

Mike Wiegele Helicopter Skiing

Ski Tips & Techniques

DECEMBER 2010 - TIPS FROM JOHN CREWS

During my time as a guide in Blue River, I have met and skied with a lot of incredible people. One of the first groups I worked with came as a group from Sun Valley with their friend and ski instructor John Crews and his wife Janet.

Over the years I have become great friends with John and Janet and their ski group. We have shared lots of laughs and some of the best powder skiing anywhere in the world.

John also helped shape how I wanted to move forward as a ski professional and more importantly, how I wanted my clients to perceive me as a ski professional.

John's story is an interesting one. He started out racing at Mt. Baker then moved to Sun Valley to teach skiing part time and pursue ski movie work with Warren Miller, Willy Bogner and Dick Barrymore. When Barrymore created the first freestyle contests in Sun Valley and Aspen, John took first place and went on to win the National Aerial Championships in Aspen.

During this time John realized that teaching skiing was his true passion. He turned his focus to being the best ski instructor he could be and has spent the past 40 years plying his trade. He has been incredibly successful, becoming one of the most prolific Private instructors in the history of Sun Valley and being named one of the top 100 instructors in the United States.

I sat down with John after dinner the other night and picked his brain about the past, present and future of skiing.

Do you remember your first powder skiing experience?

“I was 7 years old. My parents drove us to Mt. Baker for our first ski trip. They didn't believe in ski lifts and really didn't offer me any pointers but as I started down the first beautiful powder slope...straight lining it..... I knew I was hook. I spent the next 3 hours climbing through waist deep powder to get to the top.”

What are your 3 go to pointers for all skiers in powder?

“The 3 H's...Hands, Hips and Hamstrings. First, Hands control the fate of the upper body. Project your hands forward to project your momentum forward. Second, hips. Getting your hips inside the turn is critical to counter the forces of the turn. And finally, hamstrings. Hamstrings are the least appreciated muscle for skiing. The hamstrings are

key to retracting your skis by lifting your heels as opposed to using your hips flexors which lifts your tips and puts skiers in the back seat.

From your years of teaching skiing, what is the future of skiing?

“Historically we have always looked at skiing as a gravity sport. Modern equipment is making skiing more and more a sport of centrifugal forces. New skis and boots allow skiers to generate forces that were inconceivable in the past. Skiers will continue to strive to perfect dynamic powerful turns in all conditions and instructors will be there to help them do it.

Thanks John!

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