

Ski conditioning

DEVELOP EXPLOSIVE LEG POWER

By **BILL KERIG**

■ YOUR BODY'S ANTI-GRAVITY system—the quadriceps, hamstrings, gluteus maximus and calf muscles—not only keeps you upright on skis, but also provides the power to pressure the downhill ski and carve a turn. If you can build quickness and explosiveness into that system, you'll ski more aggressively.

The exercises I demonstrate on this page can transform your technique. I employ two props: a fitness step and a 6-foot exercise cord. Both are available at most sports shops. If you'd like to save a few bucks, build a wooden platform measuring 10 by 15 by 24 inches (height by width by length). You can substitute surgical tubing for the exercise cord.

Bill Kerig is a pro mogul skier who teaches ski conditioning at Vail's Cascade Club.



SIDE STRIDES

Anchor both ends of an exercise cord in a door jamb or have a partner hold the cord while sitting against a wall, as pro bump skier Dan McNeill and I are doing here. I loop the cord around my waist. Standing perpendicular to the wall, I step sideways until the cord is taut and then squat. I slightly lift my outside foot and firmly push away from the wall with the inside foot. When my outside foot touches the floor at the end of my stride, I let the cord's resistance pull me back. The exercise is repeated until the motion becomes natural. Finally, I "explode" off the inside foot to develop power. I do 15 reps with one leg, then turn around and do 15 more with the other.



LATERAL LEAPS

With arms outstretched, I stand sideways beside the step with feet slightly closer than shoulder-width. I step up with one foot, then follow with the other. Next, I step off the other side, one foot at a time. I keep my eyes focused ahead, not down.

As I grow comfortable with the movement, I pick up the pace. Finally, I try two-footed jumps—flex the knees, spring up and land lightly on the box. Then I quickly hop off to the other side and repeat. This is a high-impact aerobic exercise, requiring careful monitoring of pace and heart rate. →