

INSTRUCION

Perfecting Jumping Fundamentals — Via The Single Wake Cut

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Photography by Scott Atkinson

As I sat down to write this article and took into account the incredibly broad level of jumping abilities of our readers, I decided rather than try to write an article telling everyone else what they should do, I would write an article about what I do, and more importantly why I do it. Keeping in mind that I'm a huge advocate of the fundamentals of our sport, I think you will see that I tend to keep things simple with my theory. I have always felt that things happen too fast on the water for me to think my way through a jump. Instead, I want to rely on basic fundamental principles of jumping as well as physics to help me fly farther.



Freddy Krueger

Now if you are like most jumpers you probably learned to jump by plopping over the ramp. Once you got comfortable with landing, you add speed by doing a single cut. And after you could jump 80 to 100 feet, you probably started three-quarter cutting or doubling. So each

time you wanted to go farther you did it by adding speed. But eventually you will run into the scientific notion of "diminishing returns." In jumping, this means that you most likely can build more speed than you can handle and therefore won't get good lift.

When I start my season I work on two conflicting ideas. First, I ride my skis and work on being able to create more



In this photograph, I have turned my skis toward the shoreline and begun edging with my body following my tips for direction.

speed, but do so in a controlled manner so that I can still get my lift and remain in control. Secondly, I do a lot of single cuts. What I'm trying to accomplish with the singles is trying to find a way to create more distance with limited speed and controlled variables.

So let's break these two concepts down a little. When I'm riding my skis, I'm working on three things. I want to stay balanced in everything I do. I'll talk about this more when I talk about the singles. Secondly, I want to ride with direction. I hear a lot of jumpers talk about turning their skis to the ramp when they make their turn. I personally turn my skis to the shoreline across the lake and try to maintain that direction. The more you travel across the lake, the more speed you will create because you are traveling in an opposing direction to the boat and that boat is going to give you the power to create speed. Finally, and most importantly, I'm working on my rhythm. You've probably been told countless times that you want to start easy out of your turn and then build your intensity all the way to the ramp. This is exactly right, but most people struggle immensely with the concept. So what I do is try to ski with a rhythm that is efficient with my movements. I have always known that I would not be strong enough to out-muscle guys like Carl Roberge, Bruce Neville and Scot Ellis. So I had to find a way to create the same maximum load, but hold it for a much shorter amount of time. So rather than "turn and burn," I try to create my direction across the lake and yet "sneak up" on the boat and get as close to the wakes as possible before the boat feels me coming on. Then I'm working hard behind the boat and off the second wake for a short amount of time. This rhythm when you see it from the shore looks like I'm starting soft and finishing hard.

To work on the other half of my jumping I do a lot of single cuts. My goal here is to get maximum distance out of controlled inputs. I can only create so much speed on a single cut, so how do I maximize distance with that limited speed? The first thing I do is make sure I'm well balanced before I start my turn to the jump. I don't want to start cutting and then have to find the balls of my feet while the boat is racing away from me and the ramp is flying at me. So before I start I get in the position I could hit the ramp with and get my lift. Now all I have to do is maintain that position in my fight with the boat.

You will notice that in the previous paragraph I said I would get balanced before I made my turn. Most people that do singles point their skis at the ramp and start cutting like crazy. I actually take the time to try to turn my skis like I would on a double cut and create some direction toward the shoreline. This allows me to go later, which means I have more



You can get an idea of how hard I am working just to get onto the ramp. You can see basically all of the spray off my right ski and still my body is balanced and ready to impact the ramp and kick.

load and more speed, and I don't have to hold my cut as long as most people so I am jumping with a better rhythm.

Finally, I build my intensity to the bottom and see where I hit the ramp. If I'm hitting the ramp in the middle then I work myself into the course until I'm about two feet off the bottom right corner. By getting myself comfortable with that sight picture, I will have more confidence to wait later into the course on my double cuts as well. I find that working on my lift and aerodynamics is much easier when I have these good approaches.

Once I have spent some time on these two ideas I go ahead and start on three-quarter and double cuts. When I do that I try to work on the same things I did when I was doing the singles and just stretch things out. It's the same concept, it just happens over a longer period of time.

I hope this gives you some ideas on how you might like to get your season started. I once heard a sportscaster say that Michael Jordan was the best in the world because he worked harder than anyone else in the game on the basic fundamentals of his sport. I have tried to incorporate "Jordan-like" thinking to jumping. I hope you find the same improvements with your jumping as I feel I've had with mine.

Freddy Krueger, who lives and trains in Winter Garden, Fla., is the current world record holder in Men's jumping with a 240-foot leap. He is sponsored by MasterCraft Boats, D3 Skis, Body Glove Wetsuits, OJ Props, Masterline Ropes and DSO Sunglasses. ♦



You can see my path here in this photograph from the bottom left impact to the upper left top of the ramp. You can also see that I am still well-balanced between my skis; I'm not twisted or sliding. This is because of the good balance between and on my skis that I had on the approach.