

## 4 BARRIERS TO GOOD SKIING

BY TUE DAVID BAK

71

This chapter deals with some of the typical barriers skiers may face while skiing; exercises are suggested in order to overcome those barriers.



Photo by Jacob Helbig

## 4 BARRIERS TO GOOD SKIING

72



*Leaning back*



*Rotation*



*Stiffness*

The main point of this book has been; skiing is simple and straightforward. In the previous sections, we have shown you how, with a series of simple exercises, you can seriously improve your skiing technique.

Regardless of your technical level and physical condition, occasions will arise where skiing will not feel as easy and as simple as we have described it. You will undoubtedly meet some obstacles on your way to perfect skiing.

### **Tip 1: Barriers are to be broken!**

When you encounter problems, use the diagrams shown to your right as a help guide. Here you can recognize your mistakes and find an exercise that will help you break the barriers holding your skiing back. The last column describes the new feeling that you should begin to experience.

It is our conviction that, regardless of ability, 95 percent of all mistakes made while skiing, can be traced directly to one of the three main mistakes:

### **LEANING BACK**

### **ROTATION**

### **STIFFNESS**

### LEANING BACK

#### THE FEELING

The backside of the boot rubs against the calves.

You are getting acid in your thighs.

Your skis run away from you.

Your skis are flapping.

Problems in starting a new turn.

#### THE SOLUTION

Actively push your knees forward.

Lean forward in your boots and relax your body.

Pull your body forward using your arms.

Press actively down on the skis with your feet.

Press actively down on the skis with your feet when you start a new turn.

#### THE NEW FEELING

You feel your shins against the front of the ski boot.

A feeling of being relaxed.

You control your tempo.

The skis lie stable and noiselessly on the snow.

The skis will turn on their own.

### ROTATION

#### THE FEELING

Difficulty in getting the skis to "bite" into the snow.

Weak balance in the actual turn.

A feeling of insecurity when the skis accelerate in the turn.

"Stop and go" skiing.

#### THE SOLUTION

Use your ankles and knees to edge the skis.

More focus on letting your legs and not your body turn the skis.

Have patience, let the skis continue further round in the actual turn.

Keep your upper body still. Let your legs steer the skis.

#### THE NEW FEELING

The skis bite firmly into the snow and feel more directed.

Better balance.

Rounder turns giving better control.

Fluent and relaxed skiing.

## 4 BARRIERS TO GOOD SKIING

74

### STIFFNESS

#### THE FEELING

#### THE SOLUTION

#### THE NEW FEELING

The skis lift up when they hit uneven areas.

Sink your ankles, knees and hips together.

Constant contact with the snow. Less tiredness.

The skis do not hold on hard snow and ice.

Push actively down on the skis at the end of the turn.

The skis dig deeper into the snow.

Quickly feeling tired.

Sink down in your ankles, knees and hip joints. Focus on connected turns.

You can ski for a longer period each day.

Mogul runs are not fun.

Absorb the surface by actively stretching and bending your legs.

Constant contact with the snow. No hard bumps from the moguls.

Your balance is clearly worsened on un-groomed ski runs .

Always ski with an open stance. Bend your ankle, knee and hip joints.

Better balance through a greater surface support and bent joints.

You will probably notice that you sometimes encounter more than one or more of the above problems simultaneously. This need not be a problem. In reality skiing is of course not as simplistic as the tables can make it out to be. All the exercises mentioned in the "solutions" column though can contribute to improving your skiing.

Most skiers, regardless of their ability, can do all of the given exercises. When you have become good at executing one exercise, for example on an easy trail, then challenge yourself to performing it on increasingly difficult trails or in different snow conditions. In varying the exercises and the conditions in which you perform them, not only will your balance improve but so too will your feeling for the snow - and this is central to becoming a better skier.

## **SUMMARY: BARRIERS TO GOOD SKIING**

**Tip 1: Barriers are to be broken!**

**Tip 2: Pull your upper body forward by pushing your arms in front of you!**

**Tip 3: Press actively down on your skis when you want to start a new turn!**

**Tip 4: Lean forward in your boots and relax your body!**

**Tip 5: Keep your upper body still. Let your legs steer the skis!**

**Tip 6: Have patience. Let the skis continue further into the turn!**

**Tip 7: Absorb the surface by stretching and bending your knees!**



Tip 2



Tip 3



Tip 4