To
PSIA
&
all the Ski Schools

For Ski-boys & Ski-girls everywhere

> & For Graham Dorsey

> > May 2010

Apology:

> Sincerely, GH

ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER

<u>Skiers</u>-- Whether you're a beginning, intermediate, or advanced skier, this *Heinsian DOWNHILL SKIING* manual is your lift ticket to reaching your full potential. Using your uncommon everyday forgotten <u>horse sense</u>, take responsibility for your own learning:

Get mounted on the right

ski equipment

(and cheaper than you thunk)

Develop three basic skills--for balance

Set up three primary variables--for Comfort Zone & Versatility

Analyze any given ski turn, and understand turn-linkage

Find out from **GARY HEINS**, maverick ski-boy straight from the *HeinsQuarters* of the **SWINGIN' G WINTER RANGE**, how to learn from yourself and the mountain and its snow. Be one with your skis; and ski fluently, in any context.

Ski Teachers-- Read the fun print: You can lead a man to powder, but you cannot make him ski. Knowing how to ski . . . is only a drop in the bucket to good skiing and teaching: knowing who-nwhen-n-why to ski . . . a new slope, a new snow condition, the same old slope or snow in a fresh new way, . . . or knowing when to make an equipment change--this knowing who-what-when-nwhere-n-why, rather than just how, is the key to progressive learning, as young horses have been telling their handlers for centuries. This DOWNHILL SKIING manual will help you get out of the student's way and let them reach their full potential. But be careful: your students may learn to ski better than you can. . . . One more thing you should know: Kept down for decades by too much SS politics and pecking orders, GARY HEINS is now U.S. SKI-TURNER GENERAL with a new chart defining Comfort Zone, which helps Prosecute Bad Ski Instructors.

GARY HEINS

DOWNHILL SKIING

Get certified . . . to ride the high lift

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SWINGIN' G BOOK

ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER

---Heinsian

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SKIING

~ GARY HEINS ~

U.S. SKI-TURNER GENERAL

ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER ---Heinsian DOWNHILL SKIING

by **GARY HEINS**

Published by:

SWINGIN' G BOOKS

PO Box 784 Saint Johns, Arizona 85936

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"Now there's one thing that'll make it easy: I'll ski like you, and, Baby, you ski like me ---let's ski this run . . . one turn at a time."

> ---GARY HEINS & His DUAL GS SKI-BOY BAND

DISCLAIMER . . . & CLAIMER

It is not my intention to harass ski areas or ski schools with frivolous lawsuits dealing with natural problems beyond their control. I do, however, intend to help as many skiers and teachers as I possibly can . . . to reach their full potential, much to the dismay of Professional Ski Instructors of America and a few other charlatans. This book doesn't claim to be for everybody, just wise open-minded teachers . . . and confident ski-it-yourselfers, as well as those students and teachers who feel neglected, misunderstood, abused, even discouraged, disempowered, or disenfranchised . . . by the dysfunctional pecking-order status-quo. Oh, the most selfish and dysfunctional of instructors will want to read this book also, so that they can defend themselves in court; if they read it soon enough, they might start doing their job right and not have to defend themselves in court, as from now on This Heinsian DOWNHILL SKIING Manual is the yardstick all ski lessons are measured by—so this book is for everybody.

A big reason snow-boarding has taken off like wild-fire for more than twenty years . . . is because of Political Correctness, . . . and because some fed-up ski instructors weren't able to climb the political ski-school ladder: Many in Ski School saw a more-lucrative ground-floor opportunity in becoming ignoble and igmobile snow-board instructors instead, much like a prostitute. ---Witness a high percentage of ski instructors and other skiers who wouldn't be caught dead shackled on a snow-board kneeling down or sitting on their butt as if controlled by a pimp or a rogue religion.

