TIPS FOR FASTER SKATE SKIING

- Always be way forward in shins, thighs, hips & butt… when you press forward, the ski goes forward faster
- keep your butt up under your body, “don’t get behind in the behind.”
- Stand up tall while keeping shoulders round & forward
- Step lightly & softly onto the snow
- keep feet close to the ground… no sense lifting them further than you have to.
- shoulders & trunk always face straight down the trail… no side to side rotating, twisting or bending; round shoulders, head hangs down slightly, but eyes look up the trail
- compress powerfully with abs and arms
- V1 on uphill - short, quick, smooth, continuous strides; skis always moving, no stall
- V2 is easiest to learn on slight uphill or flat; poles touch split second before step
- V2 Alternate is for fast terrain; best learned by following

SKATING DRILLS & SKILLS

* BODY POSITION
  - standing on slight hill, in boots - Fwd in shins, knees, hips, pelvis, belly button
  - balance on 1 foot/skate position; body upright, no twisting/bending
  - same with eyes closed; should look like “gun slinger” or “gorilla”
  - on skis, standing in skate position, press forward at the ankles & knees feeling how the skis begin sliding forward without even pushing off
  - add weight shift from ski to ski maintaining this forward press
* BALANCE
  - never waste a nice downhill - spend a lot of time gliding on one foot
  - downhill, 1 foot turning; 2 people with arms linked, one ski each, turning
* “HOT FEET”
  - no poles, move feet quickly as if on hot sand - continuous movement without stalling
* NO POLES SKIING
  - no upper body movement, twist or rotation - ski with strong legs
  - hold poles across front of body - check for & minimize upper body swing
  - shorter, quicker strides uphill; longer gliding on gradual downs
  - forward pressure at ankles, shins
* V1 UP HILL – 4-5 times up a 50 meter hill, glide back down on 1 foot
  - Body square facing up the hill, hands high & in front of shoulders
  - with low effort, focus is on smooth, powerful gliding strides
  - as hill gets steeper - tempo quickens, stride shortens: quick, silky soft strides
* V2 – 4-5 times up gradual 100m hill, glide back down on one foot
  - V2 is fastest technique in flats & gradual up hills
  - drop weight powerfully onto the kicking ski and poles for max power
  - get power from stomach & core muscles - arms/hands high
  - carry downhill speed into uphill transition with V2 as far as possible & smooth
  - V2 with “double pump” – 2 poling strokes for every 1 kicking stroke – requires balance
* AGILITY AND CONFIDENCE
  - figure 8’s, circles and cones/flags
  - quick & lively on skis, knees flexed, arms forward, strong athletic position
  - follow the leader progressing to “I can ditch you!”
  - skiing corners with quick transitions
* TRANSITION INTERVALS
  - down-up interval shifting gears/technique as uphill increases
TIPS FOR FASTER CLASSICAL SKIING

- FORWARD shins, thighs, hips, butt and TALL in thighs, hips, butt, core
- “ski high down low and low up high!”
- don’t get “behind in the behind”
- ski tall, but rounded in chest & shoulders
- flex ankle FWD and be on the balls of your feet
- bad posture is good skiing…. “Round and down” in the shoulders & head
- hands high & close, elbows forward; arms swing freely at shoulder
- don’t emphasize hand throw back; emphasize quick return
- snap foot forward - “quick & snappy forward kick”
- drive knee & thigh forward to improve glide
- double poling is a fast & efficient way to move in classic skiing…. strengthen your core

CLASSIC SKILLS AND DRILLS

* BODY POSITION CHECK on foot, no skis
  - with partner – lean forward at feet, partner catches you; let whole body fall fwd
  - balance 1 foot, opposite arm extended, tall in hips, fwd @ ankle/shins, rounded shoulders

* CIRCLE ARM SWING
  - free & loose swing from shoulder, like pendulum; everyone in rhythm

* “SNEAKY FEET” - like sneaking up stairs
  - Fall forward, with short quick strides, up a gradual hill, then a steeper hill
  - Weight on balls of the feet, the stride length short and the tempo quick and light…

* RUN & GLIDE
  - Insert 5 running steps into your classical stride on an uphill, like “sneaky feet” – especially when you feel your hips sinking back, or your tempo slowing down.
  - Goal is to pull the hips up over the kicking ski, help give quickness to the kick, and teach transitions by changing tempo on gradual or rolling terrain.

* SCOOTERS
  > kick, kick, glide / kick, kick, glide / kick, kick, glide
  > one ski on, kick with boot, glide like a scooter

* SKIPPING ON SKIS
  - Skipping forces you to keep your hips in a high position.
  - When they master skipping, try: ski for five strides, skip for five, then ski 5, skip 5…

* NO POLES SKIING
  - Emphasize quick/snappy kick with long, relaxed glide
  - In the gradual up hills - shorter kick & dynamic arm swing
  - keep the arms and the momentum going.
  - On down hills glide for a very long time on one ski in the extended glide position.

* SINGLE STICKING
  - Use poles only, as in classic striding; short/quick uphill, long/powerful in down hills

* DOUBLE POLING – 80% of power comes the moment the pole touches snow
  - Initiate the poling motion with a quick and powerful downward crunch of core muscles
  - The body must be forward and over the poles when they touch the snow
  - 100 m sprints down hill for quickness & speed; 50m sprints up hill for power
  - double pole 50m on 1 foot for balance & power

* KICK DOUBLE POLE – best technique for flats & gradual up hills
  - Quick powerful arm swing forward while kicking, then quick powerful DP
  - Fast hands = fast feet
  - Do 1k loop with mostly Kick DP
WORKOUT SUGGESTIONS

DURING WARMUP
• think about your technique from the moment you begin skiing
• ski no poles for several minutes of warm up to focus on body position
• clarify in your mind what you want to get out of the session that day

IN EARLY SEASON
• ski 1/3 regular, 1/3 no poles, 1/3 poles only
• spend time skiing smoothly up hill, not hard
• do intervals in flatter terrain where you can focus on technique

DRILLS FOR BALANCE
• scooter – kick, kick, glide, kick, kick, glide for 100 meters
• ride one ski down long gradual hills
• when you do hill intervals, ski back down on 1 ski
• ski with eyes closed
• ski no poles with emphasis on glide

POWER & SPEED
• 10x100m up hill double pole sprints or V2 sprints for power
• 10x100m down hill double pole sprints or V2 for speed
• no poles up hill intervals – begin with shorter, comfortable hills - upper body still & relaxed – power comes primarily from legs & core
• short, 10-20m up hill sprints for dynamic power
• 2-4 minute intervals on long gradual up hill, holding technique together toward top

INTERVALS
• fartlek transition intervals – 30 minutes while skiing the downhill/uphill transitions with quickness & power; some will be short & quick, others will be longer & steady
• 10/8/6/4/2/1 minutes – speed gradually increases until last 3 are all out
• 2&1 – 2 minutes fast/1 minute rest for 30 minutes

DISTANCE WORKOUTS
• great time to focus on technique – think while you ski
• never waste an easy ski – focus on various aspects of the movement
• spend part of the time with no pole and part with double pole only
• spend significant time on V2 skating – gradually increase the % of V2 time
• spend significant time on DP & kick DP in classic – gradually increase % of DP time

QUALITY
• should be BIG difference in HR between distance workouts and speed workouts
• should be BIG difference in HR between interval and rest
• during fast workouts, hold technique together as you fatigue
• work on quickness and speed to improve starts & finishes

“Work on your weaknesses first, then your strengths.”