



The Outside Edge – The Weak Edge?

Why? Here is my rationale.

Balance and edge control is the foundation of skating. The inside edges are mainly used for starting and striding. Even with a minimal use of the inside edges, it will provide greater stability than using the flat of the blades. The more a player digs into the ice with his/her inside edges and bends the knees, the more traction is available and the more difficult it is to get knocked down.

Balancing on the outside edge is initially more difficult than balancing on either the flat or the inside edge. Regardless of difficulty, it is an essential aspect of skating on a curve. To skate and balance on the outside edge of the right foot, it is necessary for a player to lean his or her right skate, knee and thigh strongly towards the outside of his or her body so the outside blade edge cuts into the ice at a strong angle about 45 degrees. Using the left foot as the push foot, the player thrusts off and glides forward on the right outside edge. The player lifts his or her left foot off the ice after the push and holds it close to the

skating foot. It's important for the player to keep his or her skating knee well bent and his or her body weight on the back half of the blade. The player will be turning in a clock wise direction.

The outside edge is mainly used for turning and stopping. For example, in order to perform a forward crossover properly it is imperative to obtain a full extension (step – crossover – under push). When crossing over e.g. left foot over right foot, to acquire a proper leg extension and to avoid loss of power, a player must feel the outside edge of his or her inside (right) skate cutting the ice. If the outside edge is neglected, a player will lose half of his or her power. Besides the forward crossover, the outside edge on the inside skate is required for completing a strong two foot stop, a tight glide turn and a powerful backward crossovers.

It is truly amazing how many players progress through the minor hockey system often up to the midget level and above without having good control of his or her outside edges. As a result, it

adversely affects a player's stopping, turning, crossovers and overall skating agility. Many minor hockey coaches do not teach this skating skill well enough and often players as well do not practice outside edge skating skills properly.

Players will often practice an outside edge drill without getting out of his or her comfort zone. A player is reluctant to push on the outside edge to the point of falling so as to stretch his or her game. As a result, a player will develop a deficiency in his or her overall skating which continues to follow the player throughout his or her hockey career. Many players are cut during tryouts due to inadequate skating which is supported by a weak outside edge!

...Food for Thought.

"It is impossible to underestimate the importance of the coach in the development of an athlete. From the youngest peewee player to the elite athlete, the coach is a pivotal character in the moral as well as the physical development of his/her charges.

The more intensive the training, the greater the opportunity for moulding the athlete's character and personal philosophy as it pertains to his/her athletic career. Elite athletes appear to cleave to their coaches as mentors, guardians, and, in some cases, almost as surrogate parents. They are fortunate indeed if their coach is concerned with their moral and intellectual development as well as their athletic training."

(Report of the Dubin Commission of Inquiry into the Use of Drugs and Banned Practices Intended to Increase Athletic Performance, 1990)

**Cherish Yesterday
Dream Tomorrow
Live Today**



**Your Skates Are Your
Most Important Piece
of Hockey Equipment!**

*The right fit and sharpening will
improve your performance on the ice!*

For Professional and Expert Skate Sharpening
check out Chris, Rick and the expert staff at
Professional Skate in Marda Loop.