Let's face it: the Ski Schools haven't gotten the job done in this country for a couple of decades now---that's another reason why snow-boarding has taken off like wild-fire plowing over the more practical mode of skiing. The Ski Schools generally haven't done the Skiing Public justice, and they haven't done all the instructors justice: it's been politics as usual with too much factional-n-individual scheming for power, with too few guys at the top . . . living off the high turnover of instructors. That high turnover is perpetuated by the greedy few at the top, and it helps them keep their cushy jobs "training" a constant supply of fresh new instructors while keeping the general populace unskilled and ignorant. When The Reformation came along by the late 1990s, and 'Shaped Skis' were supposed to make skiing much easier, the Powers-That-Ski decided to make the tasks and techniques that much more difficult, especially near the top of their certification ladder; meanwhile, they made entry-level certification extremely easy so that everybody and their brother could be a "certified" instructor, even the most mediocre of skiers . . . and ski-bums who just want the perks but don't even want to teach.

Every now and then, an individual ski instructor shines above the rest, . . . only to be stifled or even totally shut down, by politics or economics, because he's a threat to the comfy status-quo. In 1980, passing Associate-Level Certification in PSIA's Northern Division, they complimented me on my "Strong Communication Skills"; however, in PSIA's Intermountain Divi-

sion in the years to follow, they passed me in Skiing Ability and Technical Knowledge at the Full-Cert-Level, but they flunked me in "Communication Skills" three times in three years---they did not give credit where credit was due, and they still don't. They might as well have done wrong to Clint Eastwood or Charles Bronson or Sam Elliott . . . or Erin Brockavich . . . or Tim Robbins in *The Shawshank Redemption*, because it has been my life-long purpose to continue doing what I do best, . . . and to prove them wrong and expose them for what they are, . . . ever since.

Everything we think, feel, and do . . . matters; individually and collectively, we create our own destiny---if you don't understand that yet, you are missing the boat . . . or at least the last chair-lift ride to a more celestial place. This book is for leaders more than followers, ski-it-yourselfers who are willing to take responsibility for their own turns in life---as responsibility means freedom; . . . but we must follow something for awhile . . . until we learn how to lead for ourselves. You don't have to do anything I say in this book; but God help you if you think you can learn from a politicallymotivated instructor with a hidden agenda, or from a hedonistic ski-bum masquerading as a 'certified' instructor---whether He or It, you already have the God Force inside you, and you don't need anyone's permission to ski through the Narrow Gate into Heaven. When learning from a book, the student must take responsibility for his own safety; however, when learning from an instructor out on the mountain, the student is somewhat dependent on the instructor for safety. While obviously spiritual and somewhat psychological, skiing is also a highly physical activity: for every thousand new-age gurus coaching millions to "just close your eyes, and think positive," we are lucky to find one instructor really offering the people what they need. Things have gotten so silly lately in our Nation's politics and socioeconomics . . . the Meek have started inheriting the Earth---singer Susan Boyle's long-overdue success in 2009 was a Turning Point; and, from now on, with the help of this book, the most out-of-line ski instructors and instructor trainers, PSIA or otherwise, will be held responsible for their arrogant, self-serving, ignorant and/or subversive actions.

The problem is deep-rooted, and it goes way beyond just ski school--it's hundreds if-not-thousands of years of puerile tradition . . . in almost
every walk of life. Enjoy what you learn here up on the mountain and
anywhere else in life where you can apply it, kindly giving attribution; . . .
and you're welcome to transfer what you learn here . . . to another walk of
life that needs help----but this niche is taken (as well as some of my other
topics, like WESTERN SWING). Remembering the childhood story illustrating the importance of recognizing the Truth, we need to admit that the
Emperor is not wearing any clothes, in every walk of life where we see it;
and we need to do it right now if not yesterday---otherwise, the planet and
its people may not have much of a future, and learning downhill skiing will
be the least of our troubles.

