



ARC THE SKI

Tip the ski on edge; sidecut and pressure will combine to bend it into an arc like this. Skidding has its place for speed control, but skis that are carving are fast.

FLEX THE ANKLES

Maintain pressure against the fronts of your boots in all phases of the turn.

OUTSIDE LEG LONG

The outside ski is where most of your weight is. Keeping your leg long allows you to resist the centrifugal forces that build through the belly of the turn.

Shred like Ted

THE BEST U.S. SKI TEAM EVER IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO CRUSH IT AT SOCHI. HERE'S WHAT EVERY SKIER CAN LEARN BY WATCHING WORLD CUP RIPPERS LIKE LIGETY. *By Michael Rogan*

Ski racing should be more popular in the U.S. We're home to the world's best women's downhill/super G team (Lindsey Vonn, Julia Mancuso, et al.), the world's best female slalom skier (Mikaela Shiffrin), and the world's best male GS skier (Ted Ligety), and we have every reason to expect a big medal haul at the Sochi

Olympics. Ski racers risk as much personal injury as athletes in any sport; their daring should awe and inspire us all.

And there are valuable lessons to be learned from watching them ski. Racing incorporates all the fundamentals of good ski technique, and many of the greatest skiers in non-racing

disciplines rely on their racing backgrounds.

Just this single still photo of Ligety gives all skiers, no matter their ability, a tremendous amount of guidance. Want to win beer-league races and NASTAR golds? Or just ski better? Tune in to the Olympics and pay attention. Here's what to keep in mind.

» **Carve, don't skid.** A ski is designed to turn if you tip it up and balance on its edge. Your weight and the ski's sidecut work together to bend the ski into a carve-ready arc that tracks cleanly through the snow. Notice how Ligety has his skis carving in the fall line, with very little skidded spray coming off them despite the speed he's



LEAD WITH THE ARM

By driving his inside arm and shoulder forward, Ligety keeps his upper body pointing slightly to the outside of his turn. It's the position of strength and stability.

BE STRONG

Strength, especially core strength, is key to resisting the huge forces of a carved turn at speed and maintaining balance.

INSIDE LEG SHORT

By flexing his inside leg, Ligety gives himself room to commit to the inside of the turn.

▶ Giant slalom is the most fundamental event in ski racing, and America's **Ted Ligety** might be the best GS racer ever. He's a two-time (and defending) world champion in the discipline, with four World Cup GS titles and one Olympic GS gold.



▶ SKI's director of instruction, **Michael Rogan**, is a PSIA Alpine Demo Team captain, USSA Team Academy coach, and Heavenly, Calif., instructor. He spends his summers enjoying more winter at Portillo, Chile, where he's resident manager.

carrying. This is the secret to going fast.

» **Keep the outside leg long.** By fully extending his outside (right) leg, Ligety accomplishes two things: He keeps his hips out in front of his feet, and he maintains dynamic balance. Notice the mostly straight line from his right boot to his hip. This allows him to stand strong and pressure the ski.

» **Keep the inside leg short.** Ligety allows his inside (left) leg to flex at the hip, knee, and ankle. This helps

him move to the inside of the turn. He commits with his entire body, relying on centrifugal force to keep from falling inward, as you do when turning a bike. » **Drive the inside shoulder.** Resist the urge to rotate your upper body in the direction you're turning. Ligety keeps his inside arm extended forward and his shoulders pointed slightly to the outside of the turn. This helps him to stand strong against his outside (right) ski, where most of his weight is.

» **Flex those ankles.** Ligety has the best ankle movement in the world. If you want to win your race, keep those ankles flexed. Feel your shins pressuring the tongues of your boots—always. Do this by engaging the muscles around the tops of your feet and the fronts of your lower legs. » **Hit the gym.** There's no substitute for strength. To manage g-forces like this without getting squashed, Ligety must be World Cup strong.