

by PERRY B. RAWSON

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Foreword on a Lost Art

There is considerable evidence that in the 1800's the Art of Plain Skating was a beautiful, graceful, effortless art of propulsion on skates, featuring what is known to experts as THE GLIDE OF THE SKATE.

Since the turn of the Century it has become a LOST ART. Its effortless action has been replaced by tiresome "walking" anatomical action; its perfect balance has given way to partial balance, thus making it unsafe; its graceful beauty has disappeared. Present day devotees—with few exceptions—are "fighting the skate"; effortless GLIDE OF THE SKATE is a rare sight.

In the matter of EFFORT, the "walking" system and the "effortless glide" system may be contrasted as climbing a hill on skiis against being whisked up by skii tow; or climbing a mountain on foot against riding on a tramway. The secret of effortless glide lies in mastering effortless transfer of weight at the takeoffs and the takeoffs have to be CLOSE AND PARALLEL to get it.

The mechanics are that "EDGES" supersede "FLATS"; then SIDE PUSH takes the place of REAR PUSH; soon SIDE PUSH develops into SIDE PRESSURE; later on, SIDE PRESSURE turns into effortless Transfer of Weight. . . After that, little, if any, "push" is needed; momentum may be likened to whipping a top. The unwanted REAR PUSH produces a sluggish "two footed" action; is tiresome; interferes with maintenance of perfect balance; is useful ONLY FOR FLATS.

Unfortunately, most of us were brought up on the hybridized REAR PUSH "walking" technique. Fortunately, it is easier, safer and quicker to master the skating art on correct, scientific skating principles as set forth in THE ART OF PLAIN SKATING. In substituting joyous SKATING for the disappointments of WALKING, results come quickly, are most gratifying. Once the body is trained for Scientific Plain Skating, the door to Skate Dancing is wide open. Without that training, the door remains, more or less, a closed door.

Speculating on the reasons WHY Beautiful Plain Skating became a LOST ART is guesswork and a waste of time; a revival is in prospect. The Rawson system of effortless skate propulsion herein propounded aims for RESTORATION of the Lost Art by a re-statement of the "Lost" principles. It required years of research and much travel to find the lost pieces and rebuild the foundation. That foundation is quite different from the ordinary present day conception of Plain Skating. It features ROLLING versus PITCHING as its basic principle; the skate is made to do % of the work while the skater does only % of the work. There is only ONE BALANCE to learn; only ONE LEAN (Side Lean); only ONE PUSH (Side Push). The footwork is close, transfers of weight, called takeoffs, are instantaneous. The finished product is a skater who can skate on ONE FOOT instead of on TWO FEET.

Widespread mastery of the lost anatomical processes—as set forth in this book -will bring back one of our most beautiful Arts—the ART OF PLAIN SKATING.

PERRY B. RAWSON

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The Art of Plain Skating

by Perry B. Rawson

SKATING LITERATURE

There is a mass of literature available for the serious skater. Plenty for the figure skater—for the Free Style skater—for the speed skater—for the dancer—for every skate-minded group except the largest and MOST NECESSARY group of all—the PLAIN SKATERS.

Most NECESSARY group of skaters—because, in the last analysis, it is this group that SUPPORTS ALL PUBLIC RINKS—be they Roller Rinks or Ice Rinks.

For those interested solely in PLAIN SKATING for pleasure, exercise, thrill, escape, sociability, or any one or more of a dozen motives, there is nothing on the American market that I can find that comprehensively details and explodes the "mystery" of the TRUE SKATING BALANCE.

This article is a belated attempt to fill the literary gap. To be a worthwhile attempt—on this most worthwhile subject, there must, of necessity, be much detail. Brevity is out of question. At the risk of excessive length, every pertinent fact will be analyzed and explained with the hope that, eventually, there will be produced a Nation of Skaters skating on a TRUE SKATING BALANCE.

THE GLIDE OF THE SKATE

Hardly one rink patron in a thousand has what is known in skating circles as "the GLIDE of the skate." The reason is that the true skating balance necessary to produce the glide of the skate has not been studied and achieved. The body anatomy is fighting the skate. The body is WALKING. Short, choppy, unsafe, uninspiring WALKING strokes are the product. Needless effort is expended. Falls are frequent.

When, in place of the WALKING balance, the skating balance is substituted, and the "Glide of the skate" is acquired, many pleasant things happen. The strokes are many times longer, they are much smoother, they are practically effortless, they are safe, the falls are eliminated, and the thrill of REAL SKATING begins.

The GLIDE may be acquired by close application to, and mastery of, the basic skating principles berein to be outlined. WALKING on skates will not produce it.

SHALL WE WALK OR SHALL WE GLIDE?

A beautiful plain skater is as rare a find as is a beautiful ballroom dancer. Either is a joy to behold. Neither of them got their proficiency by chance—by luck—by "picking it up." Both of them are finished performers by reason of using certain UNDERLYING BASIC PRINCIPLES. In both instances, these fundamental principles have nothing to do with WALKING. The finished Ballroom dancer does not WALK. He dances. The finished plain skater does not WALK. He skates—he glides.

And you, too, may glide on your skates as does the perfectionist in plain skating if you will but study and master the principles involved.

They are not hard. They are DIFFERENT. First of all, you must ask and answer the question: "What is my personal ambition on skates?" Is it to walk? to run?—or to SKATE? Already you have in your body the trained mechanism for mastering the first two. It was given you in babyhood days the walking-running balance.

This article will present to you full details of the DIFFERENT body mechanism necessary for the third—that graceful, natural, effortless sway of gliding on skates. The thrill and charm of mastering the art of gliding on skates in contrast to walking on skates is farther enriched by the fact that the doors to other branches of the skating art—Figure skating—Free Style skating—Dancing—are wide open to the finished Plain Skater. If tempted to enter you will save time, effort and money. Your professionals will be very pleased to be saved the hard work of changing your anatomy over from Walking to Skating (AS THEY WOULD HAVE TO DO). Your progress will be RAPID.