---GARY HEINS SWINGIN' G BOOKS Bear with me, Beginners, while I send a note to any Neigh-Sayers & Know-It-Alls out there:

Brief Prologue----May Day! May Day! 2010

This book was originally laid-out in 1990, but it is as true today in 2010 as it was back then---and I've had twenty more years to tinker with it. While skis and boots may have generally changed for the better in recent years, becoming easier to operate, the requirements for learning to ski have pretty much stayed the same: mountains are still mountains, snow is still snow, and people are still people (although I wonder sometimes). Back when the 'Straight Skis' kept you more honest, ski teaching had to be done more correctly; one of the main problems with the recent Reformation of Ski Technology with 'Shaped Skis' . . . is that it has made many instructors lose focus----they've given the skis themselves too much power, much like a rogue computer, and they've forgotten how to help the student learn to be responsible and take control. The new skis operate pretty much the same as the old skis: they just carve a little easier is all, but all skis need to be skidable---a ski that won't skid is like a car with no brakes. ---Let's not forget: 'Straight Skis' already had Shape, so 'Shaped Skis' are not the totally new and different phenomenon the Ski Industry would have you believe. And, even if the newer ski technology carves a lot easier, every skier still has his threshold where he had better start skidding to brush off too much speed---even for most experts it is somewhere on intermediate steepness. Not being part of a conspiratorial trend full of Planned Obsolescence to milk your money . . . and MissInformation to control everyone's brain, . . . this book will be just as truthful fifty years from now as it is today . . . and was twenty years ago.

> ---GARY HEINS U.S. SKI-TURNER GENERAL

ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER

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"A Ski-boy is Helpful: he must go out of his way ... to do a Good Turn for someone everyday."

> ---Ski-boys of the Swingin' G, 1993

Foreword: Meet Gary Heins

You don't know Gary Heins yet maybe. He's no Olympic Gold Medalist, no Infamous Extreme Skier, yet most have agreed since the early 1980s he is an expert skier and teacher. Some of his best skiing buddies have been World-Famous Extremes Skiers and Olympic Gold Medalists, and some have been nothing more then wedge-turners: unlike most skiers and teachers, he has skied with the best of them . . . and the worst of them---most skiers never have the inclination to do both, either way. And he has a credential the average Extreme Skier or Olympic Racer is not likely to have: Gary started skiing as a total beginner at the ripe old age of 18 (oh, he had one measly day the spring previous at 17&9months); and, since the age of 20 in 19&79, he has skied down in the trenches with thousands of recreational ski students most medalists and extreme skiers don't have the patience to wait for. Gary is a true teacher, and he feels about his students the same way many parents feel about their children. Says Gary, "In the beginning, I became a ski instructor mainly so I could learn it better myself---I couldn't afford much in the way of ski lessons; but I soon found out I'd just as soon have students with me, especially frustrated students who've been abused, neglected, or misunderstood---and they're out there by the millions." After three seasons teaching and six seasons total on skis, Gary was acknowledged by Professional Ski Instructors of America in skiing ability and technical knowledge at their full-certified level---"But that's still a long time to get good," he admits, even though he was ahead of schedule compared to most skiers, even a high-percentage of the early head-starters, "---it shouldn't have to take that long." In 1990, after more than ten years learning full-time from his students---and much of that time was invested gathering his thoughts and writing this manual,---Gary had found his niche being the liaison between you and the gold medalist or world champion, the liaison between you and the mountain and its snow, the liaison between you and yourself.

(Now, in 2010, after going in and out of exile a couple of times because of his above-average teaching, he is also the liaison between you and the MissInformation and petty politics and pecking orders that have grown rampant in the Ski Industry since the advent of snow-boarding and better though-more-complicated ski equipment. Gary's few years in exile have helped him to sit-back and see the overall picture: he's been deep into the system a number of times, and he's seen it well from a distance. The more comfortable instructors who've been able to stay in the business each year-after-year see only tiny bits of change at a time; but, when you are out for enough years like Gary, over five at one stretch, you come back flabbergasted by the change, change mostly for the worse. Listen to this: "When I finally got back into the locker room of a small Montana ski area after my longest hiatus, I saw an older gentleman getting ready for the day---'Oh, splendid!' I thought, 'an older comrade, an ally, who knows the business like I do, or better!' . . . but, come to find out, the older gentleman was a new recruit who barely knew how to ski or teach---and, within that season, after 'picking up one too many hippopotamuses,' he was disillusioned by the whole fiasco . . . and back to taking it easy as a mediocre civilian skier. ---You don't start a ski-teaching career at retirement age," says Gary, "but try explaining that to pyramid-scheme PSIA." Then, he says, "When I come back a new face to a new ski school after even a short hiatus, I know what it's like to have power-hungry PSIA Examiners eyeing me like fresh meat, more pyramid-scheme income for their pockets---but they soon get nervous and irritated when they find out I know more than they do about the Ski-Teaching Business . . . and have no intention of signing up for more of their pecking-order politics.")

