

BALANCING MOVEMENTS REVISITED

Senior Moment: text, photos and photo compositions by Ed Kane, Yoga poses by Dorothy Corrigan

When we are skiing or riding we deal mostly with dynamic balance in trying to stay upright and move with our equipment as we slide down the hill. Here we are coping with changes in terrain, snow conditions and turn dynamics. In addition we are constantly moving from foot to foot as we transition from turn to turn. This means that for some period of time (in skiing) we must balance on the outside foot while relying on the other foot for aid in recoveries due to terrain changes or snow condition variations. The more acute balancing skills are, the more relaxed we'll be and we'll save energy – meaning more runs on any given day.

As we age, we generally start to lose both muscle mass and bone mass even for more active seniors. In addition, the joints tend to lose flexibility, which can result in pain when they need to be flexed, while making the movements that complement balancing. These conditions may cause seniors to experience balancing issues. In this case, a program of off-snow exercises will help sharpen balancing reflexes and retain joint flexibility, minimizing pain during athletic activities.

The knee joints are especially susceptible to injury or pain if the supporting muscle structure is not well toned. This means that the quads, hamstrings and inner/outer thigh muscles should get attention prior to the season. These should also be lengthened to retain or improve flexibility and support of the knee joints. It is also advisable to strengthen the core muscles, including the abdominal muscles, to facilitate turning and balance. A strong core also helps support the spine and reduce fatigue during skiing and riding.

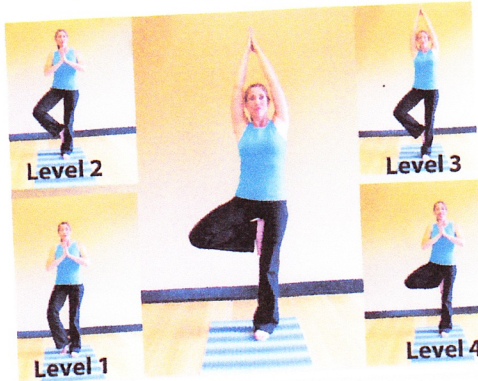
There are many ways to improve our balance while strengthening the muscle groups. One of the most popular approaches in the sports community is to enroll in an organized Senior Yoga class or practice a regimen suited to your capability (see "Yoga for Snow Pros" in the Spring 2011 issue for some ideas).

Any regimen that you adopt should include both Static and Dynamic balancing poses and exercises. Before starting this kind of regimen, be sure to warm/loosen up with your favorite stretching and rotation exercises and keep in mind that in yoga "if it hurts, don't do it"! The static exercises give you a chance to focus on centering your core while helping to build strength and bone mass.

Static Poses

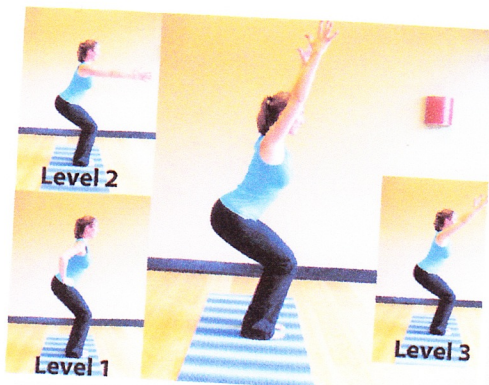
Tree Pose

- * Stand tall with feet together, shift weight to left foot and bring right heel to ankle (level 1), to calf (level 2 & 3) or to upper thigh (level 4).
- * Bring palms together at heart level (level 1, 2 & 4) or stretch arms over head with palms together (level 3) & focus on a stationary spot.
- * Hold for 30 seconds to one minute.
- * Repeat balancing on right foot.



