

Starting the Turn

by Sean MacCarron

When in a comfortable and efficient stance on the board, we have a perfect reference point to move from and return to. We are balanced on two feet. Looking at the snowboard attached to us, we have a tip or nose and a tail. If any additional weight is shifted towards the front of the board this will now make the same leading area of the board "heavy". Being on a, slippery slope gravity now assists the rider by drawing the front of the board down the hill. Not only because it is now the heavier end of the board but also because the board has been flattened. This means that the base of the board is even from edge to edge on the snow and therefore neither one is engaged.

From this point the rider can choose to engage either the heel or the toe edge depending on the chosen manoeuvre.

It is important to note that the mechanics of riding "switch" or with the opposite foot forward are exactly the same as regular riding so if one understands the mechanics it is easy to learn some of the more challenging aspects sooner just by having the knowledge to do so.

There are many arguments about the current methodologies being taught in varying countries. If we simply review the mechanics involved then it is important to realize that the ultimate goal is efficiency. Sometimes the snow conditions or the physical capabilities require adaptation of established movement patterns.

To make the most obvious of statements, it is necessary to have both knees and both ankles active to execute any or all, efficient movements. Sometimes everything will be simultaneous and at other times it will be sequential. Every situation can require some form of adaptation to be successful. Let us not forget it is the determined stance or set up on the board that will be the most integral part of the foundation. Physical capability and understanding will certainly contribute to the many varying levels of success.

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