THE BALANCE THAT IS DIFFERENT

The human body is capable of being trained for many and varied balances—skiing, tightrope, trapeze, swimming, horseback, slack wire, stilts, ballet, bicycle, dancing, skating, walking—to name but a few. Walking—like all the others—is but an ACQUIRED balance. Training for it is (or was) as necessary as for the other balances. A baby has to LEARN how to walk. Certain adult invalids have to LEARN all over again how to WALK.

Leaving out all the other body balances, and confining ourselves to the Walking balance and the Skating balance, we narrow the field.

And the first amazing fact that analysis uncovers is that the motions necessary to achieve the perfect skating balance ARE EXACTLY THE REVERSE of the motions used in the Walking balance. Skating forward may be likened to WALKING BACKWARD. Skating backward may be likened to WALKING FORWARD. You are going to reverse your anatomical processes. You will be given TWO LESSONS which will do the whole trick. Lesson Number ONE will train from the waist down. It will reverse the leg and hip motions. Lesson Number TWO will train from the waist up. It will reverse (and finally nullify) the action of the shoulders.

COMPLETE BALANCE

The human body is in COMPLETE upright balance only when standing perpendicular with both feet together side by side and the weight equally distributed on the two feet. Also, it can balance on ONE foot by shifting the weight to one SIDE.

When, as in walking, it attempts to project itself forward or backward, it is "off balance" immediately and has to recover its balance by propping itself up with the striding foot. At this point it has assumed an INCLINED BALANCE with two feet on the floor, one in front of the other. It cannot, in this position, balance on ONE FOOT. A fall would result if one prop (foot) was magically whisked away. It must (a) re-assume complete balance position (both feet together alongside each other) before the weight can be placed all on one foot—or (b) it can place the weight on one foot by jumping or throwing the body forward onto the extended "prop."

This action may be referred to as a PARTIAL BALANCE. It is NOT the balance wanted for our SKATING. It will not get us anywhere.

PARTIAL BALANCE

Nothing but a fall can result when completely "off balance." A fall never occurs—except by accident—when a skater or a walker is on a perfect balance.

Between perfect balance and completely "off balance" there are many PARTIAL balances. Walking, as you have seen, is one of them. Almost all of our plain skating rink patrons are using PARTIAL balance. They are WALKING on their skates. They are "stepping out." They are striding out with one foot AHEAD OF THE OTHER. On skates this is more risky by far than walking on shoe leather. After weeks of painful endeavor our skate walker attains to a collection of various PARTIAL balances. None of them are safe. All are risky. But if one perseveres months and years, even a risky balance can be ridden. And that is what our public participants do. They persevere against the most frightful combination of adverse circumstances—for weeks, months, years. This indicates better than anything else the unexplored possibilities of plain skating when, and if, we are successful in transferring our session skaters from an unsafe PARTIAL balance to a safe COMPLETE balance, and at the same time introduce to 100,000,000 non-skating Americans a quick, short-cut method of acquiring a TRUE SKATING BALANCE that will usher them immediately into the joys of real skating, and sidetrack the misery of a painful WALKING initiation.

MAKING THINGS EASY

To avoid confusion and to make things easy for you, this treatise will confine itself to just one thing—skating FORWARD. Skating BACK-WARD will be taken care of in a closing chapter. But right here it may be consoling to remark that backward skating, and all advanced skating technique will come easy to those of you who MASTER the principles of skating FORWARD. Also avoiding more confusion, I shall not go into the advanced intricacies of edges and flats, nor the technique of turns. It is sufficient to point out that a skate will travel on either straight lines or on curved lines. Straight lines are called "flats." Curved lines are called "edges." You will get all that at your rink later on. At the moment we have a one-track mind—a single purpose—to skate FORWARD correctly, and we are not concerned now with any other phases of skating.

The reason for so much explanatory matter before reaching the lessons that are going to switch your anatomical processes from the walking balance to the skating balance is that you must have a thorough understanding of what you have been doing on skates, and a clear mental picture of what you are going to change to, or you will fail to reach the goal. The better you understand the proposition, the easier it will be for you. A brief survey on anatomy and we will be on our way.

ANATOMY; MAN WALKS

Man is a biped and walks on two feet. He tilts forward on one foot and catches his balance with the other foot. He is always stepping ahead of himself. He is unsure and unsafe. In babyhood he had a hard struggle to adjust this balance. When he misses the balance he falls. After a while the balance becomes automatic. He walks—he runs—he jumps. In the walking and running movements ONE LEG ALWAYS GOES OUT AHEAD OF THE BODY. This is NOT the Skating action. It is the walking-running action. As mentioned previously it must be completely reversed for the true skating balance. You will be shown HOW to reverse

the action. It will take a bit of time—a week or two perhaps. Habits ingrained in the body over a period of years cannot be instantly reversed.

ANATOMY; MAN PUTS ON A SKATE

After years of walking, man essays to skate. Ice or Roller skate—it makes no difference. The anatomical principles are the same. He starts to WALK on the skate. This is the only action he knows. He finds himself back in babyhood days. He puts one foot FORWARD. He tries to catch his balance. But a new and fearsome element has been injected into the picture. On his foot is a MOVING mechanism. It does not stand still. It does not grip the surface as shoe-leather does. It is travelling. And the MOVING mechanism is out AHEAD of his body, not under his body where it should be. So he is in double trouble.

Finally, after much trial and tribulation he learns—as in babyhood-how far to throw his body forward to CATCH UP WITH the moving skate that is out AHEAD of his body. Just so far and no farther must he throw his weight. Too far and he will fall forward. Too little and he will fall backward. Here are the unnecessary falls already spoken of. The SKATING action which is going to REVERSE the walking action will eliminate them. Therefore, for quick action, force the mind to realize that WALKING is not SKATING—has no relation to it—is an entirely different body action—must be completely discarded.