Fierce Pose

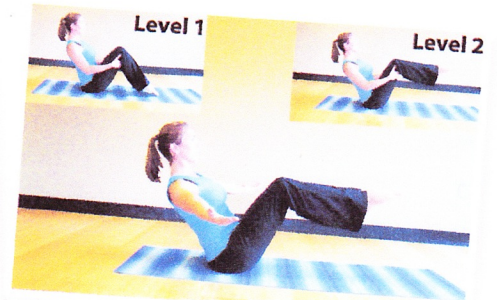
- * Stand tall with hands on hips, feet about hip width apart and feet parallel to each other.
- * Take a deep inhale and on exhale bend at hips and knees to reach tailbone back. (If you look down you should be able to see your toes.)
- * Keep hands on hips (level 1), extend arms in front parallel to floor (level 2), raise partially (level 3) or reach for sky.
- * Hold for 30 seconds to one minute.



Note: Each of these is shown with some intermediate poses that can be used in gradually achieving the pose shown in the main picture.) The dynamic exercises help develop joint flexibility and sharpen your balancing reflexes. Following are some examples of both Static and Dynamic Yoga poses and postures that will aid in improving your balance, increase both limb and core strength and enhance your skiing enjoyment.

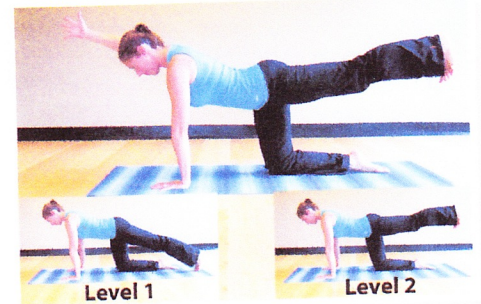
Boat Pose

- * Sit on the mat with knees bent and feet flat on floor.
- * Bring hands to back of legs, lengthen spine, lift heart, lean back far enough to take weight off feet.
- * Raise heels & keep toes in contact with mat (level 1), raise legs together parallel to floor (level 2) or hold legs parallel to floor and reach arms away from the body.
- * Hold for 30 seconds to one minute.



Balancing Table

- * Start with hands directly under shoulders, knees directly under hips and tops of feet pressed down on the mat.
- * Reach left leg behind and place toes on mat (level 1), inhale and lift leg parallel to floor (level 2) or inhale and lift right arm to shoulder height (palm in) and left leg parallel to floor.
- * Hold and breathe for 3 to 5 breaths.
- * Exit by inhaling deeply and exhaling while returning to starting position.
- * Repeat on other side and repeat 5 times.

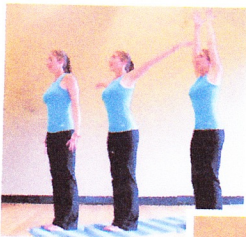


Dynamic Postures

When first attempting these dynamic postures it may help to place the back against a wall (Cloud Salutation & Knee Lift with Forward Leg Extension) or by placing the hands on the back of a chair (Knee Lift/High Lunge Flow & Knee Lift/Warrior III Flow) for stability.

Cloud Salutation

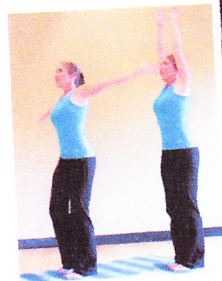
- * Stand tall with arms at the sides stretching toward the floor and focus on a gazing spot.
- * Inhale while first reaching to the sides and then up to the sky pressing the palms together.
- * Exhale slowly while lowering the palms to heart level and lifting the right knee toward the chest. (Exhale should be completed as hands reach heart level and leg reaches maximum height.)
- * Inhale slowly as arms reach toward the sky and the right foot lowers to the floor. (Inhale completes as hands and foot reach their final position.)
- * Shift weight to the right foot, exhale while lowering the palms to heart level and lifting the left foot, completing exhale as palms and foot reach final position.
- * Inhale while lifting the arms and lowering the foot to the ground, completing the inhale as the palms and foot reach their final position.
- * Repeat sequence 5 to 7 times.



