



EXERCISES TO ENHANCE PERFORMANCE

Fitness Tip: text, photos and demonstrations by Jenn Lockwood

Dorsiflexion at the ankle and leg rotation are the topics of this issues fitness tips! Brad Jacobson, shared with us how we activate the tibialis anterior to dorsiflex the ankle, helping to maintain equal angles at the ankles and shin to cuff contact when we ski, during our January training. Here is my favorite way to condition this muscle for the skiing – TOE TAPS. Our goal will be for muscle endurance of the tibialis anterior.



Toe taps: Feet hip width apart, place the right foot ahead of the left, bend your knees and place both hands above your right knee (keeping the right foot anchored to the floor). Lift your right ball of foot up toward shin as high as you can (keeping your heel on the ground) and then tap your right foot to

the floor, repeat – lifting your right ball of foot as high as you can and tapping it as fast as you can. Continue for 30-90 seconds, switch feet.

At Winter Blast, our group worked with National Team member, Matt Boyd on off-piste terrain. Our groups common deficiency on the steeps off-piste was to square our hips with our ski tips through the finish of our turns. Our focus to correct this inefficient movement was to relearn how to stabilize the hips (upper body) to facilitate tipping and steering of our legs from apex through finish of the turn – allowing us to better shape and manage pressure through the finish of the turn and allow our body to move over our equipment into the next turn initiation.

For a great article going over leg rotation refer to *Help Your Legs Assert Their Independence* by Robin Barnes in the Winter 2011, 32 Degrees, pages 74-79. Below are listed a few of my favorite exercises for strengthening muscles that facilitate leg rotation.

Leg Rotations with paper plates and/or Fitter Discs: Standing in your athletic stance (feet hip to shoulder width apart) w/fitter discs placed under feet and standing in front of a mirror – perform



the exercises that Robin describes on page 75. Tip: focus on stabilizing your hips (part of your upper body) and/or even rotating them in the opposite direction of your feet. These exercises will target the strengthening of the internal and external rotators of the legs with goal to facilitate the femurs turning in the hips socket while the hips are stabilized.

Charlie Chaplain Pose



Rotate legs/femur to the right and left with opposing rotation at the hip and femur. Leg rotation may be limited due to tight hip & gluteal muscles – refer to *Stretch Your Performance through Hip Flexibility* by Robin Barnes in the Winter 2011, 32 Degrees, page 79.



Sidelying clam shell with or without resistance:

Lie completely on your side positioning the hips flexed at 60°, and the heels in alignment with the back. Slowly raise the top knee as high as possible while keeping both feet together, and keeping the back from moving with the knee. Lower the knee back down ¾ of the way so that there is constant tension. Place your hand on the muscle of the butt, and focus on creating the contraction at the point of contact while performing the exercise. For added challenge you can add a resistance band around your thighs.



Monster Walk (Hip Abduction w/superband): Begin in an athletic stance, rotate your legs outward and forward in large strides for 20 steps. Stay low. Repeat the movement moving backwards for 20 steps.



Resistance Band Rotation:

Assume a half-squat position and wrap a resistance band around your legs above the knees. Keeping your left leg stable and your hips and shoulders pointed forward, move your right knee back and forth. Switch legs. Go to the PEAK Fitness NW youtube page to see a demonstration of each of these exercises: www.youtube.com/PEAKfitnessNW.



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