

A2 Forward Stride Mechanics Taught by Dr. Gaston Schaeffer

Key Points:

Be in a balanced position with a good knee bend. Use as much blade as possible. To start fall forward and push back the first few strides and then skate with a sideways push. The arms move opposite the legs in a back and forth motion never causing the upper body to over rotate. Lead with the head up and chest forward.

Description:

I have put together various videos of Dr. Gaston Schaeffer teaching skating. Gaston has a Doctorate in Body Mechanics and taught at University in Switzerland where he was the Swiss figure skating Champion and followed that being feature skater for Ice Capades and Holiday on Ice where he toured the world. He met his wife while touring and they had a girl and a boy. Gaston was the Olympic figure skating coach for Switzerland as well as in charge of fitness for their speed skating team. He worked with Juhani Wahlsten in Davos when Juuso was coaching there.

Gaston Junior demonstrates the forward stride. He is one of the most powerful skaters I have seen. He suffered a major injury at 18 and stopped playing but his technique is perfect.

The video goes in this order.

1. Gaston talking about the mechanics of the forward stride while I film him on my deck.
2. Gaston and his son doing an on ice demonstration with Gaston describing the important points of the stride.
3. Gaston leads a group through a forward skating and balance warm up.
4. Gaston teaching that group the mechanics of the forward stride starting with the long stride first, then the start and the medium length stride.
5. Gaston leading a U17 skills group. Dany Heatley came and skated with them that day. He had just won the NHL Rookie of the Year. He came as a favour to me to say hi and skate about 15 minutes but because we did transition games all practice he stayed and played and did the skating as well (he has a black sweatsuit and hat on).

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