← Inhale



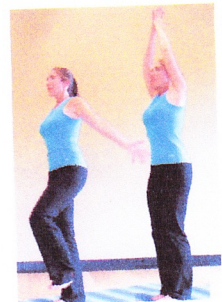
Exhale →



← Inhale



↑ Exhale



← Inhale

Knee Lift/High Lunge Flow

- * Stand tall with feet together, hands on hips, shift weight onto left foot, inhale and lift right knee as high as feels comfortable.
- * Exhale while stepping back with left foot and raising the arms toward sky with palms facing each other. (Weight should be evenly distributed between front and back feet and front knee should be stacked over the ankle.)
- * Repeat 7 to 10 times and then switch to the other side.



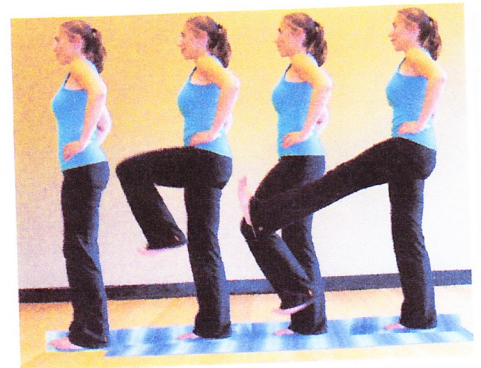
Knee Lift/Warrior III Flow

- * Stand tall with arms stretched down by side of the body, elbows bent and palms in, shift the weight to the right foot and firm that leg.
- * Inhale while lifting the left knee as high as feels comfortable, keeping the hips level and arms in the starting position.
- * Exhale while extending the arms forward and the left leg back bending at the hip until they are both parallel to the floor. Intermediate versions of this posture are keeping the left toe on the ground (level 1) or partially raised above the floor (level 2).
- * Repeat 5 to 7 times and then on the other side for the same number of repetitions.



Knee Lift with Forward Leg Extension

- * Stand tall with feet together, hands on hips and move weight to right foot while firming the leg.
- * Inhale while lifting the left knee as high as feels comfortable and keeping the hips even.
- * While exhaling, press the left heel down towards the ground and in front of the body until it is straight.
- * With the leg fully extended lift as high as feels comfortable.
- * Repeat 7 to 10 times and then switch to the other side for the same number of repetitions.



I would like to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Dorothy Corrigan, my Yoga Instructor, for her guidance and consultation in the preparation of this article and for her demonstration of the poses shown herein. ❄️



Ed Kane is a Snoqualmie Region Board Representative, past PSIA-NW President and is currently the Training Director for Ullr Ski School.

Post comments @ psia-nw.org

Looking for an "alternative to" or post Level III option?

The Senior Specialist program is a great way to go! Gain insight and training specific to one of the fastest growing segments of the snow sports lesson demographic: 55 and older. Provide your clients and your snowsports school a valuable asset by becoming a Senior Specialist! See page 16-18 for dates and details.

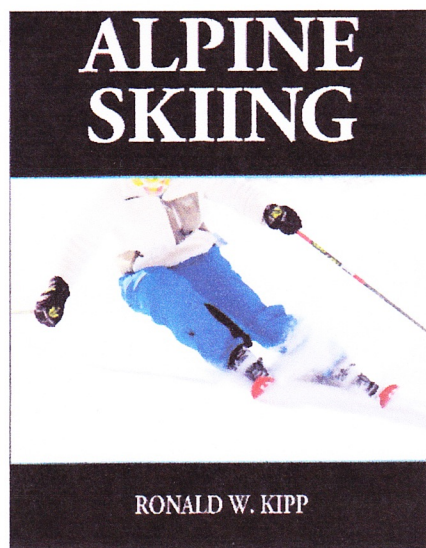
Video/Book Reviews

by Ed Kane

Alpine Skiing – by Ron Kipp, © 2012.

Ron was the featured speaker at the Fall Seminar last season and I found his talk not only entertaining but also very informative. His ability to describe the technical aspects of high performance skiing was impressive, entertaining. This same easy going straight forward language is used throughout the book making it easy to read and the concepts easy to grasp. In addition the illustrations are first rate and help add clarity to the descriptions. This 224 page softbound book is available from the publisher, Human Kinetics, for \$19.95 (plus tax and shipping) or from Amazon for \$16.10 (the Kindle version is \$14).