We will start with a clean slate. There is to be no more DANGER-OUS STEPPING OUT AHEAD of the body. Henceforth the feet are to take the surface ALONGSIDE OF EACH OTHER (Fig. 1) and the unused foot is going TO THE REAR (Fig. 2).

This unused foot will be referred to as the BALANCE FOOT. Yo will hear a lot about it.



FIG. I

FIG. 2

THE BALANCE FOOT

I could make this chapter very brief by telling you that you have two feet and that the one you are skating on is called the SKATING foot, and that the one in the air is the BALANCE foot, and I could let it go at that. However, this BALANCE leg and foot is the villain of the piece when untrained and uncontrolled, and it is necessary to go into detail. It is of great importance that you understand the vital part this leg and foot plays in real skating. Otherwise you may cheat on your lessons and skim through. Seldom is this fact emphasized properly.

There are other names for this member in skating terminology. It is called the "Unemployed,"—the "Free foot," "Free foot" is a short: handy designation, but I shall stick to the name "Balance Foot." T.

foot and leg are altogether too "FREE" for our present purpose. "BAL-ANCE" is the word we want. Why was it called "BALANCE LEG" (or foot)? Because the skater is supposed to use it in maintaining his balance when skating. Or let us put it another way and say that, by CONTROL-LING it, he prevents it from constantly UPSETTING his skating balance.

Why does not the "walker" on skates likewise maintain his balance with his balance leg and foot? Because it is—for skating—almost always in the WRONG PLACE. It is in front when it should be in back. It is in back when it should be in front. It is not under CONTROL. It is swinging wildly and aimlessly and is perpetually OUT OF CONTROL.

Being out of control, it is forever UPSETTING his balance. Now and then this leg throws the "walker" completely off balance. A fall results. Right here you have the chief cause of the unnecessary falls already referred to.

You are now ready to begin training this unruly member. He is the chief actor in LESSON number ONE.

TERMINOLOGY

Very little terminology will be used. As little as possible. Here is all that you are going to need.

SKATING FOOT-The foot that is on the floor.

BALANCE FOOT-The foot that is in the air off the floor.

TAKE-OFFS—Transferring the weight from one skate to the other.

BENT KNEE—A modest bending of the knee of the SKATING FOOT.

No good skating is ever done on a stiff unbent knee. This bend is accompanied by a bent INSTEP, but NEVER A BEND AT THE WAIST.

PLAIN SKATING LESSON NUMBER ONE--AT HOME—NO SKATES

In attaining the scientific skating balance, home is the best place to use for a starter. We can begin the training of that balance leg much easier without skates. All you will need for this lesson is a small unencumbered wall space. Face the wall and stand up close to it (Fig. 3). Feet are close together, alongside of each other, and PARALLEL, as in Fig. 1. PARALLEL is a word you will meet frequently, so learn it NOW. TOES SHOULD TOUCH THE BASEBOARD. Weight is equally distributed, and is over the middle of the foot—over the arch. It is NOT on the toe. It is NOT on the heel. The weight is on the MIDDLE of the shoe. In SKATING it is ALWAYS going to be over the MIDDLE of the skate, so learn this point NOW.

For steadiness, place both palms against the wall. The body is crect. The toes are against the baseboard. The abdomen is against the wall (and stays against the wall). The nose is 2 or 3 inches away from the wall. All you are going to do at first is take up one foot and put it down again right alongside of the other foot where it is now. That seems very simple. It is very simple. You have nothing else to think of. And yet the coming anatomical action is going to seem awkward at first, because the BALANCE leg is



FIG. 3

going to the REAR and not to the FRONT where, for so many years, it has been trained to go.

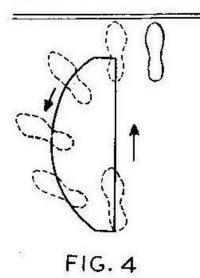
Why are you standing with your toes touching the baseboard? So that there is no other place for the BALANCE foot to go but BACK-WARD. The baseboard will train you much quicker than other methods for it provides an automatic stop beyond which the BALANCE foot cannot travel.

First move: We will not even move the balance leg backward to start with. We will leave it alongside the other foot and practice weight transference first. Just the shifting of WEIGHT from one foot to the other. Begin by shifting the weight wholly on to the Right foot. Note that the body makes a slight shift to the right to accomplish this. The palms help to steady you here. The LEFT foot lifted from the floor, did it not? It should. See that it does. Now put the left down alongside the right and shift the weight on to the LEFT-lifting the right off the floor. Note that the body made a shift to the LEFT. Put down the right and shift the weight to it instantly. Put down the left and shift the weight to it instantly. Now the right. Now the left, Right. Left. Right. Left. The slight rocking of the body from side to side is your introduction to the rolling action so necessary in beautiful skating-either Plain Skating or Dancing. It will be written of later on under "Rolling and Pitching." Keep on with this exercise. Shift. Shift. Right. Left. Right. Left. Repeat this training every chance you get for a few days. You will be learning BALANCE every minute—and the RIGHT KIND of balance for SKATING.

Second move: After you have felt the TRANSFERENCE OF WEIGHT from one foot to the other, you can begin the training of the BALANCE FOOT to go to the REAR. Balance on the right foot and take the left foot to the REAR. How far? Oh, about 24 inches will do. High off the floor? No, CLOSE to the floor. 4 to 6 inches is plenty. Can you think to turn the TOE of this balance foot OUT and point it DOWN? As it goes to the rear? Do so if it does not bother you too much. If troublesome, forget all about turning the toe OUT and pointing it DOWN. Forget about it, I mean, FOR THE PRESENT. But come back to it later. It is not only graceful and "good to look at" but it has something to do with the SKATING BALANCE. It "OPENS THE HIP." You will hear about this later on in your skating career.

