SKATES

Notes about sharpening:

I use a big belt sander. My edges are 90 degrees. Not worried about a hollow grind. Some might want that. I sharpen to 220 if I am seeking ultimate edge. Belt sanders acan be turned upside down. Stones and files with jigs are also options.

Be careful with files. Ensure yours is sharp. It is possible to tear the steel if you are too aggressive.

I do not use a jig. I sharpen by eye and by hand. Pretty crude but it works for me. I have a lot of experience with skate blades and ice boat runners. Jigs are nice if they work for you.

I check the blade profile against a machinist straight edge with a light. The more you sharpen your blades the more rocker you will get. Verifying rocker to a straight edge allows you to maintain consitant rocker. Any flat surface will do. Table saws usually have a nice flat platen.

I hone my edges with a red diamond sharpening stone or a soft Washita Arkansas stone. I use the stone to remove any burrs, to smooth the edge. Pay attention to light reflecting off the edge of your skates. If you can see reflected light the edge is dull.

What ever you do: it is important to make sure there are no burrs on the edges of the sharpened blades. The burrs roll over or tear off and make the blade instantly dull. The coarser the grit or file you use, the more likely you will have a rough edge or a burr.

Too much attention to blades can get in to your head. It is possible to waste a lot of time making blades way better than they need to be. Most folks including me cannot tell the difference.

Hard cold ice dictates sharp blades. Softer ice requires less edge.

Folks should be aware: hard ice with grit on it, like the ice near road surfaces where the wind can blow sand on to the ice, or here in Alaska where we have volcanic ash deposited to the ice, dulls blades really fast. Bird poop can wipe an edge almost instantly.

Blade profile and sharpness are issues relative to ice hardness and temp.

Do not underestimate the human eye and the feel of the blade under your thumb or stone. Check sharp edges by eye and by dragging a fingernail on the edge. A sharp edge will shave your fingernail. Your eyes and by feel are pretty good gages.

I have heard that the human eye is good to one degree. Even my old shaky hands can feel the slick of a stone or a burr well enough for me.

Notes on bindings:

I had knee surgery after a wing sailing episode. I was sailing with a non releasable binding to boot set up. The nordic clap skate did not come off when it was grabbed by a stiff shallow snow drift.

I believe that cracks in the ice, holes, shell ice, stiff snow, are hazards best insured against by using a releasable skate. Wing sailors go too fast.

Of course when you are driving a big boot to long skate combo you will smile. Ski boots are super secure, they make it a lot easier to drive blades.

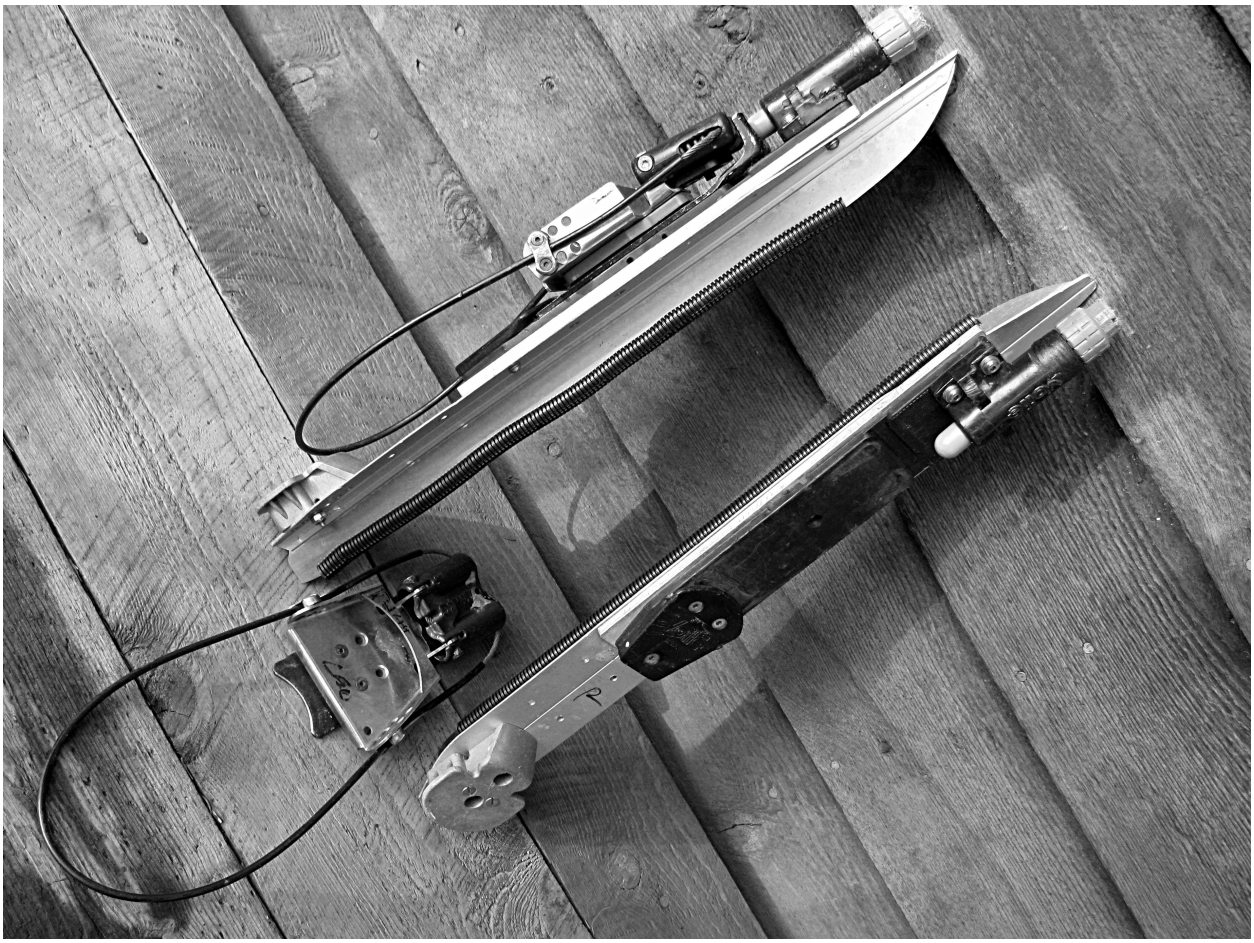
I mount up my skates with releasable telelmark bindings or AT bindings depending on the boot.