Ron is a product of the Northwest Division and went on to earn a PhD in motor control at the University of Utah. After the degree he joined the US Alpine Ski Team as a coach and head physiologist. He is currently the alpine sport education manager for the US Ski and Snowboard Association. During his time in the Northwest division, he strove to understand the relationship between movements, issues affecting those movements and how they relate to efficient skiing. This focus is clearly apparent in the contents of the book. Although the book is intended to provide the general public with resources to improve their own skiing, these contents should be of value to instructors who are trying to expand their teaching skills and would be especially useful to those preparing to take the Level II and III exams.



The first third of the book is devoted to orienting the reader to the elements of the sport. It includes a short history of skiing, some tips on getting fit for the sport, a discussion of equipment and some insight

into the skiing environment. The 5th chapter

discusses learning and instruction which emphasizes the importance of getting started properly and the value of lessons. This section is rounded out with a discussion of planning trips and traveling. While most of this is pretty intuitive to most of our instructors there are some interesting insights that will help to remind us that our customers generally come from a less informed situation. Reading through this information really helps us to better understand our customers and enable us to do a better job of communicating with them and satisfying their needs while achieving their goals. For example, the 3rd chapter contains a great outline for laying out a personal fitness regimen or one for new students that could be offered by the school in the preseason. In summary, the first third of the book should be considered a valuable resource for planning for the upcoming teaching season and to help the reader to be more effective in helping our students reach or exceed their skiing goals.

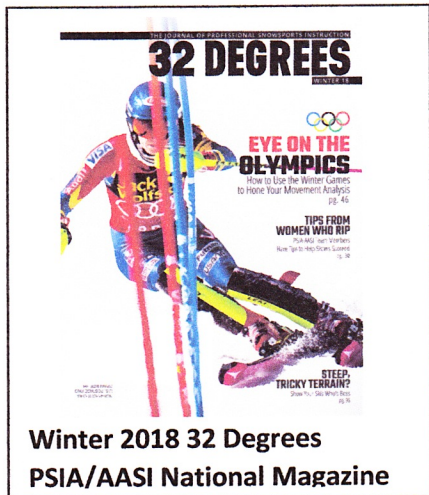
The remainder of the book is devoted to discussing the various levels of skill and ability of the learner. It generally is lumped into Never-ers, Beginning – Wedge Turners, Intermediate – Wedge Christies and Advanced – Parallel and Dynamic Parallel. This portion constitutes the technical meat of the book. The greatest value I personally found in this material was the clear pictures of the various basic turns that are being described. As an example, when discussing the wedge turn the picture clearly shows the movement of both knees in the direction of the new turn. This clarity is enhanced with diagrams and grids to show the relationship of the various body parts to efficiently make the turns being discussed. The last chapter covers more advanced skiing in moguls and off-piste. Here again the illustrations and simple descriptions are most illuminating and would be of significant value to those who are working on the movement analysis aspects of the Level III certification. In conclusion, while this book is written for the general public, the contents are very valuable for reminding instructors of the perspective that their customers bring to their lessons. A good understanding of this perspective is key in delivering effective and satisfying lessons from both the student and the instructor viewpoint.

The Benefits of Being a Member

By Ed Kane

Membership in PSIA-NW/PSIA/AASI offers unlimited opportunities for personal growth as a skier, rider and as a snowsports instructor. An active member can take lessons and get coaching from some of the highest qualified teachers in the industry both nationally and divisionally. Over the years this has led to significant improvements in our personal skiing/riding skills and in improving our effectiveness as an

