The ABYSS!
Greetings Central Division Members,

What an exciting start to the season, with early openings for resorts all over the Midwest!

It’s not just the snow that makes 2018-2019 exciting, but the direction of PSIA-AASI Central, and the progress the past year represents.

To the general membership, our progress appears in the form of new processes and offerings, from the revised Alpine exam process to the introduction of our Senior Specialist program. You have experienced more in-depth and informed communication through The Central Line, through emails, and via our social media presence. In each of these ways, PSIA-AASI Central has become more connected to the membership.

At the board level, our advancement is evident in a different fashion- one that I wish I had more power to convey.

When we participate in discussions with other divisions and the national organization, PSIA-AASI Central has a relevance and voice that is much different from in the past- it conveys confidence, shares insights, and leads. In recent meetings, it was the voice of Central that led policy and practice decisions.

Similarly, at Fall Conference and as guests at the Rocky Mountain Training event, Central Division Representatives brought new ideas, stood strong when discussing standards and values, and changed the way many viewed our organization, our membership, and our worth as educators.

Also, Central Division Technical Team members Ron Shepard, Danny Carmichael, Chris Fisher, Matt Clements, Robin Roberts and Justin Soine recently traveled to Breckenridge Ski Area for a training session with Coach Michael Rogan.

During the training session, Coach Rogan performed an assessment of each Technical Team member and helped them in their self-improvement. I would like to express my gratitude to all of our hard-working members.

I could not be more proud to say I am part of PSIA-AASI Central Division, and I look forward to a great season.

Richard Wren, President
For most of us in the Midwest snow sports industry, the majority of our lessons involve students who are experiencing skiing or snowboarding for the very first time. The beginner lesson is something that nearly every instructor in our region handles on a regular basis. And often times, it is the most important ability level that we teach as it introduces a student to the sports of skiing or snowboarding in the most appropriate way—via professional instruction by a trained snow sports teacher.

The following five components can make for a smooth and productive beginner lesson:

1. Good Customer Service
2. The Learning Partnership
3. The Skills Concept
4. Guided Practice
5. Positive Feedback

Let’s explore these teaching aspects in detail to see how they can be implemented to create a memorable beginner lesson.

**GOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Generally, snow sports instructors act as ambassadors for their home area and the snow sports industry as a whole. Understanding this role and implementing a few key customer service points in your beginner lessons will make your students that much more successful and will encourage return visits.

Let’s start with PSIA-AASI’s definition of the “Customer-Centered” approach to ski/snowboard lessons. In basic terms, the Customer-Centered approach means we try to view every situation from the customer’s point of view. This is important because quite often a beginner student has have never been to a ski resort nor seen ski or snowboard equipment. Put yourself in your student’s shoes for a moment and ask yourself;

- How was the check-in at the ski school desk?
- Did the equipment rental process go well?
- Was your student able to walk and carry their equipment to the meeting area or did they encounter a problem?

As instructors, we can—and should—deliver a warm welcome, a magic moment and a fond farewell.

A warm welcome should include removing your goggles, introducing yourself and greeting your guests in a cheerful manner. The magic moment could be anything from putting skis on for the first time or linking wedge turns on the beginner slope. A fond farewell is your chance to thank the student for choosing your resort, and more importantly you, as their instructor, during their first skiing/riding experience. This information may seem basic, but it is critical in the retention of first-time snow sports participants. Recent data from the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) found that 82% of first time participants never came back to ski or snowboard a second time. So, as you can see, the role of the instructor is much more important than just teaching skiing or snowboarding.

A key element to remember about offering good customer service is to greet your students and make a connection with them.

**THE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP**

The learning partnership is key in the beginner lesson process as it allows us, as instructors, to seek and understand the motivations and desires of our students. From there we are able to select proper learning activities and progressions to meet the needs of our students.
I’ve spoken a great deal about this past summer’s Midwest Ski Area Association conference, and the increasing role that PSIA-AASI Central seeks to play. This is probably good news, because a common refrain among resort leadership is often “Where is our next-generation of leaders?”

Our answer? Right here – in our pipeline.

I often hear from young instructors that their ambition is to become a ski school director, or resort manager. When you connect these aspirations to the pathway of so many contemporary industry leaders, you can understand their logic; Nick Herrin (PSIA-AASI CEO) started as an instructor, went to group sales, and eventually became resort CEO at Crested Butte Ski Area.

