

Annual Toboggan Handling and Patroller Skills Refresher

OVERVIEW

The skills denoted below should be demonstrated on an annual basis by active alpine patrollers. Rather than making this feel like a test please practice regularly and make this more of a team activity (and something that becomes routine).

Appropriate terrain should be identified based on the prevailing conditions (and patroller performance); ideally this would include moderate to advance terrain.

If you have any questions or concerns about a performance, please discuss with your patrol director or shift supervisor, as well as the region S&T advisor Eric Speedy.

Finally, if you observe ANYTHING that you feel is unsafe in your judgment, stop the drill.

PATROLLER SKILLS – SNOW PLOW

CRITICAL STANDARD: Does patroller maintain effective movement consistent speed by slipping the edge(s) without railing during terrain changes and has the ability to stop?

TIPS FOR THE SESSION: The real key is keeping forward pressure on the inside shin of you leg/boot. Having your hands forward is nearly critical for this skill (otherwise your weight is back). So encourage patrollers to really push in their boot and keep their hands within their field of vision. If they are having trouble, have them hold both bolls in front of them (so they cannot bring their hands back)

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Maintains BALANCE, ski or rides with stability
2. Demonstrates effective use of EDGES
3. Uses ROTARY movements to steer skis or the board at the appropriate point of the turn or skill maneuver
4. Applies effective PRESSURE throughout the turn or skill maneuver
5. Maintain awareness of safe SPEED and consistency as appropriate for terrain and conditions
6. Demonstrates snowplow confined to a narrow corridor
7. Demonstrates consistent speed in all direction changes and terrain changes
8. Stops in a snowplow position (skiing) or with a “hockey stop” maneuver at the end of the course (or upon request)

PATROLLER SKILLS – SIDESLIP

CRITICAL STANDARD: Does the patroller maintain effective, consistent movement by slipping the edge(s) in either direction without traversing in a narrow corridor (or prescribed course)?

TIPS FOR THE SESSION: The real key is opening up your hips so your body is facing down the fall-line. The key is usually to spread your feet in both direction; so, this would include keeping your

feet approximately shoulder width apart and scissoring your feet so your uphill heel is out in front of your downhill toe. Ask patrollers to really look and reach in the direction they are traveling.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Maintains BALANCE, ski or rides with stability
2. Demonstrates effective use of EDGES
3. Uses ROTARY movements to steer skis or the board at the appropriate point of the turn or skill maneuver
4. Applies effective PRESSURE throughout the turn or skill maneuver
5. Maintain awareness of safe SPEED and consistency as appropriate for terrain and conditions
6. Demonstrates sideslip confined to a narrow corridor
7. Demonstrates consistent speed in all direction changes and terrain changes

PATROLLER SKILLS – TRANSITION MANEUVER

CRITICAL STANDARD: Does the patroller maintain effective, consistent movement with firm braking edge(s) on the snow (at all times) while changing direction and not deviating from the “fall line” corridor.

TIPS FOR THE SESSION: This skill really builds on both the sideslip and snowplow but this is NOT a turn. Most people will want to turn across the slope; remind them that they should be moving down the fall line at all time (and NOT moving across the hill). The real key is keeping your weight centered over the skis; at the end of the maneuver many will have difficulty matching their skis back together in a sideslip because their weight is back. Keeping the body centered (i.e. over the center of the ski and facing down the fall line) will help them finish the maneuver.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Maintains BALANCE, ski or rides with stability
2. Demonstrates effective use of EDGES
3. Uses ROTARY movements to steer skis or the board at the appropriate point of the turn or skill maneuver
4. Applies effective PRESSURE throughout the turn or skill maneuver
5. Maintain awareness of safe SPEED and consistency as appropriate for terrain and conditions
6. Demonstrates consistent speed in all direction changes and terrain changes
7. Maintains a fall line corridor decent
8. Changes direction using a braking edge maneuver (and not by turning)
9. Boarder Specific: demonstrates consistent speed during direction changes, going from one braking edge to the other

LOADED TOBOGGAN – HANDLES

CRITICAL STANDARD: Is able to run toboggan in a smooth, controlled, efficient, and safe manner?

TIPS FOR THE SESSION: The real key is keeping the sled under control, which usually means effective braking. There are a few methods for stopping the sled: (1) good route selection (i.e. avoiding ice or variable terrain), (2) effective edge control (i.e. edge angulations and not just leaning back on the sled), (3) downward pressure on the handles to create friction, (4) deploying the chain to create even more friction (especially when downward pressure is applied to the handles). Also, remind patrollers to communicate to the tail-roper and check on their patient.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Selects appropriate route
2. Controls speed and skis safely and expediently
3. Provides smooth, safe, and comfortable ride for the patient
4. Skis in a balanced, stable position
5. Controls descent
6. Controls direction
7. Brakes toboggan as needed
8. Communicates as necessary with patient and tail operator
9. Demonstrates effective wedge, sideslip, and transitions, as needed
10. Avoids slipping during traverses

LOADED TOBOGGAN – TAIL ROPE

CRITICAL STANDARD: Does rear operator safely and effectively control the toboggan as needed?

TIPS FOR THE SESSION: Rope management and proper position are the critical components. Remind patrollers to keep “light tension” on the rope and actively manage the rope. Their hands should remain in front of them (same as if they had the handles of the toboggan) and the rope should be feed in/out as needed to maintain light tension. A quick tip: tell patrollers they should always be able to see their hands in front of them (and not up over their head). On position, its simple, are they in a good spot to arrest the sled if the person in the handles lost control. This would also include not being too close (~10-15 feet back) and not directly behind the sled (where they could fall into the toboggan if they lost control).

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Traverses left and right with minimal slipping of toboggan.
2. Assists with braking as needed.
3. Brakes toboggan effectively with edge and pressure movements.
4. Controls speed using wedge, sideslip, and transition.
5. Makes smooth and controlled turns and transitions.
6. Coordinates change of direction with front operator.

7. Generally sideslips in same direction as front operator.
8. Maintains rear of toboggan in stable position.
9. Controls rope with hand or belay position.
10. Skis with stability and control.
11. Adapts to terrain and condition changes.
12. Monitors condition of patient.
13. Maintains safe distance from toboggan.