grab a bagel and go!

- 1 cup chocolate milk
- 1 Bananabl
- 1 tbl spoon peanut butter (optional)
- 6 ice cubes

Makes two servings



A pre-level course could invigorate you and your business!

By Andrew Sibbald

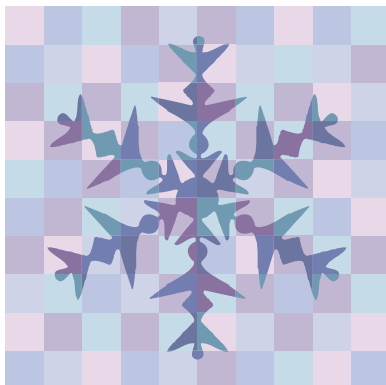
Looking to brighten your winter, clean out the cobwebs and indulge yourself in tweaking your ski skills? CANSI has a whole weekend planned for you!

Attending the pre-level II/III course this past February at Highlands Nordic was a remarkable experience. We spent two days working at our own pace and under the tutelage of a couple of Canada's best instructors.

The pre-level course gave me confidence and encouraged me to look at things differently...

Classic, skating and downhill techniques were covered both days. We were brought up to date on the newest innovations and expectations, with enough time to explore, apply and discuss them in depth.

At a pre-level course, you will likely share the session with others working on their level certification course. They get to explore different teaching styles and ideas, and you get to try to mess them up while they're at it! Of course, some of us managed to do that unintentionally like I did with offset... but they all did a great job picking up the faults.



It was also fascinating to see our fellow instructors who had devoted months perfecting their techniques since their pre-level course. Some were graceful, others efficient, and others so powerful. It was an education just seeing the skills applied by different personality and body type.

For me, this course gave me more than better skills; it gave me incentive to bring Nordic skiing to a higher level in my life and business. That may seem like a strange statement, here is some background.

When my parents bravely transformed our seasonal resort into a year-round business in 1977 (the first in Ontario without a ski hill), we were

blessed to open with the cross-country ski boom. We had five "traditional Ontario" winters in a row. Our winter weekends were full with skiers of all ages - doing a sport few had heard of before. There was a lot of excitement; imagine, the ski report was a highlight of the evening newscast!

As skating was only done on a rink, walking was not fashionable and snowshoes were too clunky to interest us in the low-snow southern part of the province, our trails had only to deal with what is now called classic skiing. Our Ontario-designed and -manufactured grooming equipment did the job well. It could be pulled behind a small snowmobile, the trails looked great, and the process was fast - once or twice around the trails and you were done.

Thirty years into the winter business things have changed. Those trails now need to accommodate classic and skate skiing, walking, snowshoeing and group activities. The work takes longer, requires heavier (imported) equipment, is challenged by variable weather, all with fewer people wanting to be outside and active. And the media ... well... they seem to have lost sight of the benefits of snow and sub-zero weather!

... this course gave me more than better skills; it gave me incentive to bring Nordic skiing to a higher level in my life and business.

The pre-level course gave me confidence and encouraged me to look at things differently, making plans to adjust the equipment, signage, and routing to make the trails more cohesive, interesting and professional. Hopefully, this effort will entice our guests onto the trails and enjoy our property's winter beauty.

The meteorologists are expecting another traditional winter in 2009. It should be great! So plan to take a pre-level course. If you're there while I'm doing my level II course, you can test my teaching skills when I present my lesson!

Thanks to Paul and Jan and our hosts in Duntroon for a wonderful experience.

Andrew Sibbald, currently a cross-country Level I but aiming higher

The Briars Resort and Spa

<http://www.briars.ca/index.html>

Come to Callaghan before the world gets here!

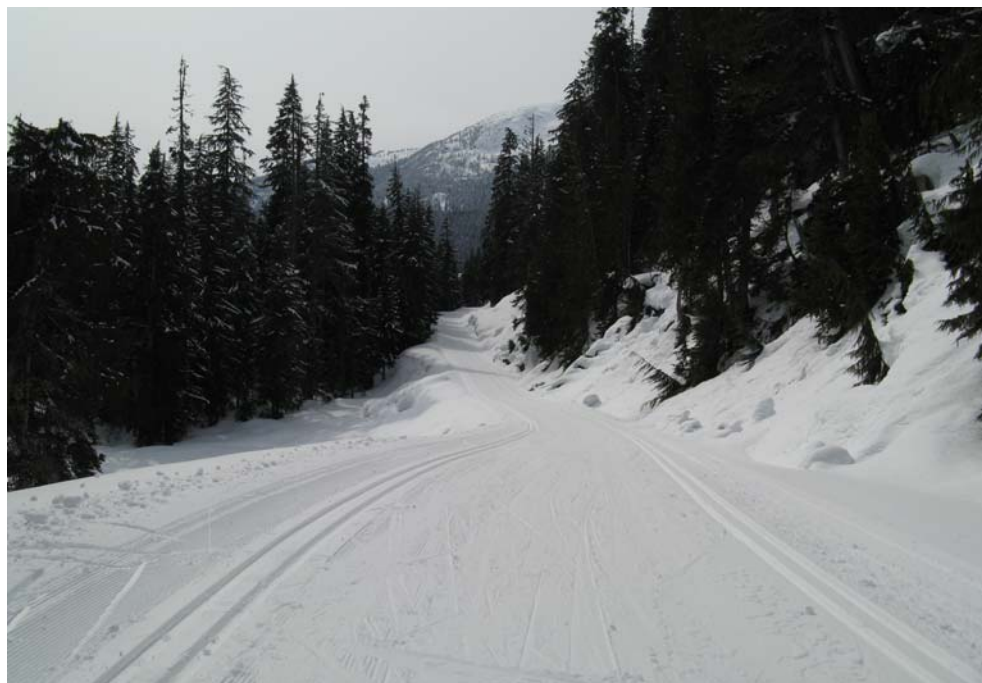
Story and photos by

Sherryl Yeager

The cover photo on this issue of XCitation was taken in the Callaghan Valley, as it's known to locals, and Whistler Olympic Park, according to the signage. You may not know it yet, but you will. The future site of the Olympics, the venue was given a good test run this winter, with cross-country, biathlon, and ski jumping all hosting national level events in preparation for their respective world cups next year.

The cross-country racing trails have been described as having, among other things, "humbling" hills for us mere mortals (I've personally seen young racers upchuck and pass out on them), and wickedly sharp corners, capable of throwing a Swede or two off course. The existing recreational trails offer incredible mountain views when it is clear, and rolling terrain through old growth forest for days when the snow is dumping.

And can it dump! A 30 cm snowfall in a day is routine! There are currently 40 km of trails in total, with plans for more recreational trails next year. When planning your trip, check out these websites for information on trails, tickets, and upcoming competitions worth watching from the fancy new stadiums:



Wide, scenic, rolling or steep, the Callaghan Valley trails beckon – see the mountain views from the stadium – just come visit!!!



<http://www.boldtracks.com/nordicports.php?langid=en&page=main>

<http://www.crosscountryconnection.ca/winter/wop.html>

Aside from being the XCitation editor, Sherryl is a rabid Olympic volunteer in training, and is ecstatic about skiing on new trails within two hours of home!

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