When the balance foot has reached its maximum backward movement—say approximately 24 inches—bring it forward to its parallel position alongside the other foot—put it down—shift the weight—and take the other foot (the right foot this time) back to the REAR. Repeat. Left. Right. Left. Right. Over and over again. You will soon begin to feel this exercise in the HIPS. More about HIPS later. Very important.

As the balance foot goes to the rear, it should go out in a slight are or curve and come forward to the baseboard in almost a straight line. Not too wide a curve. Just a natural curve. Out in a curve—forward in a straight line. The right foot will trace in the air a letter D. The left foot will trace in the air a letter D turned backward (Fig. 4). Continue the exercise. Out to the rear and return to the baseboard with the balance foot. Awkward at first—smoother as you work on it. Somewhat DIFFERENT from walking by stepping forward, is it not? Well, THIS is the true skating balance action. Concentrate on it. Train that leg to go BACK. It is psychologically helpful to keep saying "BACK" each time a leg goes to the rear. Soon the mind will do it for you. The mind is cap-



able of sending the leg BACK for you, just as in walking it sends it forward for you. And as you move the balance leg backward and forward "KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL, Take it back and bring it up to the baseboard when YOU want it to do so, and NOT when IT wants to do so. Always under CONTROL, Remember, an uncontrolled, free, wild swinging balance leg is a bad actor in skating. Avoid it. Start avoiding it now while you have a friendly baseboard to assist you. You will have no baseboard in front of you when you go to the rink for Lesson number ONE ON SKATES. And that foot WILL GET OUT AHEAD OF YOU at the rink. Willy, nilly, it will, for a couple of weeks, sneak out ahead of you whenever you are not thinking about it! It will cause you a lot of trouble. So, stick to your baseboard practice until the feet and legs will behave.

Until they do not try to crash through the baseboard. Until the legs and hips are under control. Until you feel you have control of the HIPS. Until it does not feel quite so awkward to have the leg go to the REAR.

This is lesson number ONE at home, and these two moves are all there is to it. Unless you can add one more thought—the BENT KNEE. Try to keep the SKATING KNEE (not the knee of the BALANCE leg) bent. You will have to learn to bend it at the rink. We may as well start at home. A nice moderate flexible bend is all for the present. Anything but a STIFF inflexible knee. You will not bend it too much, never fear, but no exaggeration is required at the moment. That is why a "moderate" bend is all that is asked for now,—just enough to get your weight over the MIDDLE of the skate.

You did not find lesson number ONE very hard. And neither was it easy. Not easy, because it was so DIFFERENT. Persevere with this lesson. Master it. It will save you time and trouble. And, speaking of time and trouble. I will outline for you in the next chapter a time and trouble saver to put in use when we go to the rink to put this lesson on Skates.

PREPARATION FOR TRANSFERRING LESSON NUMBER ONE TO THE RINK

We now take Lesson number ONE to the rink and put it on skates. On skates we are not going to stand still as we did on shoe leather at home. We will be on the move. We will need MOMENTUM. We will need a BALANCED GLIDE. These are the two ingredients we are after. But we are not going to get them BOTH AT ONCE, so let's make a success of this thing by making arrangements to SEPARATE THE INGREDIENTS.

Years of experience have convinced me that the greatest saving of time and trouble for the beginner in skating comes from separating these two ingredients and tackling one at a time. Otherwise it is too large an order for bewildered mind and unsteady feet, and weeks of time are needlessly frittered away.

This goes, also, for the skater who is not a beginner, but who is now practicing for the change over from walking balance to skating balance.

He, or she, will save time by following the procedure here suggested for the beginner.

As an excellent illustration of what to plan for I shall use the bicycle. In learning to ride a bicycle TWO THINGS plague you. You must keep pedaling and you must steer. Steering is impossible without momentum. You find you cannot do both at once. You can do ONE, but you cannot do BOTH. So a friend helps. He takes over ONE job. He pushes and you steer—or he steers and you pedal. He does this for you until you achieve balance AND momentum- after which you no longer need him. Practicing Lesson number ONE on skates finds you in exactly the same predicament as the bicyclist. There are TWO items to be handled-MOMENTUM and BALANCE (Glide). You can do but ONE (Balance), because the old style stroking out ahead of yourself- which is the only method of propulsion you knew-HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU. You are going to the rink to practice BALANCE, but where is the MOMENTUM to come from that is so necessary to keep the skate moving? You, yourself, have lost it. It has been taken away from you FOR THE PRESENT because the feet have been taught to stop at the "baseboard." If you STRUGGLE for momentum, you will revert immediately to the old walking style. You will lose the new balance.

So, let us call upon the same friendly hand that provided the bicycle momentum to propel the skate for you while YOU concentrate SOLELY upon the remaining ingredient-BALANCE. (Glide.)

This is VERY IMPORTANT. Struggling to maintain momentum while, at the same time, studying to achieve balance and comfort on the GLIDE is a combination of despair for a beginner. Momentum is our lesser worry at the moment. Turn this job over to a friend. Free your mind for BALANCE and GLIDE.

Here are the instructions for your assistant: Very, VERY short strokes at first. Inches rather than feet. Do not go fast. Do not try to get anywhere. That will all come later. Give the pupil a STEADY arm. Keep your feet together as closely as possible, just as the pupil is trying to do. There is a REASON for this. Keep moving slowly and propel the pupil gently along with you. No distance or speed for the first 15 minutes. After that, if the pupil is attaining balance and glide, the momentum may be increased slightly. Remember, there is no hurry. Hurry is fatal at THIS SPOT. This is the building of the FOUNDATION.

PLAIN SKATING LESSON NUMBER ONE AT THE RINK— ON SKATES

No matter how fast, or how slow, or how well, or how badly you skated previously—or whether you ever skated at all previously—you have, for this first lesson, provided a friend or an instructor to furnish momentum. You have shown him his instructions. Have him understand that his ONLY JOB is to furnish momentum. Are you both ready? Here you go on the first steps of the great adventure that is to make of you a beautiful plain skater.