Mount Snow’s GM Erik Barnes started in ski school, as did Snow Basin’s Davy Ratchford. Vail resorts President Patricia Campbell started in ski school, as did Bobby Murphy, Vail’s V.P. and GM of Stowe, Vermont.

In fact, PSIA-AASI Chas also been the conduit for leaders in many of the western resorts, and this link goes back for decades. Currently, resorts such as Deer Valley, Park City Mountain Resort, and Keystone can point to the Midwest as the origin of their trainers and managers, while several members of the PSIA-AASI National Teams started here. This link goes back for decades.

It isn’t just western resorts that need leadership though – we regularly field calls in the office, seeking leads on ski-and-snowboard school trainers and directors. Our answer is always the same – “we’ll keep an ear-out”. We want to do more, by ensuring that our members know of opportunities as they arise.

And we do – via our online job boards. We try to connect those eager to grow with the opportunities available in the division (and beyond).

We also encourage the sort of growth and exposure that sets aspirational leaders up for success. Lately, we’ve begun to take a leadership role of our own, with courses including our “Train-the-Training-Director,” “Front-Line-Management,” and “Introduction-to-Tourism” courses.

The pathway isn’t linear, and these courses, while specifically intended to bridge the gap between the capable-instructor and the capable-leader, are not the end-game solution. That distinction is relegated to experience, most often experience from outside the Midwest. Instructors who have sought employment in larger resorts, who have experienced a variety of leadership styles, and who gain the sense of both sides of the feeder-resort equation – meeting guests at their destination resort who may very well have learned to ski at some local Midwestern area – these are the leaders who garner the insights that make next-level leadership a possibility.

Recent examples of this path occurred most recently in the East. Andy Raybould left the Intermountain Division to direct the snowsports school at Connecticut’s Mohawk Mountain. Allie Doro went from the staff at Aspen Highlands to lead the school at Pennsylvania’s Holiday Valley. Both went from being “instructors” to becoming “leaders”, and both will acknowledge that this back-and-forth across-the-nation pathway has opened further doors for them. Allie was recently recognized as an industry rising star, for exactly the pathway she is upon.

How can we help you achieve your resort leadership dreams, and at the same time help solve the leadership needs of Midwest resorts? Here are some ideas:
1. **Share your goals,** no matter how audacious they may be. Everyone loves to be a part of a success story. Tell your clinic leaders, your examiners, and your ski-and-snowboard school director.

2. **Be observant.** Take the time to reflect upon the qualities that great leaders and teachers have demonstrated. Don’t forget to also note leaders that you didn’t admire, and see if you can be objective about their results. Be self-aware enough to know how you are motivated, and how you interact with others.

3. **Step up to the occasion,** no matter how small the task may seem. Every school has a pet project that they would love to see grow, but a lack of time and resources always seems to interfere. Volunteer to take on the project, research it, and make a plan. Every great leader starts their journey with a small success.

The new direction of PSIA-AASI-Central is to reach beyond our education-and-certification provider realm, and to be a resource for both members and member schools. Helping resorts find great leaders is one way to ensure the health of our organization, and the sport.

Share your dream, because for ski and snowboard school leaders, this IS the land of opportunity.

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www.psia-c.org
P SIA-AASI is working hard at unifying the information and processes it communicates to members, member schools, snowsports directors, area managers, area owners, partners, sponsors, staff and the public. Excellent teams of Educational Leaders, Operational Leaders, and Boards of Directors from across the country have been assembled. These teams are meeting regularly (both in person and via teleconference), and have been tasked with improving the 3C’s (Communication, Collaboration, and Consolidation). The teams have been finding common practices, and unifying divergent details within those practices resulting in final products that are more closely aligned across all divisions.

The Education Leadership Council (ELC) has been tasked with unifying educational materials and messages going out to members and member schools across the nation. Through an on-going evaluation, they are studying the details of each division’s educational process. The ELC hopes to achieve unity in the overarching educational and exam process while still allowing divisions and regions the flexibility to adapt the process for local use. Two of the several concepts under consideration are: unifying the exam scorecard across divisions, and sharing a unified “Senior Specialist” credential program. Identifying similar programs and unifying them eliminates the need for each division to create its own program from scratch. The ELC is also focusing on strategic initiatives by setting a 5-year plan that includes goals and initiatives for the group moving forward.