Let's note that Gary started writing before he ever started skiing and teaching. And, as a teacher, he felt obliged to read most of the how-to books on skiing; but, being a writer, he is highly critical of other writers, and he has found many of the books on how-to ski, . . . well, limited or lacking, sometimes even dangerous: "They're usually too flowery with that popular new-age right-brain approach, forgetting how physical skiing can be; or they have too much emphasis on racing and complicated technique for most recreational skiers, and there's too much time spent on hard-pack, with many teacher's having a difficult time breaking the ice for

subjects like powder and crud or steeps." One modern book he found, which came out by two of the more famous magazine ski writers, thicker than the one in your hands now, tells in its last paragraph about all the stuff they haven't covered yet---powder, crud, moguls, ice, steeps---"these are," it said, "the subject of another book." --- "Powder is not a separate book," Gary challenged, "it's just a different chapter maybe, or just a few new paragraphs placed in the right time and place." A later book, he found, dangerously implies that you can master skiing in one weekend. ---"That will never be the case," he says; "Learn Skiing In a Weekend is a gimmick title of the worst kind, preying on a spoiled quick-fix society. But I would agree that you can treat beginners like real skiers with dignity from day one, letting them feel a few inches of powder if it's handy." Further, he says, "When you begin to write about something, and are sincere about getting at the Truth, it's amazing how much you thought to be true may turn out half-true or even totally false" (---just look at moist Religions). I believe what Gary means is: beware of writers who learn their writing skills in one weekend; to conceive and give birth to and raise a healthy, open, honest how-to book such as this one . . . takes more than a few days away from the fun on the slopes. "I get so sick of right-brain ski books or books that are just too physical," says Gary; "how about a whole-brain, whole-body, whole-heart approach for a change?!--and the same goes for those new-age gurus." Most of his other titles are fine works of literature, rather than just positive-thinking or ho-hum how-to; the title The Greatest Ski Instructor alone gives readers goose-bumps. (Meanwhile, the Powers-That-Ski PSIA literature on ski instruction is similar to reading the Federal Government's 2010 Health Care Plan, full of complex official language and plenty of tricky double-talk and no poignancy whatsoever, . . . or parts of the Old Testament of the Holy Bible, full of skier-n-brimstone and no humor whatsoever. "PSIA and a few others," as far as Gary is concerned, "are on the wrong side of the fonts.") When you get deeper and deeper into this manual and Gary's other books, you notice that most of the other writers that are out there on his subjects . . . are way too sterile and homogenized---while Gary's books are full of cream.

There is one famous ski-racing coach and writer of the potentially-dangerous classic *How the Racers Ski*, Warren Witherell, who is proud to profess he got an even later start in skiing than Gary, at age 22; but beware of this character's work and all his disciples: before his skiing life: he was a world-champion water skier and a