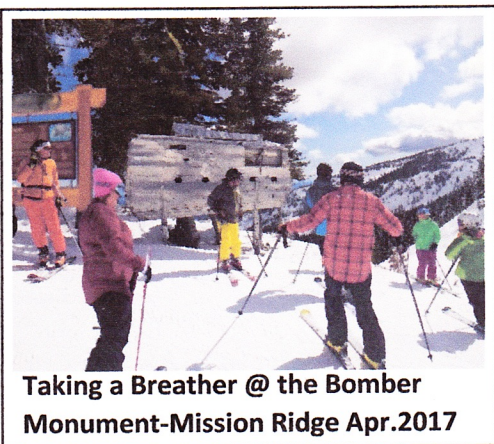
instructor. So, the question is what can we do to encourage the instructors of our snowsports schools to become members and take advantage of these benefits? The purpose of this article is to give both current members and nonmembers



Winter 2018 32 Degrees
PSIA/AASI National Magazine

information that can be used help our nonmember staff make the decision to become members.

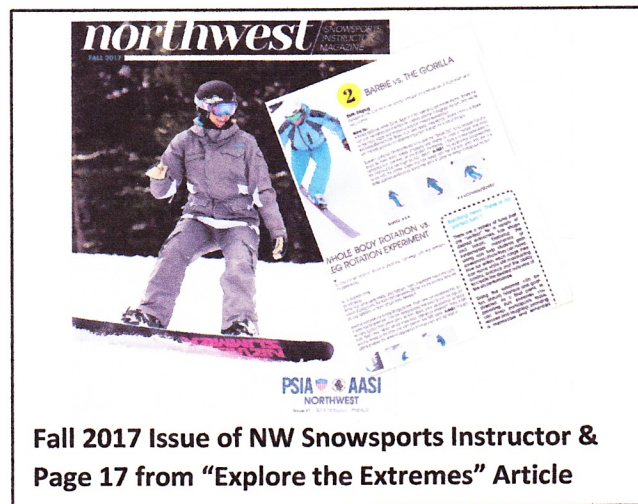
The first consideration is that membership is not particularly



Taking a Breather @ the Bomber
Monument-Mission Ridge Apr.2017

advantageous for all people engaged in teaching, unless they are serious about their job as an instructor. If teaching is personally motivating they will have a sense of satisfaction at the end of each class, they will want to share their experience with their peers and they will have an internal desire for personal growth. That desire can be accommodated by being an active member of PSIA-NW and PSIA/AASI. So, let's look at some of the opportunities.

By joining as a National Registered member, they gain access to almost unlimited resources, from the National Organization (PSIA/AASI) and from the Division (PSIA-NW). The price of membership is \$117 per year, or \$97 if you're a full-time student. Wow!!, you say, that's a big bite out of the



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paycheck. If one looks at this as the price of admission to significant self-improvement opportunities in their chosen avocation, the sacrifice is equivalent to giving up 1 latte a week or 2 beers a month through the year. This seems to be a relatively small sacrifice for significant potential gains in personal skill and satisfaction as an instructor.

Let's take a closer look at these gains. There are electronic and printed resources such as the content of the PSIA-NW website (www.psia-nw.org), PSIA/AASI website (www.thesnowpros.org), and publications including the NW Snowsports Instructor (NWSSI) (see example excerpt from the Fall 2017 issue above) and 32 Degrees, The Journal of Professional Snowsports. These resources contain significant numbers of articles that reflect the latest developments in teaching approaches, technology and tips to make each class more interesting and effective.

Last comes in the "what's the payoff" category. As a nationally recognized professional instructor, there are a number Professional Deals available to Nationally Registered members. These amount to some significant discounts offered to members in recognition of their profession contributions to the industry. These discounts include lodging, equipment (both hard goods and soft goods), business cards, lift tickets, new cars, publications, books and educational materials. In addition, as a national registered member, one can start working to achieve a higher level of certification (Levels 1,2 or 3 and National Specialist Certificates) which ultimately means more pay to reflect higher teaching skills and value to the school. A more complete listing of these benefits is contained under the Member Benefits tab (<https://www.psia-nw.org/membership/member-benefits/>) on the PSIA-NW website.

Current members see both the Division and the National websites so that they can help potential new members understand the opportunities available to them as new members. In this way, you will be acting as their mentor and will be helping the community to grow and prosper.