The first steps of this great adventure may not feel or look so hot, but they will improve shortly. So pay close attention and follow the instructions to the letter. You make or break at this early stage. This lesson is to teach you—ON SKATES—just the things your wall and baseboard practice at home taught you—to keep your feet together PARALLEL at the transfer of weight (take-offs)—to place your feet on the floor alongside of each other PARALLEL—that you do not step out

head of the body as in walking—that the balance foot is to go to the REAR, not to the FRONT.

First move-Do not start off by yourself. Start off with your friend providing the momentum. This in order to kill off all attempts of your anatomy to stride forward and ruin the entire picture. Dismiss from your mind all thoughts of momentum. Your assistant will attend to that. Let him propel you along SLOWLY and EASILY, while your mind reverts to the wall and baseboard at home. Place in front of your toes an IMAGI-NARY baseboard. See that you do as well with the imaginary baseboard as you did at home with the real baseboard. But you won't at first. That balance leg is an unruly leg. However, do your best. Take one up and put one down. Practice the transfer of weight first. Shift to right—shift to left. One up, one down, side by side, PARALLEL, just as at home. Only this-nothing more at the moment. But do it over and over again. Get the "feel" of it. And with your friend furnishing the power. Relax and concentrate on learning to RIDE the skate. It sounds easy. But watch that balance foot. It is wanting to swing FORWARD, Why shouldn't it? It has been doing that ever since you first learned to walk. Don't let it master you. Instead, you must master IT.

Second move. After the transfer of weight seems automatic, start forcing the balance leg to go BACK. Train it by mind and muscle to go BACK. Exactly as you did at home. Not high off the floor. Toe turned out and down if you can think of it. If you can't think of it, forget it for the present and come to it later. Just get the leg back any old way—straight, kinked, curved—but make it go to the REAR.

This is your only job now—all through this lesson—backward with the balance leg, feet close together and parallel at the take-offs, toes hitting an imaginary baseboard. Mentally, you simply transfer the entire home lesson practice on the moving skates—remembering to travel with the weight on the MIDDLE of the skate—not on the toe—not on the heel—but on the MIDDLE. Bear down. Don't skate as if on eggs. Make yourself IIEAVY. How is your friend's patience holding out? All we need now is patience.

As you begin to feel the gliding action (WHICH YOU WILL) you may let him pull you along a TRIFLE faster. And now for a new thrili. At the end of half an hour, more or less -you should feel that the act of throwing your bodily weight SIDEWAYS from one skate to the other skate is beginning to PRODUCE MOMENTUM. You had better take a rest now, for the anatomical movements you have been making are contrary to your previous style of propulsion. You will feel that you have been using muscles hitherto unused. You are going to feel it strongly IN THE HIPS. And there you have the secret of real skating. FOR ALL REAL, BEAUTIFUL SKATING IS DONE MOSTLY FROM THE HIPS. Not from the shoulders, but from the hips. Our finest appearing expert skaters—our finest dancers—our "naturals"—all these are HIP skaters.

If you have been following instructions, you must now know, from the feel of your hip muscles that you, too, are entering the ranks of the hip skaters and leaving the ranks of the shoulder skaters. (More about your shoulders in Lesson number TWO.)

After a rest, try it again. Still with the friend providing momentum. A bit faster if you feel like it, but not too fast. Don't spoil things. Make the movements PERFECT. If you cannot get the take-offs perfect, or if balance foot persists in creeping ahead of the other foot, try for 3 out 5—then 4 out of 5, and so on until take-offs are perfect and automatic.

Don't try for distance yet. Short glides, but PERFECT action is the objective. Distance will come and come FAST once you get the action.

When you get tired, or the body balks at "walking backward" take skates off, go home—try it the next night. And the next night. The closer together the trips to the rink are at this stage, the better.

PLAIN SKATING LESSON NUMBER TWO— AT HOME—NO SKATES

It is a pleasure to tell you that the hardest part of the work was done in Lesson number one, and that Lesson number two will be easier.

In Lesson number two, you meet the second villain of the piece, the SHOULDERS. They, too, are out of place for skating. They, too, will have to be REVERSED from their WALKING technique. And after reversal is accomplished, THEY ARE TO BE KILLED OFF ALTOGETHER. You are not going to need them at all. You are going to skate FROM YOUR HIPS. Your graduation performance in plain skating may well be skated WITH THE ARMS FOLDED.

At the moment, however, your shoulders and arms are nullifying all the good work you are doing with the hips. Like the untrained BAL-ANCE LEG they are in the WRONG PLACE all the time. Like the untrained BALANCE LEG, the shoulder and arm is in FRONT when it should be in the REAR.

It is well to pause a moment at this spot and reflect on what a terrible, almost unbeatable, combination of anatomical faults is stacked AGAINST the beginner in skating. The fact that thousands upon thousands of you have fought through to any practical balance whatever is an achievement of no mean order. The legs wrong for skating—the hips wrong—the feet wrong—the shoulders, the arms wrong—the balance wrong—what more can be added to the frame-up? I look to see SKAT-ING'S greatest advance take place when rink operators, professionals, instructors, floor men, Club Presidents, coaches and all amateurs CON-SPIRE to eliminate this holdback frame-up at the threshold—at the beginner's rink—when the beginner first steps onto the floor.

So, in the privacy of our homes, we will start training villain No. 2 the second half of the frame-up—the unruly shoulders and arms.

Walk across the room, swinging your arms naturally—as you would swing them in a brisk outdoor walk.

WHICH ARM goes forward when the RIGHT FOOT goes forward? WHICH ARM goes forward when the LEFT FOOT goes forward? Note that it is the OPPOSITE arm that goes forward. Left arm with Right foot—Right arm with Left foot.