The team of Operational Leaders is identifying common practices used across all divisions and looking for ways to improve efficiencies and unify the implementation of those practices. One idea would be to consistently “brand” the PSIA-AASI table so that our organization would be easily recognizable at education events and industry events nationwide. Another nationwide efficiency would be to offer members an online digital membership card, which would reduce printing costs and help support PSIA-AASI’s environmental sustainability program. The Operational Leaders have renewed their emphasis on strengthening our relationships with snowsports school managers, area managers, and area owners. Elevating the awareness and value of certified instructors to managers and owners will help build the prominence of PSIA-AASI. That will make it easier for this team to identify changing needs going forward.

The PSIA-AASI Board of Directors speaks with a unified voice as it communicates its goals and expected results to our Chief Executive Officer mainly through statements of desired results called “Ends.” These Ends are in the Board Governing Policies Manual, which is available on the PSIA-AASI website. The Board also strives for unified messaging to our members and member schools, so that its goals are more easily understood. The Board spends considerable time monitoring and reviewing the Ends, the CEO’s interpretation of how to implement the Ends, and the organization’s progress in accomplishing the Ends. The Board, along with a select group of educational leaders and operational leaders, recently began an in-depth review of the current Ends. The Board is considering adjusting the Ends to place a new emphasis on aligning the National strategic goals with each division’s strategic goals. This decision was prefaced with much discussion on what the entire PSIA-
Take Off the Instructor Cap and Make Time to RIDE

By Bradferd L. Miller, PSIA-AASI C Nordic Education Staff

Last March, I put on my Alpine gear and headed to Amy’s run and North Challenger, at Boyne Highlands Resort, for what would turn out to be my only Alpine free runs of the year, all seven of them. Although I enjoyed shutting my teaching/technical brain off, I was drawn to a small group of Alpiners including Ed Staff members Floyd Soo and Logan Price. Like so many in the snowsports community, clinics are a magnet that I’m attracted to allowing me a chance to share, watch and listen. Although this particular clinic, like many others, was outstanding, it shed light on one of my short comings - skiing for the love of it gets put on the back burner all too often. As great as my first instructor was, just skiing for the joy of it generally proved the best teacher. As a youngster, tromping around in the woods, catching air and pushing the speed limits were elements of fun that couldn’t always be found in a class setting. Nearing 60 years old my passion for participating in snow sports has needed a kick in the rear over the last decade. I’ve jotted down a few things that have helped and other items that may help to keep the fire burning.

- Try not to be that person who always wears their instructor’s cap. It’s okay to hand out instructional advice to your buddies or strangers when asked, however when your instructors cap is off, set your Strava on and accumulate vertical.
- Ski and Ride with your buddies using rides up the chair and lodge breaks to chat. Hit the exit ramp ready to roll.
- Competition is not evil, take advantage of Nastar, USSA or club racing to compete with yourself and/or others.
- Pair up with someone better and follow them. Following better athletes puts an emphasis on doing rather than overthinking.
- Make time in your schedule to watch a high end snowsports competition. Not only will the competitors’ skill set be unbelievable you may pick up a few helpful visual cues.

- Take up another snowsport activity to break up the monotony. Chances are you will make a good connection between snow sports.
- Challenge terrain within your personal safety boundaries. If you rip on the groomers it may be time to step up the terrain challenge.
- Try not to fret about what you perceive others may think about your skiing or riding. If you’re smiling and having fun you have controlled what you can control.
- Take pen to paper and jot down a note about your first time participating in snowsports and why you loved them.
- Take your favorite non-snowsport thing and write down how it relates, or could relate to your snow sport.
- Honestly access the effect free-riding has on your teaching, riding and person skills.
- Set aside time each day to free ski whenever possible.

With winter already here, getting in a lot of free riding time is on my list of goals. By taking off my instructor cap I’ve been able to enjoy the snowsports I teach more and teach them better. I don’t plan on teaching forever, but I sure want to enjoy participating in sports as long as I can.

Keep your sticks on the Ice and remember we’re all in this together.

In Memory of Nancy Oakes Hall - her love of skiing and people made her an outstanding educator.
Life at light bike speed... why ride a bike?

By Danny Moss, PSIA Central Division Education Staff

In our fast-paced world of technology, knowledge and travel, for many of us rolling at bike speed is consciously stepping back in time and slowing life down. Whether you ride road, mountain, tri, commuter, BMX, townie-cruiser or tour, you travel at bike speed.

I’m the first to admit that I struggle with slowing down; I love the fast pace. Yet life passes by all too quickly if I give in to only living in the fast lane. Slowing down is good for the spirit and it helps us maintain perspective. Riding a bike lets us do just that.