semi-pro hockey player, which gave him quite an edge and fearlessness as a skier compared to most people; then, when he got into skiing, we have the sneaky suspicion he skied only with hard-core racer types on mostly beginner and intermediate terrain, like most race courses---he had all kinds of incentive to carve every turn and go as fast as possible without skidding. But Gary skis with real people in all the scenarios, including terrain much steeper and with more natural obstacles than most race courses . . . and easy terrain that is crowded with unpredictable traffic----these people have more of a very real need to keep their speed in check than to always be the fastest on the mountain. Gary agrees with Warren Witherell up to a point, on beginner and low-intermediate terrain for advanced skiers and experts who have the ability to carve high-speed when light traffic permits; "But," Gary says, "he scares me everywhere else." Witherell's racer-based approach is totalitarian, and it may work fine for cranking out an occasional Olympic Gold Medalist---but I wouldn't want to be married to him, as he seems like the kind of guy who could make rules impossible for you to not break. (Professional Ski Instructors of America used to be a big burr under Witherell's saddle in the 1970s; but, since the late 1990s and early 2000s advent of 'shaped skis,' which make carving much easier, they have in many ways become witless Witherell followers. As you'll find out from Gary, it doesn't matter how user-friendly the skis become for high-speed carving, the mountain will always have the last say, letting you know when carving would be suicide and prudent skidding is often just what the doctor ordered.)

There's something else that makes Gary especially different in his approach to skiing: he is what you might call . . . a working skiboy, . . . as he makes his days in the summer riding young horses, in the winter riding long-n-lively skis. He is a horse wrangler who skis during the off-season, and he draws strong parallels between skiing and riding, both biomechanically and psychologically. "The hard-working horse is a tremendous athlete with an innocent brain and basic instincts programmed mainly for survival," says Gary; "we humans would do well to set up a ski-learning schedule similar to what the best colt breakers set up for their twelve-hundredpound pupils." Gary's teaching can be subtle: rather than expounding on the how-side of skiing all day, he'll choose the right mogul or the right powder or the right steepness at the right time for a ski student the same way a cutting-horse trainer might choose a certain slow cow in a large round-pen for a young cutting horse, to build confidence rather than fear and frustration. Sure, Garv relates the horses and skiing to be funny; in fact, humor happens to be one of his biggest tools to help make skiing and lessons in the Rocky Mountain West more fun---but don't underestimate humor where fear is a common problem: I dare say Gary is one of the few unusual American ski instructors willing to go against the grain, saying key things in ways that regular instructors and their clones aren't getting said in regular ways, sometimes saying what the big skiing herd needs but doesn't want to hear. Gary skis with a purpose, treating his skiing like wholesome ranch work: "We have to manage our snow the same way we manage our grass, opening the right gate at the right time and pushing skiers or cattle into the deepest grass or tallest snow. Where I live on the Swingin' G Ranch, water can get real scarce in the summer months, so we work real hard all winter long, skiing the winter range to pack the snow and see if we can't get it to last a little longer for summer irrigation and watering of the stock." . . . It should not be surprising that Gary's fun Ski-boy Poetry and his even funnier Ski-boy-n-Western Music lyrics are highly instructional in their own right.

While kind and gentle, Gary is firm with his students; but he can be cruel when backed into a corner, as one time with a difficult advanced student who, rather than trying for one good attainable turn in a tricky situation, kept insisting on stampeding ten bad turns to a big rodeo: "Here!" Gary boomed as he clicked out of his own skis longer and stiffer, "my skis're well-trained, they'll sort these maverick moguls for you!" ... Gary runs a healthy operation: he knows how to prevent runaways on the steeps and skiers getting bucked off in the moguls. "But there are some spoiled students out there that will test you," he points out, "just like spoiled horses. But it's usually not their fault: they're so tired of not reaching their full potential, and they're subliminally used-to not getting the best lessons---what else are they going to do but get frustrated and try to test a new instructor they don't trust yet?"

