



Ski Spectacular Instructor Academy

**Hosted by The Hartford Ski Spectacular
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Clinic Summary Notes

Clinic Topic: Biski: Progressive Teaching and Tethering - Trevor Hildebrand hildetf@gmail.com

1. Take time to fit your athletes in a bi-ski to avoid pressure sores, rubs, and discomfort.
2. Adjust the shock on the bi-ski to reduce the impact of the terrain variation on the student's spine and any current injuries.
3. Clear and concise communication with your co-coaches, your athlete, the lift operators, other mountain employees, and the general public goes a long way. Be prepared for what you need to say!
4. No one cares how fast you can go, but in the moment and for the months of recovery everyone cares how fast you can stop! Practice emergency stops and know how much weight you can safely tether on different slopes in different conditions.
5. Encourage your athlete to be as independent as possible and be inclusive in your lessons.
6. Your body position is vitally important when tethering. If you aren't getting the results you want, then you are likely in the wrong position!
7. If you find something difficult while you are tethering, you likely need to work on developing or correcting something in your skiing/riding. Some great tasks to work on are:
 - Wedge change-ups (skiers): ability to move smoothly and gradually between a braking wedge and a gliding wedge. Cat tracks are a great place to start your practice. You will use this in more gentle terrain, especially as you are coming to a stop at the end of a run.
 - Sideslips in the fall line in a tight corridor: ability to simultaneously increase and decrease the edge angle(s) while staying in a corridor. Perform this on all terrain that you might tether in, but achieving this on a pitch with a wandering fall line is ideal. You will use this on steeper terrain to control speed and to save your legs/hips by not skiing constantly in a wedge.
 - Sideslips in a tight corridor: sideslipping in a corridor that wanders down the hill in and out of the fall line. You will use this on steeper terrain to control speed and to save your legs/hips by not skiing constantly in a wedge.
 - Fall Line to Hockey stops: on both sides in a 6' wide corridor on steep blue terrain. Maintain hands and upper body facing downhill at all times. Ability to progressively and quickly increase edge angle(s) to come to a stop in a balanced position. This is the ability to stop the bi-ski. Perform this on all terrain that you might tether in, including very low angle cat tracks and steeper pitches. You will use this to perform emergency stops

- Traverse to diagonal sideslip to traverse: Start a traverse across the hill on railroad tracks, then release edge(s) to allow for a diagonal sideslip, then re-engage the edges to continue with railroad tracks. This is the ability to control your speed in relation to the bi-ski as you finish the turn and lose speed.
- Wedge Christies (skiers): this has 2 components to it: the ability to slow yourself down slightly as you prepare to turn to put you in the ideal position for the bi-ski to naturally turn down the hill.
- The ability to flatten and rotate the inside leg to match the outside leg to get back to sliding parallel across the hill. This is also a great practice for prepping for a hockey stop as the inside leg also has to rotate. This should not involve picking up the inside ski to rotate it, but to flatten the ski and keep it on the snow.
You will use this to make controlled turns on steeper terrain when you need to control your speed going into a turn, and especially in variable terrain where pivot slips are difficult or unachievable.
- Accelerated Floating Leaf (snowboard): staying on the heel edge, pivoting from pointing your tip straight down the fall line to your tail straight down the fall line with smooth and progressive movements. The upper body should remain pointing down the fall line. You will use this to control your speed while tethering.
- Switch (snowboard): riding switch comfortably. You will need to be comfortable in an accelerated falling leaf moving in your non-natural direction.
- Flatspin 360s (snowboard): this emphasizes pivoting while managing the tilt of the board which is required for some of the maneuvers while driving the bi-ski from a snowboard.

8. Remember the cues to load/ride/unload the chairlift:

- STOMP - at the base of the lift
 - Straps
 - Temperature
 - Outriggers
 - Mechanism for lift loading/unloading
 - Practice Load
- BOWLS - to get off the lift
 - Bar
 - Outriggers
 - Wiggle
 - Lift unloading mechanism
 - Strap
- MOST - before shredding the hill
 - Mechanism for lift loading/unloading
 - Outriggers
 - Straps
 - Tethers

9. Read an article: 32° Winter 2025 page 78: Using Tether for the right reasons

10. Read an article: 32° Spring 2024 page 48: How to create a foundation for student independence

11. Read an article: 32° Fall 2022 page 75: A tethering tip to improve bi-skiing experiences