

## **The Butt Tuck**

By Susan Ellis

We often hear the phrase 'hips in to the turn' in skating. This means leaning so that the left hip is always to the inside of the left skate. It does not mean rotating the hips in to the turn! The whole body should lean in to the corner without any rotations of the hips or shoulders.

It is the position of the pelvic bone that controls the position and motion of the hips, as well as of the knee drive. And since the hip bone is connected to the thigh bone, which is connected to the knee bone, which is connected to the shin bone, which is connected to the ankle bone, the position of the pelvic bone is key to maintaining pressure in to the ice. You must maintain the pelvis in a tilted position so that your butt is tucked under you to have control of what the rest of the lower body needs to do to put pressure in to the ice. This pelvic position can be referred to as the 'butt tuck'.

Try this simple exercise to demonstrate the effectiveness of the butt tuck in keeping the hips in and the knees forward. Stand a little bit from a chair or table and bend your ankles, knees, and waist. Extend your left arm and lean against the chair or table so you are supported on your left leg. Rotate your butt up toward the ceiling so that there is an arch in the small of your back (your back forms a u shape like a bowl). Look at the position of your left knee. Now rotate your butt down so that the small of your back is rounded (like an upside down bowl). Notice how your knees moved forward. Try getting the weight to the ball of the foot with the butt rotated up and then try it with the butt rotated down under you. You should find it was easier with the butt rotated down. Now do the same, taking note of the position of the left hip. You will find it much easier to keep the left hip in towards the table with the butt rotated down and tucked underneath you.

Keeping the butt tucked under you allows the knees to drive further so that you can land in a low position on the middle part of the blade.

So, when you skate, or do drills, **TUCK YOUR BUTT!**