

# INSTRUCTION: Slalom



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**B**alance and speed are two crucial elements of skiing, but how do you use them? More importantly, let's look at how you use balance and speed together to make your skiing the best it has ever been.

## Balance

Being balanced on your ski involves much more than being centered over your feet. While that is the first step, it goes much deeper. To be truly balanced, all of your movements must work together to move the same direction at the same time. For instance, if you want to pull out for your gate, your shoulders, hips and feet must move together away from the boat to make an effective outbound move. If you try to make these movements independently you will find yourself feeling extreme disconnect throughout the course. If your entire body is making simple movements across the course and through the turns, you can truly be in tune with what your ski is doing and maximize your efficiency and pulling power.

## Speed

If speed is your friend, then maintaining constant speed is your best friend. Your speed starts with the acceleration you

take out on your gate pullout. From this point it is optimal to carry this same speed throughout the course. By carrying this speed and not decelerating in the turn, you allow yourself to maximize width on the boat and

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maintain position in the course. Any time you decelerate as a skier the boat continues on its straight line down the lake, thus forcing you more down course. The key is to move wide with speed, maintain a tight line and keep your ski moving through the backside of the turn.

## The Combination

Combining your balance and speed maximizes your potential. By taking your strong balanced position over your ski and using it to carry speed in the course you allow yourself to take more width and ski a more up-course line. One thing that really helps bring these two together is keeping both hands on the handle longer into the turn. This does not mean pulling longer, but keeping both hands on for balance. As your free hand comes off the handle your inside shoulder naturally begins to drop. By keeping your hand on longer it allows your shoulders to stay more level, thus allowing you to carry speed through the turn more effectively. Remember that simple is better. As skiers we often tend to over complicate things. Having a balanced pulling and turning position linked together as fluid as possible maximizes effectiveness.

*Nautique Boats, Radar Skis, O'Neill Wetsuits & Clothing and Performance Ski & Surf sponsor Brooks Wilson. Check out his Web site - [thewilsonbros.com](http://thewilsonbros.com) and follow @The\_Wilson\_Bros on Twitter.*