This is all cockeyed for SKATING. It has a place in figure skating but for our present purpose this WALKING shoulder motion is throwing us OFF BALANCE on every skating stroke. The skater is, at all times, on but a "PARTIAL" balance. (See chapter on partial balance.) He is a shoulder skater. Even with Lesson number one mastered, and the Balance leg going to the REAR, the skater is still on "partial" balance. But he is close to the goal of "COMPLETE" balance. ONE MORE trick and he will turn this "partial" balance into "complete" balance—his REAL SKATING BALANCE. It is a simple trick, and may be done in two ways. He may either REVERSE the shoulder action (as he did with the leg) or he may CUT IT OUT ALTOGETHER. As the latter scheme is our ulti-

mate destination, many will seize upon it as a time saver, but my own preference is to learn REVERSAL first and then GRADUALLY eliminate the shoulder action until you can skate with arms folded—with ALL action coming from the HIPS. I will give two reasons (There are others). First, the upper part of the body will develop a freer, smoother style—giving more graceful action and appearance, thus avoiding a rigid, "soldier at attention" stiffness. Second—the reversed shoulder position is useful and necessary in dancing and figure skating later on.

Let us, then, practice REVERSAL of the shoulders.

Walk the floor again, but this time nullify Nature. Swing the RIGHT arm and shoulder forward with the RIGHT foot. Swing the LEFT arm and shoulder forward with the LEFT foot. This is SHOULDER REVERSAL and it is obvious. No one can misunderstand it. Practice this reversal until it becomes automatic. It is easy. You may walk all over the house while doing it. You may practice it on the street if you do not mind appearing funny or "queer."

Note that the balance leg and hip go MORE EASILY to the REAR. Observe that the turning motion at the hips takes place in the BALL AND SOCKET JOINT located in the hip—and does not take place in the pelvic region. This joint business is rather deep stuff, and you need not bother your head about it. But it is REAL Skating technique and all of it is leading you into REAL skating. It is worth mentioning. (NOTE TO ADVANCED SKATERS: -95% of your trouble with 3 turns is that you are turning them on the pelvic joint instead of on the ball and socket joint in the HIP.)

After walking a while with shoulders REVERSED, start taking out the shoulder movements altogether. By "altogether" I mean kill off 80% to 90%. Leave a LITTLE. Avoid stiffness and rigidity. Keep flexible. Walking with palms placed firmly against thighs will give you the "RIGID" idea. Walking with folded arms will give you the "FLEXIBLE" idea. The main item is to first achieve REVERSAL and second, to tone the action down.

A few more observations while practicing, and we will put this lesson on skates at the rink. Do you remember your WEIGHT TRANS-FERENCE in Lesson number one?—The first movement you made?—Your shift of weight from SIDE to SIDE? Observe how this SIDE SHIFT of weight is ASSISTED by shoulder reversal—how the new shoulder action tends to put the body on a ONE FOOT balance—and helps to hold it there—and note that the general body balance is much improved, and that you do not need the wall to steady you in holding a ONE FOOT balance.

I hope you have REMEMBERED to keep the balance leg going strongly to the REAR (Lesson number one) in all this walking practice for shoulder reversal. If you have so remembered, and from now on will combine Home Lessons numbers one and two, you are in possession of the COMPLETE CORRECT ANATOMICAL POISE for skating. You may practice this COMBINED POSTURE at home, or anywhere else, by the hour, by the day, by the week. THIS IS IT! This is the scientific SKATING BALANCE. You may even risk a pose in front of a mirror. You should be able to see the beginning of a true skating posture.

We will now go to the rink for Lesson number two, and I think it an excellent idea to have the friend on hand once more to provide momentuom. This will free the mind for concentration on the new problems. It will be a big saver of time.

PLAIN SKATING LESSON NUMBER TWO AT THE RINK—ON SKATES

With the power unit in operation (friend or instructor) take a good 10 minute practice workout on Lesson number one. ALWAYS work on Lesson number one. Every time you go to a rink practice number one. The legs and hips tend to get out of training. The shoulders (of Lesson number two) are easier to train, and they usually stay trained.

After 10 minutes workout on Lesson number one (longer if desirable) begin building home lesson number two on top of Lesson number one. Concentrate on the shoulders and arms. REVERSE their action as you did at home. If you did your homework well, this should come easy. You have your escort's arm to practice on. Use it first to assist you in reversing the shoulder action; and then use it as a brake to check the shoulder action completely.

The detailed data is all in the preceding chapter, the home lesson—I will not repeat it here.

What you need now is nothing but practice, practice and MORE PRACTICE, keeping an everlasting watch that not one fundamental of Lessons number one and two gets away from you.

As you impose Lesson number two on top of Lesson number one, you will feel your skating improve. It cannot be otherwise. You are now (or should be) on the TRUE SKATING BALANCE. Believe it or not—this is the balance that, ultimately, is going to give you the GLIDE OF THE SKATE; -is going to take from your skating all the misery attending upon FEAR, FATIGUE and FALLS;—is going to make you look like a nullion dollars, and feel like another million—so STICK WITH IT. Improvement will be as rapid as you care to make it. It is linked up with the speed and effort you are putting into your body training at home and at the rink.

At last we have come to the end of the necessary revolutionary changes in anatomy. Lesson number one reversed the anatomy from the waist down; Lesson number two reversed anatomy from the waist up. THERE ARE NO MORE. Continue your practice at every opportunity and these changes will become more and more automatic. As they stabilize themselves, the mind is freed for other duties. Here are one or two necessary to this lesson. The remainder will be put in subsequent chapters to make it easier for you.