We’ve known for a long time that we can extend life by eating smart, getting enough sleep, exercising and participating in community events. The very best type of workouts are workouts that we don’t know we did until they are all done. How then do we distract the mind from the suffering? Try focusing on playfulness or fun. When we can focus on the playfulness of a game or activity, our minds are distracted from suffering, and we achieve marginal gains in fitness. Over time, these marginal gains add up to large gains and our bodies begin to operate at a level we desire. As playfulness increases, suffering decreases. Riding a bike can be playful, communal and produce a byproduct of greater health.

Riding a bike is a full-sensory experience. When you reach a town on a bike, it’s an accomplishment. When you pass through a town it’s a blip at 60 mph. When you travel in a car you look out at the scenery. When you travel on a bike you are in the scenery. You smell the air around you, see the vistas before you as you crest the rise, hear the quaking aspen, and feel the bike beneath you as you propel under your own effort and journey down the road. Riding a bike is being fully immersed in the picture.

Cycling can help your winter sports – really. On a bike we make regular fore-aft balance adjustments, lateral weight and balance adjustments to direct pressure to the outside pedal in a turn. We use pressure management as pressure builds between tire and pavement/dirt, and we must see the apex of an arc as a turn is rounded. Riding a bike can help us become better riders and skiers.

We learn a lot about ourselves and others when riding bikes, especially in groups: nutrition – on and off the bike;...
The Gales of November came early this year. Blowing down from Canada across the plains and the Great Lakes, they produced important life blood to our industry. During the off season, our Discipline Administrators, Board, Executive Director/office and several education committees produced thousands of hours to assure a successful 2019 season. Starting our second season under a new direction, our Executive Director, Discipline Administrator and current board members rolled up their sleeves with a “Let’s work together” attitude. Freshman board members John Wittman, Zeke Fashingbauer and Phil Howell, along with a host of others, have worked tirelessly towards building a Junior Instructor Program. Under Julie Nitsche’s guidance Senior Specialist committee members are unveiling Central Division’s Senior Specialist offering this year. Members have also been a driving force in Central initiatives, participating in Education committees and initiating fresh ideas.

On the National level discipline task forces have been working together towards a common ground on items such as evaluation cards and the respective scoring descriptors. Under National Director of Education Dave Schuiling’s leadership the Education Leadership Council (ELC) has shared ideas and programs amongst divisions, one example being the Senior Specialist program. Education connections with Penn State via Pete Allison’s efforts will soon be providing academic weight to our certification processes and our educational offerings.

Central Line editor Gary Evans has volunteered hundreds of hours working on our publication. Central Line has a wide range of snow sports related items that enlighten readers. Central Line offers a great way to share teaching, training, riding, fitness tips, etc., with other members. Speaking of industry publications, be sure to check out 32 Degrees magazine. With articles written by our organization’s top educators, there is always something for everyone. Snow Pro podcasts directed by George Thomas continue to show us what’s new and taking place across PSIA-AASI while introducing a diversified array of topics.

As the Gales of November continue to make their way down from the land of Sorrels, Geddy Lee and Hockey PSIA-AASI C’s and PSIA-AASI National’s countless hours of preparation are ready to be unfurled, continuing to guide us in a positive direction.

*Thanks for all you do for our organization.*

Bradford L. Miller, PSIA-AASI C Education Vice President
Cascade-fest VI 2019

You joined PSIA-AASI C because you enjoy the winter months of sliding or gliding down the hills. Through your enthusiasm and passion for snow sports, you have learned to help others enjoy the sports of Alpine Skiing, Tele-Skiing and Snowboarding.

Cascade-fest VI is for you! It is your opportunity to meet up with some old friends, make some new friends, learn some new teaching tricks, and improve your own skiing/riding skills.

Cascade Mountain will be one of the first area’s to host the new Senior Specialty Accreditation Program. Perhaps you teach a senior’s program, have seniors as clients or maybe you are getting older and want to be able to ski longer without fatigue. Cascade will also be hosting three new alpine courses: Teaching – Better Teaching, Task Master’s and MA & Progression Building. Check out our PSIA-C.org website to see a description of the courses and decide which one is best for you.

Cascade-fest VI will be hosted by PSIA-AASI C and Cascade Mountain on January 26–27, 2019. Cascade Mountain is located 30 miles north of Madison, Wisconsin. Our Mountain sits right on I-90, I-94, and I-39 at the Junction of Highway 33. We are really easy to get to! And, we are only fifteen minutes from the “Water Park Capitol of the World”, Wisconsin Dells!

