

## **SAFETY 1.**

### **How safe will I be?**

We will do our best to help ensure your safety in so far as this is possible. However, as a skier who is already beyond beginner status, you should be aware that skiing is a risk sport, partaken of in mountains. It is therefore not possible to guarantee that I, or we, can keep you safe. In any kind of skiing, in any kind of terrain, conditions will vary, and accidents, incidents or worse are always a possibility.

When you are skiing with me I will always use my best judgement but you must accept that the decision to ski is yours alone, and you must employ your own judgement and common sense. I will not be *telling* you to ski something, merely making the option to do so available. If you are in any doubt at any time, talk to me about it before making your final decision.

In the event of your deciding that you do not wish to ski a particular slope, or partake in a particular exercise, then I will immediately explore whatever alternatives are available at that time. This could be something as simple as taking our skis off and walking down. There could be a time when no option is available, and in that event you will be accorded whatever assistance can be offered.

### **What service are you offering me?**

I am promising that I will provide coaching tuition which will make available to you both mental and physical techniques which when employed and practised will facilitate both your understanding and practice of skiing. I will work with you to help you employ those techniques to the furtherance of your skill as a skier.

## **SAFETY 2 - SKI BINDINGS: Your first line of defence.**

The bindings keep you **on** the skis; and *they release you **from** the skis*. Your safety depends on correct binding settings. I strongly recommended you learn about them.

In recent seasons, a number of members have sustained injuries (not while with me, thank goodness) which might well have been avoided. The likely cause of these avoidable injuries has been very badly adjusted binding settings.

Twice, possible injuries were *avoided* because we noticed coming out of the hire shop, that the settings were at least two DIN settings too high which would likely have led to non-release in a fall; in another the settings front and back were very different. In yet a third, the bindings of the two skis differed!

I strongly recommend you to spend some time reading and understanding these charts; bindings are extremely important, and far too little either explained or understood. It is in your best interests to learn about them. **Do not trust others to get your binding settings correct for you; not even apparently expert hire shops. Check them before you accept them.**

- Learn to how select your own correct binding setting using the chart.
- Learn how to check both fore and aft binding settings.
- Learn how to adjust them, or to ensure someone else does it correctly.

On Bobski skiing course I will show you how, if you don't already know.

The information below is a copy of sheet I have been using for many years; the settings are based on previously published Rossignol and Salomon charts.

I have no opinion on which chart is optimal, but do get to know them and make a choice - not knowing makes you less safe. The suggestions in the self-testing article seem to me to make very good sense. But be very careful how you do it, if you do it – there appears to be some risk, perhaps only slight, that done wrongly you could strain something.

Weight (Kg)	Weight (Stones)	Height(cm)	Boot Size				
			<=1	2-4	5-7	8-11	12+
36-41	5½-6½	<149	3	2½	2½	2	
42-48	6½-7½	<149	3½	3	3	2½	2½
49-57	7½-9	150-155m	4½	4	3½	3	3
58-66	9-10½	156-165		5	4½	4	3½
67-78	10½-12¼	166-179		6	5½	5	4½
79-94	12¼-15;	180-193		7	6½	6	5½
95+	15+;	195+			8	7	6½

NB:

- Intermediate skiers go DOWN one line
- Advanced skiers go DOWN two lines
- After that, if you're over 50 years old go back UP one line.

Here is an example based on me.

Weight 83 kilos / height 180+cms / Boot size 9

So, my base reading is 6. Go down two lines because I am an advanced skier – the setting becomes 8. However, I am ancient and fragile – so, back up one line to 7.

That's my reading, though because I've a dodgy knee I use 6 on piste\*. The important thing is I know what to look for if I hire skis. Learn this and you can insist on the shop setting your bindings are *you* want them. (And you need to know how to *check* them – on my courses I show you how)

[ \*When I'm off-piste I set them higher because I once headed off on my back, head-first down an icy slope toward the crevasses of the Argentiere glacier because I got cut-up by another skier and *both* my skis released. As my friend Pascal (who arrested my descent) observed – “Set them higher; I think it is better to have a broken knee than to die!” ]

### **Protect yourself.**

It is not easy to find an accommodating ski hire shop. The proprietors know their stuff usually, but for commercial reasons many employ young untrained or only partially trained seasonal staff.

They are also very frequently in a hurry. Add to this that if you are injured because of an inappropriate binding setting it is exceedingly difficult to prove it and gain legal recourse.

So taking the trouble to learn the above and to do it, is (in my view) worth the effort.