Are you BENDING THE KNEE? You should be. Bend the SKAT-ING knee and instep—but allow no bend at the WAIST-EVER,

Momentum: Your momentum should be increasing. You may now give it a bit of thought. Whatever PUSII you put into it must always be out TO THE SIDE—never to the REAR. This is known as SIDE-PUSH. ALL push on ALL skates—Ice or Roller, should be from the SIDE of the blade or skate, and NOT FROM THE TOE. So, practice SIDE-PUSH as you go along. Study Fig. 4. Push against the surface with the "dotted-line" foot as it goes into its arc of travel. THE HORIZONTAL PORTION of the arc (at the top) is the portion used for the push,—NOT the curved portion. Hence its name, SIDE-PUSH. It is a maker and preserver of "EDGES". You will read about EDGES soon. Skate Dancing calls for EDGES. You may wish to dance later on. You will be well equipped. But this pushing is only ONE HALF of your power plant. The other half comes from throwing your weight from one skate to the other at the Parallel take-offs (the weight transference movement from

Lesson number one—your VERY FIRST movement). As you go along with your escort, try throwing your weight on to the skate at the take-offs with a bit more abandon. You will quickly catch on to the fact that weight transference is a potent source of POWER. It is where the much envied EFFORTLESS GLIDE is to come from. You will feel it strongly in a week or two if you have mastered PARALLEL take-offs.

I will transfer to succeeding chapters the remainder of your mental and physical training—and leave you to enjoy your practice of Lessons one and two—the only lessons you are going to need to make you into a beautiful PLAIN SKATER. Your motto: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.

PARALLEL TAKE-OFFS

The Test Books tell you to make Parallel Take-Offs for Dancing and for Plain Skating (Figure Skating makes use of more angular take-off) but they do not tell you WHY. It is time now for you to focus your mind on their importance. (See Fig. 1).

THE PARALLEL take-off gives PERFECT weight transference. 100% of the weight is transferred instantly, and is transferred to the SIDE of the skate, the PROPER PLACE.

The WALKING take-off gives IMPERFECT weight transference. It solits the transfer gives a 50/50 performance. It transfers only HALF the weight at the instant of transfer, and it transfers it to the TOP of the skate—an IMPROPER place.

A person weighing 100 pounds transfers 100 pounds instantly on a parallel take-off, but puts 50 pounds on each of two skates on a walking take-off. It should be clear to you now, ON THIS COUNT ALONE—that the walking balance and take-off (which you are getting rid of) has no place whatever in REAL SKATING. There are other indictments, especially the making of FLATS, and kicking of Partner in Dancing.

You may now be told that the "trick" in skating is to make the skate do % of the work, while you do but % of the work. Proper weight transference on to Parallel take-offs is the key factor in this trick. The walking transfer compels one to do % of the work, while the skate gets away with only % of the work.

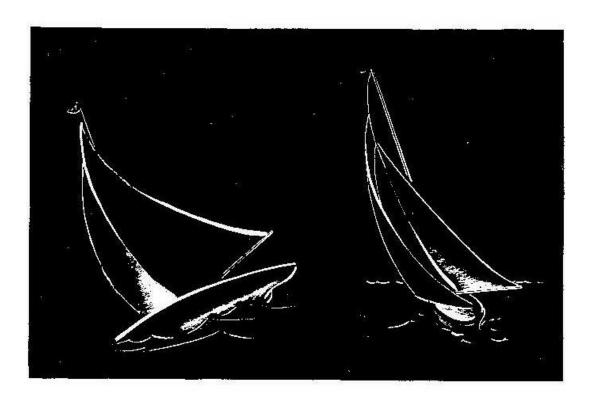
EXCEPTIONS TO CLOSE AND PARALLEL TAKE-OFFS

There are TWO exceptions—the CROSS-ROLL and the CROSS-OVER step. The feet cross over and definitely step AHEAD on these movements. Your professional will teach you these steps when you are ready for them. Also, when you advance to skating on EDGES, you will meet another exception:—taking off from an "inside edge" to an "inside edge" is not parallel, but angular.

ROLLING versus PITCHING

Illustration for this chapter is a ship at sea. It has two main motions. In crossing the waves it pitches fore and aft. This corresponds to the WALKING action on skates. This is the action you are practicing to eradicate. (See PITCHING.)

In the trough (or valley) of the waves, the ship ROLLS to starboard and to port. This is the action you are practing to acquire—the ROLLING action. (See ROLLING.) You will hear a lot about ROLLS in your advanced skating career. They are a beautiful ingredient of all skating. They are a MUST when, and if, you take up Dancing. Acquire them now. Make of yourself a ROLLING ship and not a PITCHING ship, AND YOU CANNOT DO IT WITHOUT PARALLEL TAKE-OFFS.



PITCHING

ROLLING

EDGES AND FLATS

A skate when on an "edge" traces a curve; it is on a "flat" when it traces a straight line.

Edges are made by skating with the weight on the SIDE of the skate.

Flats are made by skating with the weight on the TOP of the skate. The THRILL is in skating EDGES. Transference of weight, parallel take-offs and the ROLLING action—all are gradually getting you on the SIDE of the skate—hence leading you on to EDGES.

I refer, of course, to TRUE edges. Edges are curved lines, but all curved lines are not true edges. A curve may be faked by skidding a roller skate or "wiggling" an ice skate. Edges are easy or hard to make according to knowledge or ignorance of fundamental principles of SIDE LEAN, added to "ROLLING versus PITCHING".

Rolling sideways versus Pitching fore and aft is the heart of the Rawson system of effortless skate propulsion. Besides producing the rare and much coveted GLIDE OF THE SKATE, it opens an immediate door to the thrill of skating on real edges.

As you master Rolling versus Pitching, and add SIDE LEAN to SIDE PUSH on Parallel take-offs, you will discover that edges, glide and the PLAIN ROLL—so necessary in Skate Dancing—are natural byproducts of rolling from side to side.

SIDE LEAN means leaning exactly as if on a bicycle rounding a curve. NOTHING ELSE will make a true edge on either type of skate, so there is no need to struggle with complexity. It is all very simple. You started experimenting with small doses of SIDE LEAN in your very first lesson up against the wall, while shifting weight and balance from SIDE TO SIDE.