Cascade Mountain recently underwent a $9 Million Dollar Expansion. We have two new lifts and new intermediate terrain called the “Far East”.

The Level II Certification Exam is now a two-day event. The format going forward, for on-snow, will be one day for skiing and one day for teaching. You must pass both teaching and skiing along with the written exam to successfully pass. However, you will be able to keep any successfully passed module as long as you remain current with dues and continuing education credits. Also, there will be 2 examiners each day collaborating for one score.

For the Level II teach day, the movement analysis portion will entail the review of a video clip that will be posted on the PSIA-C website. You will describe your observations of the skier and what your lesson plan would be to help that skier achieve their motivation. After laying out your lesson plan you will go out on the snow and teach.

Go to the PSIA-C.org website for a complete listing of events in which you can participate. There is something for everyone! Pick the event that best meets your needs and come join in the fun and learning.

Plan on arriving early Friday and ski/ride with some of Cascade Mountain’s Certified Instructors and coaches. They can give you a tour of our mountain, help you with teaching progressions, and give you and your family some pointers that will enhance your personal skiing or riding skills. Be sure to take advantage of this free opportunity.

A block of rooms has been set aside for your convenience, at the Best Western Hotel, in Portage (10 minutes from Cascade Mountain). The price is $102/night plus tax.

Cascade Mountain is offering Discounted Two-day Lift package for $51.00 plus tax, and Three-day Lift Ticket packages for $64.50 plus tax, for you and your family. Remember, at Cascade Mountain Kids 12 and under ski/ride for FREE! To utilize the Cascade Mountain Discounts you and your family members must all be present at the same time to make the purchase. If you arrive one day and your family does not arrive until the next day there will be NO discount for the family.

Cascade Mountain has a state of the art “Montana” Tuning machine. Cascade Mountain will be offering a tuning special of 30% off for all of our PSIA friends and their families.

Each day will begin with “DOOR PRIZES”. In the past we have had some very cool door prizes. (Water park tickets, Goggles, Mittens, Snowboards, Dinner packages, Wood Workings, to name a few.)

On Saturday evening there will be a dinner and program for a fun evening. This event is for all of our Central Division members and their families. The food and beverage will be outstanding and we have some fun things to make the evening special for everyone (Last year we had over 60 members take part in the Saturday evening event.)

PSIA-AASI C Education Events are for everyone. You can join in the fun and learning even if you do not need a “CEC” (Continuing Education Credit.) So, mark your calendar now, get registered, and come join in the FUN and LEARNING!

P.S. Cascade Mountain hosts “Training Clinics” every Wednesday from 1 pm to 8:30 pm beginning the first Wednesday we are open. Call Erika Meier (1-608-963-1360) for details. This is a great learning experience!
This past season I had the privilege and pleasure of running several events, including a couple Level 1 Certification Examinations, a Riding Teaching Development, and a Level Two Prep Course. We had great turn-outs with a lot of new faces, great riders, and passionate instructors. I love seeing the variety of teaching styles, how prepared most came for the exams, and their desire to learn. It is always exciting to see others wanting to pursue the certification process and join this great organization to further progress the sport.

Now that you are members, don’t forget to take advantage of the perks that are offered including discounted lift tickets, so that you can get out there and ride at a number of resorts with different terrain. This will allow you to continue to advance your own riding and to represent Central Division. (I would call ahead first to check if the resort is affiliated with PSIA-AASI and if they offer discounts). Also, don’t forget about the pro offers at the Snowpros website.

If you know of anyone wanting to become a member, the new e-learning course is a great place to start. If you are wanting to further your education or to test your skills, the Snowpros website has great educational tools from manuals to the Movement Matrix. Check out our event calendar to book your next event. The freestyle accreditation, children’s accreditation, and the riding and teaching development clinics are all a great next step. Also, check out the new “Here’s A Trick” online course.

I know I have personally enjoyed the certification process and all it has done for me. I look forward to seeing you at future events and riding with you all again.

- Charley Weeks, Central Division Education Staff Member

Charley is a Level 3 Snowboard Instructor, with Freestyle Specialist 1 and Children’s Specialist 1 credentials. He is a Central Division Education Staff Member. He has been teaching at Caberfae Peaks, in Cadillac, Michigan since 2010. He says that he likes his coffee black.
Skiing/Riding on Plastic

By Charles C. Roberts, Jr.

