

## **The Corner Lay In**

By Susan Ellis

The **corner entry**, or **corner lay in**, can make or break a corner. It is the difference between accelerating in to a corner or simply drifting in.

In order to accelerate in, your weight must accelerate forward in to the turn. The acceleration of weight takes place off the right leg (you have completed your last straightaway push with the left and have landed the right foot for the first corner push). Some consider this to be part of the straightaway and don't bother to lean until they take the first step in on the left. However, remember, it is the acceleration of the body weight in the direction of travel that gives you added momentum. You must accelerate your weight both forward and in to the corner to gain momentum. This means the weight must come to the ball of the foot, and load to the power position at the same time as your body moves in toward the turn. During the push off the right the pressure should move back on your blade to finish mid-foot. If you try to keep it on the ball of the foot the ice will break away from you.



A good lay in and push on your right skate helps to ensure you land your left in a stable position under your body, allowing you to be able to load and push right away again on your left.

Here are some drills to help you get a feel for the corner lay in. They are done on short track ice and are beneficial for both short trackers and long trackers. For long trackers, set out a 125m track instead of 111m track.

### **Bucket – Inside Track**

#### **Method:**

- The drill is done inside the track, going close to the markers.
- Prepare for the drill by getting some speed up inside the track. Keep the bucket to the left, and slightly ahead of you as you skate.
- Finish your straightaway with a good left leg push, i.e.: full extension, making sure to land your right just as you are finishing your left push.
- Your right skate should land pointing straight ahead with your weight very, very slightly to the outside edge and your weight on your heel.
- As soon as you finish your left leg push, your skate lifts off the ice and your left knee returns to a position just in back of your right knee as you bring your weight forward and press both your right shoulder and right hip in to the turn.
- As soon as your left skate leaves the ice you start to press in on your right side-shoulder and right hip. Your right ankle bends, your weight shifts forward towards the ball on the inside edge, and you start your push.
- Your left skate should come through directly under the left side of your chest without stepping outside your body.

- Your left skate should land very slightly ahead, and to the inside of your right skate. Your weight should be mid-blade on the inside edge on the landing. Don't overreach as this will throw your weight back to the heel.
- Finish skating the corner and prepare the same way for the next corner. Skate 3 – 4 laps.

### **Entry Lean Inside Track**

The next step is to perform the lay in inside the track with no bucket. Practice the entry motion fairly slowly at first. You should feel your weight accelerating forward as you go from the heel on the outside edge to inside edge ball of foot. Patience is key. Don't rush the movement.

It may help to skate a couple of laps with the bucket first, and then scoot the bucket away and continue the drill without it.

### **Entry Lean On Track**

Now it's time to move on to the track. It will help to skate deep in to the corner before starting your lay in. Try to get to at least the first block. Skating a fairly narrow track will help simulate the same feelings you had inside the track.

Remember the key points:

- The entire body presses in as one unit. No rotations.
- Your weight moves forward and in to the turn.
- Do not allow your left knee to pass your right knee until you start your push. A common error is to place the left skate down without having pushed with the right.
- Use your arms to help with rhythm and timing.

### **Common Errors on the Entry Lean**

#### **> Left skate comes down before you have pushed with right**

Check:

- Left leg push was fully extended on the straightaway push to allow time for your leg to return to a position in back of right leg.
- Left leg was brought in from the side rather than from in back so there is less time to gather the leg back under the body.
- Weight stayed on heel or mid-blade rather than moving forward through the initial part of the lay in.

#### **> Weight stays on heel on right rather than coming to the ball of the foot**

Check:

- Chest stays down as you enter on right and there is no rise in knee angle.
- Knee angle not below 90 degrees (some may need to be even higher than this).
- Ankle bend.
- Timing – Your left should not land until you are almost finished the push on your right.

- Rhythm and timing of arm swing.
- Right skate lands pointing out rather than straight ahead (check the direction of your knee on your recovery to make sure it is pointed straight ahead all the way through the recovery).

**> Weight comes to the ball of the foot on the right but then returns to the heel as you push**

Check:

- Chest stays down as you start your push.
- Opening the push backwards – that is allowing your knee to move backwards rather than staying ahead of your toe as you push.
- Timing – Your left should not land until you are almost finished the push on your right.
- Over Step – Landing your left too far ahead or too far to the inside of your right.

Most of these common errors can be corrected with the help of Techni-Cords. Techni-Cords help you to slow down the movements to be able to make the necessary adjustments and can be used both on and off the ice. For more information check out [www.technicords.com](http://www.technicords.com).