

Slalom Skiing, Simple...Right?

On the surface, slalom skiing seems simple. A tow boat travels through the middle of a slalom course within a prescribed time. The skier skis in a zig zag pattern around 6 buoys that are 36 feet away from the boat's pylon using a 75 foot rope. Now for the hard part, the rope gets shorter. In order to hold the world record, as Greenwood native Jeff Rodgers does, the boat travels at 36 MPH and the rope is only 32 feet in length on his first pass. You must use your body to stretch the additional 4 feet. At this speed, the skier travels the 800 foot course in 16 seconds while reaching speeds of 70 mph and slowing to 22mph around the buoys. Accelerating back to 70mph, the skier must cross the boats wake to get to the next buoy. This is a truly amazing feat!

Tigé and Connelly team skier, Jamie Beauchesne, who also co-holds the world record in slalom skiing along with Jeff Rodgers and Andy Mapple, says on a perfect run of 43 feet off, he would have 3 inches to spare around each buoy. The strength and coordination required to do this is tremendous.

If you are interested in competition skiing, but do not know where to get started, Gunnells Marine can point you in the right direction. Selecting a ski is the most important step in the process. Gunnells Marine carries a full line of Connelly skis. This allows the skier to chose from different types and designs to fine tune their style of skiing.

To get into competition skiing, the South Carolina INT League allows skiers of any ability to compete with no pressure. The SC INT is a friendly group of skiers, wakeboarders and kneeboarders of all ages and abilities competing and helping each other to become better athletes. If you would like more information on the INT, visit Gunnells Marine in person or on line at www.GunnellsMarine.com and click the links section.