Teaching students the intricacies of beginning moves on terrain park features typically involves skiing or riding on a box. A box feature entails a box like structure with a top deck of a plastic (such as polyethylene, a polycarbonate, polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), etc.). Your students are familiar with skiing or riding on snow but may not be familiar with riding or skiing on plastic. This article explores the 50/50 (straight over the box) and the board slide moves over a box or simply put, skiing/riding on plastic.

We all have experienced that the friction between ski and snow varies widely depending on snow characteristics. The gliding of skis or a board can be impeded (slow/sticky snow) or accelerated (fast/slick snow). Waxing of the ski/snowboard plays an important part of friction at the ski/snowboard/snow interface. Likewise on the top deck of a box (the plastic), the friction between the plastic and the skis/snowboard varies.

With a dry top deck, the sensation can be slow (sticky). With residual water or snow on the top deck, the sensation can be slick. Very cold or warm days as well as humidity levels also affect the feel of a feature.

Another aspect of plastic, involves edging of the skis or board. On snow, engaging the edge results in the ski or board edge sinking into the snow for carved turns, skidded turns, side slips, etc. This results in noticeable ski/board resistance depending on the maneuver. On plastic, engaging the edge has little change in resistance and the absence of the sensation of gripping the surface. Edging on plastic is tantamount to edging over solid blue ice.

Now let’s apply this to teaching. The most elementary maneuver over a box feature is the 50/50 (the term 50/50 comes from skateboarding where the toe side wheels are on one side of a feature and the heel side wheels are on the opposite side of a feature).

Essentially, the 50/50 is when the long axis of the skis or snowboard is traveling parallel to the long axis of the feature.

Figure 1 shows a reasonably good 50/50 over a dance floor. Using the ATML method (approach, takeoff, maneuver, landing, Reference 1), Figure 1A shows a braking wedge to adjust speed, the approach. Figure 1B shows getting ready for the takeoff which is mounting the dance floor (a wide box feature located close to the snow surface). Figure 1C shows skiing parallel over the box. The landing is skiing away from the feature.

First time students tend to treat the plastic the same way as snow. In Figure 2, this youngster is performing a 50/50 and is attempting to control speed on the feature using a wedge. He continued edging in this position for the maneuver on the feature. Since the edging is ineffective on the plastic, he ended up doing a split and a fall. It is helpful to teach keeping the skis flat without edging until exiting the feature. Remind the student that if the lineup to the feature is bad, then simply ski off the edge of the feature and try again. Attempting to steer the skis on plastic in an attempt to correct a bad lineup is ineffective and usually
results in a fall. Once you are committed to a particular line of travel you have to ride it out. In other words, “Set it and forget it.”

For snowboarders, the 50/50 is usually easily accomplished. Figure 3 shows a reasonably good 50/50 over a dance floor. Errors in stance toward the tail or nose of the board are almost inconsequential. After all, a nose or tail manual 50/50 that requires a significant nose or tail weight shift is a maneuver that can be easily performed (Figure 4). The main thing to look for is to make sure the upper body is aligned with the lower body and board (A frame stance). An upper body twist will cause the board to slide sideways when mounting the feature.

Another aspect that your students may encounter when riding on plastic is the change in friction as one travels from snow onto the feature. In some cases, the top deck is stickier than the snow, in other cases it is not. A slight back seat stance is not a problem as long as it disappears when back on the snow as shown in Figures 5A and 5B, which illustrate a top deck that is slower than the snow. In Figure 5C, this student has stopped on the feature due to excessive friction between the skis and top deck. This may require cleaning of the ski bottoms, new wax or new skis as all the other students in this class did not have the same problem.

If your students are sliding off the side of a feature it may not be a result of poor line up. In Figure 6A we see a rider sliding off the toe edge despite a good line-up. This is a result of the feature tilting toward the toe edge. The rendering in Figure 6B depicts a feature that is not level. This causes skiers and riders to drift to one side and slide off before reaching the end. A landing area (easily recognized by the ski or snowboard tracks) that is located to one side of the feature confirms that it is not level.

On some warm days, the top deck can expand and cause ripples as shown in Figure 6C. This may cause problems with performing maneuvers where the board or skis are traveling sideways (board slide) along the long axis of the feature. Choose another feature and alert the park maintenance crew as to these issues.

It is helpful to check out the terrain park in order to pick the appropriate features for your lesson. Talk to the park staff and those frequenting the terrain park (“park rats”) as to the best features available.