We will produce a Nation of beautiful Plain Skaters and Skate Dancers as these simple principles—lost for many years— are restored to the Art of Plain Skating.

In the matter of roller skate adjustment, it must be emphasized that the adjustment must be FLEXIBLE. Otherwise the skate will, by skidding, refuse to make true edges.

Your professional will explain all this to you later on after you have mastered PLAIN SKATING—if you wish to know about it.

SKATING BACKWARD

With your present knowledge of forward skating it will be an easy matter to learn Backward Skating if you will SEPARATE THE INGREDIENTS (re-read Chapter "Preparation for transferring Lesson number one to the rink") and if you will take the advice laid down in the following ten commandments. It will be a HARD job if you do not do so.

- 1-SEPARATE THE INGREDIENTS. You know how to do this. Use a friendly hand for power. Concentrate on learning to RIDE the skate first. Forget about momentum. Do NOT stroke out.
 - 2-Use PARALLEL Take-offs-same as for forward skating.
- 3—The BALANCE foot is carried in FRONT of the body, but forget about that for the moment. Keep it close alongside, or even let it go behind. Get that RIDE of the skate. Later on you can train the balance foot to stay in FRONT of the body.
- 4—Practice WEIGHT TRANSFERENCE—exactly as for forward skating.
- 5—As you begin to be able to do any PUSHING, see that you do ALL YOUR PUSHING from the SIDE. Do not push out to the FRONT. It will put you on your HEEL—a dangerous spot.
- 6—Keep all weight on the MIDDLE of the skate. Not on the Toe. Not on the Heel. Always on the middle, 50/50 on Toe and Heel.
- 7 -Stand upright. Do not lean BACKWARD (a BAD fault). If you have to lean anywhere WHILE LEARNING, lean FORWARD. NEVER lean BACKWARD (over the heel) EVER. "COMPLETE" Balance is the answer.
- 8—Momentum will come in time. Do not hurry. It will come from the same spots you are getting it in forward skating—the combination of SIDE-PUSH and TRANSFER of WEIGHT.
- 9—Keep bending your skating knee and instep. But NOT the waist. Do no buckling at the waist. Do not "sit" on your skate. Stand up on it. Take all the bend you need at KNEE and INSTEP, but NONE at the WAIST.

10—You are noting that there is not much difference between backward skating and forward skating when one understands the scientific principles underlying all Plain Skating. You are noting that these instructions are very FAMILIAR. Concentrate on fundamental principles.

INTERNATIONAL STYLE SKATING

International Style Skating is done on EDGES. Dancing calls for edges. Figure and Free Style Skating call for edges. Your PLAIN SKAT-ING course will open the door to these higher branches of the art. You will find yourself well prepared for taking them up if you so desire. You will progress rapidly.

THE PROOF

The "proof of the pudding is in the eating." As you attain to correct PLAIN SKATING, look around you and see if you can spot those who are on a walking balance and those who are on a skating balance.

Try skating with one who is "walking." It will NOT mix.
Try "walking" with one who is skating. It will NOT mix.
Then try SKATING with one who is SKATING. It WILL mix.
The actions harmonize. YOU HAVE YOUR PROOF.

DANCING ON SKATES

It is possible to go from Correct Plain Skating right into elementary Skate Dancing. There are several beautiful rudimentary Dances that are designed for FORWARD skating. They contain no backward skating steps nor turns.

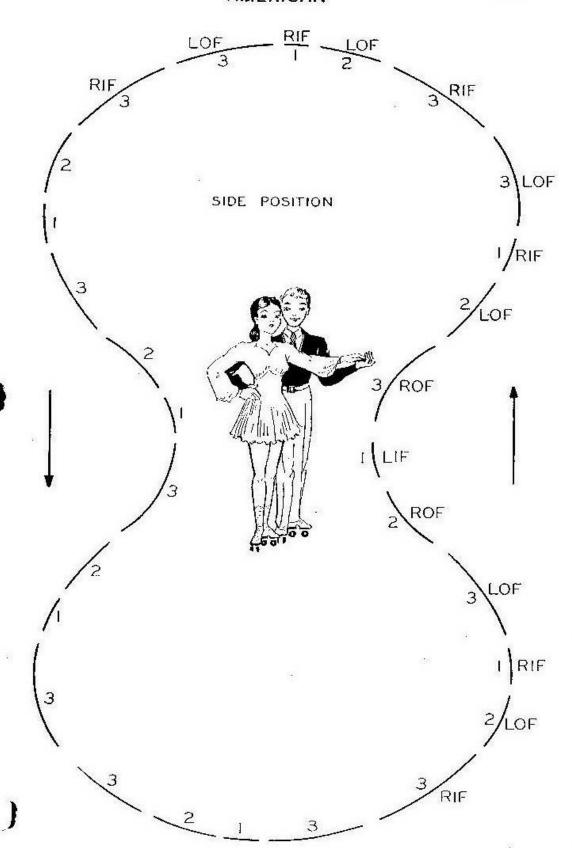
One of the most useful and enjoyable of these Dances is THE STRAIGHT WALTZ. For beginners and experts this valuable Dance is unique in one respect;—IT IS 100 PERCENT PLAIN SKATING ON EDGES.

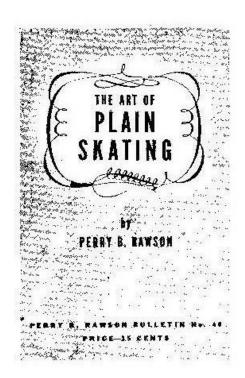
PERRY B. RAWSON

STRAIGHT WALTZ

AMERICAN

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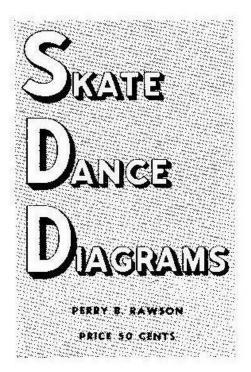








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