I really like the Scarpa F1 AT boot with a Dynafit Speed Turn binding. I have mounted Dynafits to nordic skates as well as WingBlades.

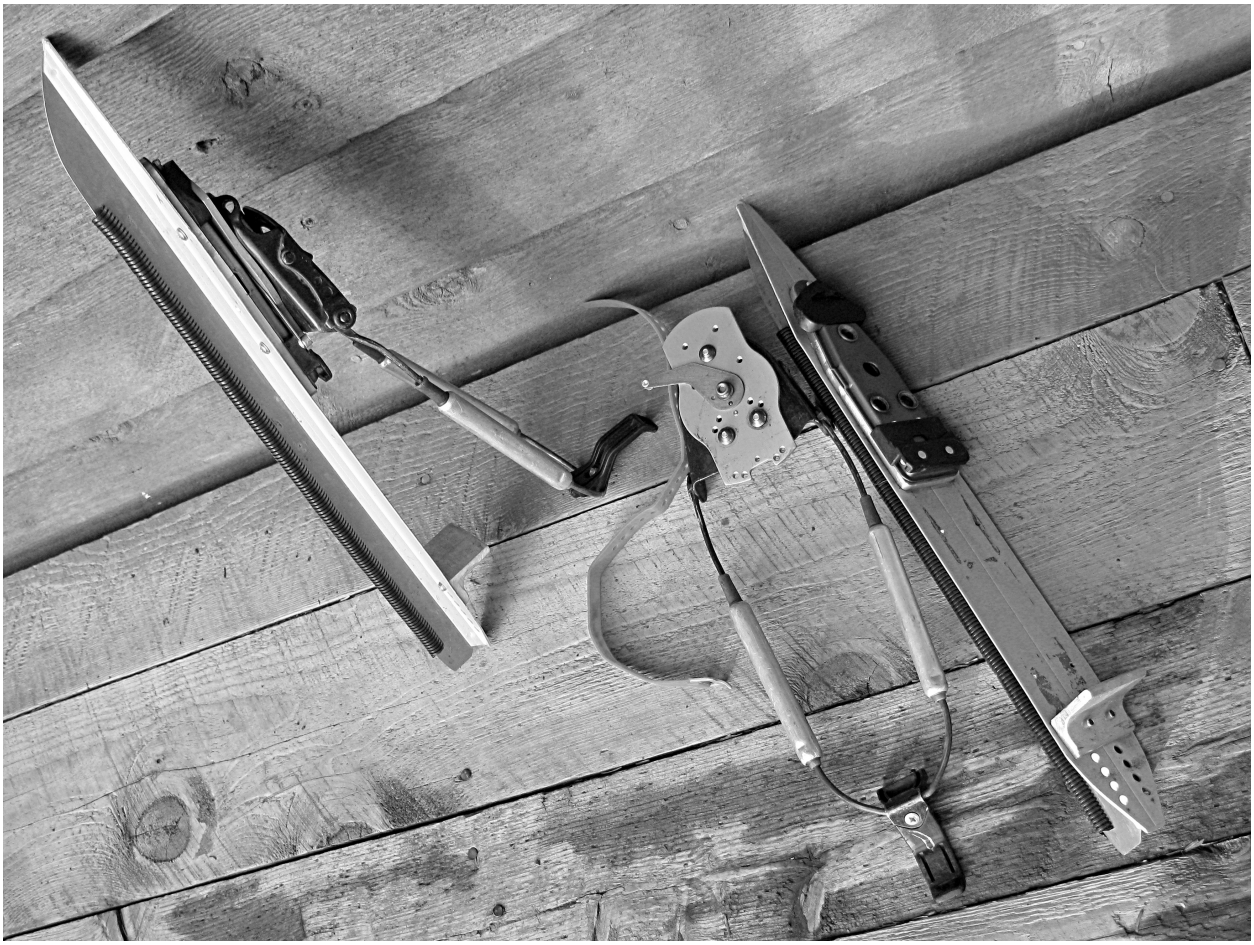
I use an adapter plate for tele bindings. The Dynafit Speed Turn can be mounted directly to a WingBlade or the deck of a wide nordic skate.

See attached pix

WingBlades are super cool. These show a Dynafit Speed turn binding mounted directly to the skate.



Here are 55cm nordic skates with a wide deck. The adapter plate is 1/4” 6061 T6 and allows for the Viole (Americana Besser Plate style) piston to be mounted forward. Bindings shown are telemark.



The nicest release plate set up is the Telebry. They are a bit fussy at first. After you get the spring dialed to release when you want, issues go away.

Release plate adapts to a variety of telemark set ups.

Aluminum angle works well for a heel riser.

These Telebry set ups are a narrow plate as apposed to wider plates sold for wider skis.