



## **Interski 2015. Report on New Zealand by Rupert Tildesley**

New Zealand presented themselves very well throughout the conference. They were professional, slick and came armed with many resources for their listeners. They had fantastic videos of their ski fields and demo team in action. They delivered 3 off-snow workshops which centred around their customer service philosophy of **Attract – Retain – Develop**. Whilst this is more suited to the ski schools that serve the clients, the whole nature of customer service is wrapped in the instructor system and becomes a core part of their training. The three workshops dealt with one of these each in turn. Some key facts that drive the philosophies:

- 5 resorts in North Island
- 23 in South Island
- 13 commercial fields
- 10 club fields
- 30,000 acres of terrain
- 1.3m skiers/snowboarders (35% of the population)
- 43% of whom are from NZ, the rest abroad.
- Tourism has now overtaken beef and lamb as revenue for the nation

Some of the initiatives they use to back their philosophies include:

- NZ\$ 70million invested in infrastructure and experience in 3 years.
- Athletes and events – Winter Games, Race training, Freeride World Tour, World heli challenge.

Challenges they face in their quest:

- Location – it may be a focal point for southern hemisphere skiing but New Zealand is a long way away!
- Competition from other industries. New Zealand is an active place and competition is fierce from canyoning, bungy jumping etc
- Infrastructure is poor. Many roads are not tarmacked and distances from town to ski field can be a negative. There is little they can do about either of these without major government backing.

Their final off-snow workshop centred around their producing of professional instructors and some key facts gleaned are:

- Level 1 is a 5.5 day course
- Level 2 is 7.5 days



- Level 3 is 9.5 days
- Trainers cert is 7 days.
- There are some modules to complete between these as there are in the BASI system.

They talked a good deal about the ideological shift they have had towards online learning and much of the course are now completed online. Interested readers can take a look for themselves at <http://elearning.nzsia.org> using the username: Interski and password: Interski where there is a demo area.

You can also download their instructor manuals at <http://www.nzsia.org/download/>

Their on snow workshop centred mainly around their progression of kids up to 15 years old. They have had a revamp of the awards system for ski and snowboard schools. I did not feel there was anything ground breaking in this presentation but it was nice to know how their ski school awards work. More information on them can be found at <http://www.treblecone.com/lessons-and-rentals/ski-and-snowboard-school/kids-snowsports-levels/>

**The next part of this report comes from Interski Team Coach Andi McCann who attended one of the on snow workshops and offered this appraisal:**

It was run by Garrett Shore and Jon Ahlsen.

Focus was specifically on the transition phase of the turn and they chose medium radius to demonstrate this.

Previously they focused on SAFETY/FUN/LEARNING

It's now... SAFETY/FUN/ACHIEVING

They're strongly market lead by their approach and in particular their techniques, hence only the need for shorter radius turns, medium is maximum radius at this level.

Most customers have a short time up on the hill and mainly a weekend only skier/visitor, athletic and ready for action!

First we looked at their Achievable Tasks, using Medium Radius Turns highlight this.

Garrett mentioned 3 areas they focus on and discuss/deliver with students.

CONNECTED (the connection to the snow during transition)

STACKED (the bodies alignment, bend all joints, there was a focus on ankle flex at this stage)

PATIENCE (waiting for the forces to build, do not create artificial downforce or add pressure)

This was achieved by looking at another 3 areas regarding range and direction of movements:

[www.basiinterski.org.uk](http://www.basiinterski.org.uk)



VERTICAL

ROTATION (this was the femur rotation/roll when flexed creating edge)

FORE/AFT

We then moved into exercises demonstrating these key areas of focus (Connected, Staked, Patience) using the 3 movements.

SKATE, used for the CONNECTED stage, used with quite a long glide phase to demonstrate using the snow/surface to support you and not to rush movements.

ONE FOOT LIFT, used after the Skate drill, lifting the inside foot through the turn, start to lift during the transition for increased patience, support and to enhance the Connectivity.

CRAB, we would call this the Chinese Snowplough. This was used for showing how we Rotate the thigh/femur. Use on flatter terrain so not to edge too much. In my opinion this is where the workshop broke down demonstration this movement, it increased the skiers chance of injury.

There was a lot of discussion from Croatia in particular and other countries that couldn't get their heads around PATIENCE and CONNECTED.

They really were adamant that you have to create pressure at the start of a turn rather than passive managing then reacting to forces. Heated discussions continued when many participants started to leave the workshop.

Garett and Jon were not the strongest deliverers, however did quite a good job.

It's interesting to see that a Nation that I once looked up to, in my opinion are not as strong in content or Trainers strength.

I've followed many NZSIA workshops over the previous Interski events, and they have a few contradictions in their system.

I can see what they were trying to achieve and agree with their approach, it could have been stronger in delivery and content.