Now let’s look at the board slide. A board slide is a maneuver on a box or rail where the skis or board are oriented with the long axis perpendicular or at some angle to the direction of travel. This maneuver does not cause wear to ski edges when using a dance floor. For narrow boxes, the coping on the side is typically steel and may cause some wear on the edges. For board slides on rails, a separate set of skis may be in order (Reference 2).
Figure 7 depicts a sequence of the board slide on skis using a dance floor. The approach is shown in Figure 7A with the skier satisfied with the approach speed. A braking wedge may also be used to adjust speed. Figure 7B is the takeoff which is unweighting either from the lift from the entry ramp, or a hop by the skier. Figure 7C is the maneuver with the skis traveling sideways and the center of mass between the skis. Center of mass outside the skis, especially opposite the direction of travel, is typically disastrous. It often results in a fall because edging of both skis is involved which causes the skis to slide out from under the skier. Perform static exercises focusing on keeping the center of mass between the skis. During the maneuver, the lead ski is slightly edged to avoid catching the outside edge in the feature. The trailing ski is usually flat. The upper body is rotated in the direction of travel. Figure 7D and 7E show the landing where the lower body counter rotates against the upper body, aligning the skis with the direction of travel.

Figure 8A depicts a student performing a relatively good board slide at approximately 45 degrees (crooked grind). A board slide where the skis are at an angle other than 90 degrees to the direction of travel, like the crooked grind, has the same ingredients as the 90 degree board slide. Center of mass is between the skis, the leading ski is edged slightly and the upper body is facing the direction of travel. In Figure 8B, the student has edged both skis with center of mass outside the stance width toward the trailing ski. Increasing the edging on plastic will not aid in bringing the center of mass toward the direction of travel, instead it may result in a fall. Have the student practice the proper stance by standing statically on the feature with a flat trailing ski and slightly edged leading ski. In Figure 8C, the student has not rotated the upper body in the direction of travel which makes it difficult to exit the feature with the ski tips facing the direction of travel. Consequently, he exits the feature in a side slide. Statically work on jump turns and counter rotating the upper and lower body.

The board slide on a snowboard is shown in Figure 9. The approach (Figure 9A) is parallel to the long axis of the feature. At takeoff, unweighting occurs and the rider counter rotates the lower body and lands with the board at an angle to the direction of travel (Figure 9B). Traveling at an angle that is not 90 degrees (say 45 degrees) is called a crooked grind. (If the student is pursuing Level 3 Snowboard Certification, a 90 degree board slide is required.) Finally, the countered lower body is aligned with the upper body and the rider exists with the tip of the board pointing in the direction of travel (Figure 9C). Riders often have the same problem as skiers, i.e. allowing the center of mass to shift away from the direction of travel, as shown in Figure 10A. Emphasize “knees over toes” to correct this. As with skiers, Figure 10B depicts the result of insufficient counter rotation of the lower body during the maneuver. The student is unable to realign the board so the tip is facing the direction of travel, which results in a side slide while exiting the feature. Static exercises on counter rotating the lower body with respect to the upper body often help.

Riding/skiing on plastic is a skill that is necessary for terrain park moves over box features. The low and wide dance floor feature is very helpful for introducing your students to the dynamics of skiing/riding on plastic because it is tolerant to many errors committed by students. Both static and dynamic exercises can be easily performed. Your students will be delighted with their progress on learning how to ski/ride on plastic.

Chuck Roberts teaches at Wilmot Mountain, in Wisconsin. He is a Level III Ski Instructor and a Level II Snowboard Instructor. He has been teaching skiing since 1970 and snowboarding since 1987.

References
Pressure control skills are vital in any beginner ski lesson as they help define how pressure can be utilized when sliding down a slope. If we look at the primary skill of pressure control from boot work activities we can show our student three variations of controlling pressure. First, from a stationary position we can use ankle flexion inside the ski boots to help establish a good athletic stance. Have your student flex their ankles so that constant pressure is applied to the tongue of the boot. A good visual cue is to ask your student to curl the toes upward inside the boot. This will help to activate the ankle ligaments inside the foot and produce the correct amount of ankle flexion. A well balanced, athletic stance will allow the student to control pressure along the entire length of the ski.

Next, demonstrate to your student how to stand and balance on one leg. Flex one leg at the knee joint by pulling the knee upward and closer to the core area. Switch back and forth. This will illustrate how to effectively control movement can be further explored through flat terrain work, most often with just one ski on.

