

July Tips & Whips Revisted

Wednesday 18 July 2007.

This month we're lucky enough to have a tip of the month from Karyn Eade. The focus is on stretching and designing a proper warm-up to get you ready to set a new PB every time you hit the water.

We have also had numerous requests to re-post the video instructional of the mini whip drills. So after reading Karyn's article keep scrolling down for a little refresher on establishing rhythm and symmetry through the use of proper body movements.

Warm Up

By: Karyn Eade

There is no doubt that time spent on warming up and cooling down will improve an athlete's level of performance and accelerate the recovery process needed before training or competition. It is necessary for the athlete to regard the warm up and cool down as an essential part of both the training session and competition itself.

Muscle stiffness is thought to be directly related to muscle injury and therefore the warm up should be aimed at reducing muscle stiffness while increasing 'readiness' both mentally and physically.

Pre Ski Routine Why warm up?

The benefits of a warm up include: increased body temperature, increased speed of nerve impulses, increased blood flow to your muscles, increased flexibility, and increased transport of oxygen to the muscles.

A warm up not only works to physiologically 'ready' the body for the upcoming work, but mentally allow the athlete to focus on the task at hand. With a structured, consistent warm up, the athlete should approach the water in the same 'state of readiness' mentally and physically before each set.

Getting ready to Ski Dynamic vs. Static Stretching

Prolonged passive (static) stretching appears to decrease a muscle's maximal force production. This can result in a decrease in strength for up to one hour after the stretch. This may affect athletes who participate in sports that require maximal muscle force production for performance, such as jumping, tricking, Olympic lifting, skiing, soccer, basketball, football, volleyball, and many track and field events. Many runners and other endurance athletes have stopped static stretching before exercise for this reason.

Your neuromuscular system may not be optimally prepared if you pursue a slower style of warm-up with lots of stretching. The more focused approach will heighten the ability of your muscles to contract;

In addition to the physiological benefits of a dynamic warm up, you will be better prepared mentally. A slow warm-up with a sustained period of static stretching can switch your mind

away from the dynamics of the task ahead. This may be particularly detrimental before a race or competition, when you'll want to maintain your focus and stay sharp.

Despite the decrease/elimination of static stretching in the new dynamic warm-up, active, passive and PNF (proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation) stretching still have a very important role to play in an overall training plan. If you recognize that limitations in your current range of movement are hampering the performance of your sport, you can use these methods to develop the range of movement you require. You should do this periodically, in any case, to reduce muscle shortening and the potential build-up of muscle tightness. Note, however, that this is best done in separate sessions, away from your sport-specific workouts.

Pre-Ski Routine

To bring the body into a state of readiness, a warm up should at least consist of the following:

- ▶ 5 to 10 minutes jogging/biking - to increase body temperature
- ▶ 10 minutes dynamic stretching exercises - reduce muscle stiffness, increase readiness
- ▶ 10 minutes general and event specific drills - preparation for the session or competition.

Sample of Pre- Ski Warm Up Exercises (Dynamic stretches)

Exercise	Set/Time	Reps	Notes
Run/Jog	1 Lap (3-5min)	x	Just long enough to get your legs warmed up.
Walking Lunges	2	12	Depth is secondary. Focus on good hip flexor stretch (front of hip) by keeping your back leg straight
Walking Twist	2	12	Stand tall in the abdominals. Holding your handle (or a towel) in both hands, step with the right foot and twist your chest to the right. Repeat other side. Think step right/face right, step left/face left. Lift the chest and pull the abdominal muscles in. Focus on feeling your obliques and lats stretch.
Squat Jumps	2-3	5	Squat down approx. 90 degrees in the knees and then jump up as high as you can. Think about exploding through the legs and warming up speed and power. Repeat

Sample of Post-Ski Exercises (Static stretches)

Strethes	Time	Notes
Piriformis	Hold each stretch 10-20 sec.	Lye on back with your botttom right leg crossed over left, pull left leg in towards you, feel the stretch in your right hip
Hamstring stretch Bent knee (soft hamstring) 3 Positions	Hold each stretch 10-20 sec.	Standing with one foot in front of you on a box about 1 foot high. Think tall spine, and lean chin forward. ▶ chin & chest lean fwd. ▶ chin & chest lean across midline (R leg fwd=chest to the right) ▶ chin & chest lean to opp. side (R leg fwd=chest to the left)
Hip flexor w/ Obliques and Lats	Hold each stretch 10-20 sec.	Begin by kneeling with one leg in front of the other (proposing position). With right leg in front, lift arms above head and lean to the right. Keep chest up and feel the stretch in your obliques and lats

Whipping drill lesson and demonstration...

