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## #Nordic #Skiing and a review of Double Poling, 2015



As you all know the class started by having everyone bring their rock skis with no kick wax on them.

We then gingerly skied over to an area, for the class, that did not have much leaves or rock showing through. As you all discovered there was a slight uphill one way and a slight downhill the other way.

Some of the exercises that were used included chicken pecking, with your hands held right beside your shoulders, elbows flared, and you fell forwards from the ankles, with the legs held in a bone supported position only about 6 inches (15cm). Hips came forward, with no bend at the waist and butt tucked in, not sticking out.

Next exercise you reached forward with the elbows being bent at 90 degrees or even bent a bit more in front of you. Hands were shoulder width apart, with the elbows outside the hands (chicken wing). Elbows reached forward at least a fist width in front of your stomach. You then fell forward only about a foot (30cm), still like a chicken pecking.

A question was asked, how high do the hands come up? This is sort of determined by speed and the length of the poles, but you see a lot of hands coming up to, at least eye level, nowadays. I also know that for classic, a lot of skiers have poles that come to top of their shoulders now, rather than under the armpit like they use to.

As you fell forward from the ankle joint you tried to stretch the stomach and hip flexors muscles, while also squeezing the cheeks. Imagery of holding a loonie in your butt cheeks, or sucking your belly button to your backbone was also mentioned. The legs were in the bone supported position.

Now the timing of the slight knee drop to load the poles more with your body weight, is the key. \*\*You must load the poles only after the hips are starting to pass the ankles. You will feel your weight behind the ankles, over the ankles and then ahead of the ankles. Do not leave your hips behind, they must move forward.

The next exercise was to drive the elbows back behind your trunk. We should be able to stick a pole handle between your back and the bend in the elbow. The finish of the push is still up in the air. I am teaching no elbow extension any more, (no triceps). However elbow extension is ok, but that depends on your tricep strength and snow conditions and if you are following someone, etc. You also feel a stretch in the chest muscles and the chin will be up and pointing ahead.

One other exercise was to float. This occurs as your elbows and body come forwards. I mentioned that perhaps you could think of directing an orchestra or pointing to something ahead of you, with your fingers. Your whole body will be mostly in a relaxed position for just a moment. This time will allow new blood to flush through the body. Also pre-stretching a muscle will allow it to contract stronger. When you come up and float, the rib cage mechanically takes in more air. Breath out forcibly as your poles contact the snow.

If your core is sore you did the double poling right, and if your arms are sore perhaps you need to look at your timing. Your poling motion should be straight forward down and back, no collapsing of the arms or tripodding. Pole baskets should be planted within approximately 6 inches (15cm) of your skis, depending on your shoulder width.

Gravity, core, body weight, and then finally, use muscle, last. Use big muscles first and smaller muscles last.

Try to get in your first 15 hours of easy skiing in the next week or two.  
The #CanadianBirkie is not that many weeks away. :)

Go Ski, Have FUN, Be Safe.