Of course, <u>Gary also relates skiing to the student's own world where he can</u>, often sounding more like a college professor than a common ski-boy. He might have to "get fiscal" and be all business with a corporate comptroller: "You have a deficit in your ski technique---that's why you're skiing in the red all the time." He might ski with golfers down "a long par-5, dog-leg to the lift." I remember him warning an airplane pilot about variable snow conditions: "We've got turbulence up ahead." With high-level corporate executives, he talks about time-management skills and making "turns that are important but not urgent," rather than constantly putting

out fires with "turns that are urgent but not important." He helps travel writers "get rid of skier's block," "edit their turns," or start over with "a clean sheet of powder." He's helped U.S. Army officers "Ski all that you can ski!" and actually ordered them to get down and do push-ups for not getting their turns right. He's given famous movie actors like Ralph Fiennes (*Schindler's List, Quiz Show*, and *The English Patient*) . . . "acting lessons," how to act like a good skier. In a lesson once with a psychotherapist watching everyone else ski by, not paying attention to his instruction, not really seeing him for the professional he is, he asked the lady how many dysfunctional families there are in this country---"Most families," she conceded,---and then he asked her how many dysfunctional skiers she supposed there are.

Indeed, ski teachers find themselves playing psychotherapist so often it's scary, probably more often than bartenders. We congratulate you for reading this book on the ski-learning process--this is the sign of a responsible, diligent student; and sometimes entering ski school is an act of the greatest courage---but you don't have to be desperate to enter this book. There are many ski students stuck on a plateau---stuck in a traverse actually; very few will ever reach their full potential, as most are just seeking some sort of relief from everyday life, and very few are truly sincere about skiing down the mountain. That's not always their own fault though, as most ski schools haven't done them justice, and the best ski-racing coaches don't have time for them let alone the plan they need. Gary shows compassion for all ski students, especially the discouraged ones. Racing coaches insulate themselves with only the mostgifted hard-core athletes who already know how to ski, and yet there is still a lot of heart-ache and injury, so the general public has never needed them. Gary has taught thousands of advanced and expert skiers, mostly in the old week-long Ski Meisters class of Jackson Hole; he's taught thousands more than his share of firstday beginners; and he's taught thousands of intermediates, whom he has perhaps more affection for in his old age: "Intermediates are not the chore that beginners are, but they are still more of a moldable piece of clay than the advanced skiers---and it isn't long before they can start thinking of skiing like an expert." (Finding great ski lessons was rare enough back in 1979 when Gary first started teaching; but it's become harder and harder over the years, as many of today's instructors can barely ski themselves as a result of recent ski-school politics and the record turnover of instructors, as well as the record number of undedicated part-timers. The few life-long

instructors at the top usually reserve the right to ski with advanced and expert students only; and some of them are exempt from having to ski with the over-charged persnickety general public.) Realize you've got probably the greatest plan for mastering recreational skiing in your hands right now; but reading this book is one thing, and applying it is yet another: *One Good Turn* of each page . . . *Deserves Another* thousand good turns out on the mountain. Not only will it help you reach your full potential as a skier, it may also help you be one of the greatest of instructors, not only in skiing but in some other activity as well.

(Since 1979, Gary has always strived to be the best most-interesting ski instructor he could be. He's done thousands upon thousands of ski students justice on no less than seven different ski schools from Montana to Arizona---this has helped him see the big picture perhaps better than anyone else. Other instructors who move around a lot tend to stay in one part of the country, or they move among mountains that have similar characteristics---Gary has witnessed first-hand the even greater dysfunction that goes on at smaller mountains, and it adds up to do a lot of damage that bigmountain administrators don't care to notice or help turn around. But, despite his knack and diligence and vast experience as a great teacher, he continues to be unable to find a job on any ski school where he can make even close to a decent living, while other lessskilled instructors are sitting pretty---however, this book and his others hope to change that. In his book The PROHIBITION of Snow-Boarding, Gary plays the role of U.S. Ski Teacher and threatens to become a Ski-Turner-At-Law; . . . in this manual, with things laid out a little more cut-n-dried, you students and more-caring instructors can take heart as he plays the role of U.S. SKI-TURNER GENERAL. ---Mountain Managers, Ski-School Directors, Instructor Trainers, Olympic Gold Medalists, World Champion Extreme Skiers, . . . and anybody playing the role of Ski Instructor . . . might want to keep this in mind. This manual has been brewing for decades; and, when it is finally unleashed, it will be like a hundredyear rogue avalanche coming down hard on anyone and everyone who's been irresponsible in the ski industry.)

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