



HOLLAND

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www.dutchinterskiteam.nl

The Dutch's key message asked how a lowland country with a humble mountain heritage could add value to the snowsports industry. The answer: be creative.

This creativity starts away from the mountains (off-snow workshop). An impressive 300 000 customers in the Netherlands are motivated to train in preparation for their trip to the hills. The Dutch have 21 dry slopes, 7 indoor slopes (one of which I was told was long enough to host a FIS slalom special), and 44 revolving slopes.

These rolling carpets are big business in Holland. Most are, apparently, fully booked from October until the end of winter. People use them as gyms. The carpets can mimic the movement pattern of competition-bumps, slalom turns, even long turns. However, on the carpet it is difficult to engage the edges early as you are likely to be spat out of the top. A snowboard colleague informs me BASI trainer Peter Kuwall is an advocate so he may be able to inform those who are interested.

On snow, the Dutch team presented the *Dutch Toolbox*. Far from involving bubblers, vaporizers or grinders, the Dutch Toolbox held the TEA concept: TRY, EXERCISE, APPLY.

TRY- Create an awareness of the theme.

EXERCISE- Learn by doing, where drills are related to the original theme.

APPLY- Master the theme by variations in range-rate-distribution, on different slopes, at different speeds.

It may sound like the cousin, albeit stunted, of our own TIED model. Similarly, they are result-orientated not prescriptive (where the original theme is generally output focused), and ever mindful of the needs of the learner.

The Dutch also used a resource called Pole Position. It is a flexible strap that connects between the handles of your pole. It is designed to give the skier a kinesthetic and visual cue to where your hands are so the skier can calibrate his upper body to an effective posture. I can see how it helps with separation and develops upper body tension, though it aims to resolve a symptom rather than a cause, and a bungee cord is cheaper. Given my own rather loose skiing, which I probably wrongly consider a quality, I felt like a claustrophobic stuck in a lift.

Having looked at the website, the same company makes poles upon which you can screw weights to the basket. I can see the worth in this. Maybe if I put a really heavy weight on my left pole I could angulate when turning right. According to the website, *it can help you experience the critically acclaimed aha-feeling.*