

Ski Tip: Work Smart, Not hard

Take this old adage and apply it to your skiing. In other words, use technique and rhythm to get the maximum direction and cross course acceleration on your slalom ski. There is absolutely no need to fall away from the boat as hard as you can in order to get cross course. In fact, this only overloads the rope which beyond all comes back to haunt you in your edge change when the rope recoils from the heavy load and sends you screaming straight into the buoy...not a desirable concept. How do you work smart? Follow these tips:

1) Keep your shoulders up and level in the approach and preparation for the turn. 2) Make your initial cross course movement with your hips; press or slide your hips at a 45 degree angle to the course (ahead and cross course). Don't really think about rotation as much as you think about sliding or pressing in the direction you wish to travel. 3) Keep your eyes somewhat down the lake so that you don't overload the rope. 4) Maintain the open and level position with the shoulders through your wake crossing.

Remember, you want to use the boat rather than fight it.

Training Tip: Push then Retreat

Pretty soon all of us are going to be getting into decent ski shape again. This is a great thing, but the problem is, as your strength and stamina increase, so does your confidence. You're probably saying what's the problem with that? The danger is that as your confidence increases, you start pushing yourself far too often. Although pushing yourself is an important part of progressing and building your skiing skills, it can be detrimental if not kept in check. Try to "push" your self for a set or two by skiing some of your more difficult or challenging passes (or runs), but before you start developing bad habits, "retreat" back to the basics by lengthening the line, or slowing the boat down, or (if you are first time or recently first time course skier) by skiing outside the course all together. Sounds simple I know, but you would be surprised how many people drive the skiing into a hole by constantly pushing and thereby grinding bad habits into their skiing.

Tech Tip: Graphite to save your screws

If you have ever had screws in your fin block that get locked up so tight that you end up stripping the heads trying to free them up, you will probably appreciate a "stitch in time saves nine" sort of mentality. Try removing your fin block screws, putting some graphite on the threads of the screws, and then replacing them in the fin block. If you take one a at a time out to complete the process, you can be sure that you won't lose your proper fin settings.