Demonstrate to your student how leg rotation can turn the ski tip inward while at the same time turning the ski tail outward. I position a ski pole about 12 inches inside the ski tip and 12 inches inside the ski tail (one ski pole in front, the other behind). I then show how the tip turns closer to the front pole while the tail turns or “brushes” away from the other pole. This exercise utilizing a ski pole is helpful in showing your student how leg rotation works to pivot the ski.

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pressure from ski to ski, and direct pressure to the outside ski. Last, with both skis now on, show your student how to flex downward and extend upward in a short straight run. The ankle, knee and hip joints begin to flex and extend simultaneously as the skier travels across a shallow slope. This exercise helps to build an understanding of how to control the magnitude of pressure that comes up from the snow, (e.g., sliding over a small bump).

The Skills Concept can easily organize how you deliver the three primary skills to your students. The best practice for demonstrating these skills is through boot work/flat work, and giving the student ample time to practice these new skills will help build a solid foundation for further skill development.

GUIDED PRACTICE
Coaching and guiding your students through their beginner lesson is important and sometimes challenging. The key here is to not rush through any steps in your progression, rather to allow time for your students to gain mastery of their new movement patterns through ample practice and play. I like to use a series of questions or experiences that help to lead a student to the desired result. Each step should build upon the previous step and each experience should help to solidify the skill or fundamental that the student is learning. For example, balancing on one leg will introduce the skill of pressure control with basic flexion and extension movement of the legs. This will lead to the fundamental of controlling pressure from ski-to-ski and directing pressure to the outside ski. Being able to accurately shift weight from one ski to the other is a necessity for proper turn initiation as it allows the center of mass (CM) to move across the skis toward the inside of the new turn.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK
Feedback is essential to development. It promotes understanding, helps correct mistakes before they become habits and reinforces positive behaviors. Feedback is objective (neither positive, nor negative), descriptive, informative and should facilitate an understanding of current performance. Deliver the feedback in a way your student will understand.

I always begin my feedback by emphasizing what the student did well. For example, if a student worked hard to produce a good pole touch at turn initiation I make sure to highlight that achievement as it will help build confidence in the student and they will know to continue using their poles in that manner going forward.

For instance, if the learner is ‘Visual,’ use words like “look,” “see,” “picture this,” and “watch me”.

If the learner is “Auditory,” use words like “listen,” and “hear.”

If the learner is “Kinesthetic,” use words like “feel,” “touch,” “grasp,” and “move.”

Providing feedback in this way allows the student to feel a sense of accomplishment about the lesson while also retaining information and tips on how to improve in the future.

CONCLUSION:
When you try implementing these 5 tips into your next beginner lesson you are likely to have a successful outcome resulting in a happy student who is likely to return for further lessons.

Good luck to all of you this season!

Logan Price is a PSIA Level 3 Alpine Instructor with a CS2 Credential. Logan is the Training Director for the Boyne Highlands Snow Sports Academy and an Examiner for the Central Division Education Staff. When not sliding on snow Logan works as a licensed realtor and enjoys golf, fishing, hiking and traveling.
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AASI organization will need to look like both five and ten years in the future.

Recently, at the request of the President’s Council (the presidents of the eight divisions and the Chair of the PSIA-AASI Board), the Board of Directors of all eight divisions and the PSIA-AASI Board of Directors adopted the unifying vision statement “Create Lifelong Adventures Through Education.”

By consolidating current practices and procedures, and then setting similar long-term strategic goals, PSIA-AASI leadership teams are progressively uniting our messages. Unified messaging and practices are essential as we strive to build on our past, and ensure the strength of our organization long into the future.

hydration – when, where, how often; breathing – controlling it to manage hearth rate, knowing when to pre-load with oxygen; stress management – remaining calm as the sprint approaches; teamwork – serving the peloton, supporting teammates, doing our turn up front. Riding bikes in groups will help instill a lot of good life lessons.

Like our snow sports, riding a bike is a life-long sport. Though we may no longer be able to compete in soccer or basketball, we can always be found riding our bike into the sunset. Riding a bike can last a lifetime. And although we love our cars and trucks, there are numerous reasons to preserve them. Riding a bike can be transportation.

New to Riding? Interested? Visit your local bike shop (LBS) and ask for assistance. Inquire about club rides, literature, trail maps, etc. Begin with manageable goals and focus on playfulness and enjoying the ride. Learn to take care of your bike and to perform simple maintenance. Travel with your bike and visit other trails or cities. Ride consistently for the greatest growth.

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