

## Tom's Musings — Achieving Slippery Skis

---

The importance of a clean ski base cannot be understated when talking about achieving optimal glide performance. And you shouldn't always be satisfied with cleaning your base with a base cleaner or hot wax. Sometimes it may be sufficient and sometimes it may not. But more often than not, a full stonegrind is the best solution to achieve optimal glide performance. Or, if your skis have already been ground within the last 2-3 years, a refresher grind (with some exceptions) could be all you need—especially before an important race. Compared to a complete stonegrind, a refresher grind requires fewer passes over the stone to clean up a scabbed sintered polyethylene ski base (UHMWPE-Ultra High Molecular Weight Polyethylene).

Removing dirt and contaminants is one way to improve wax adhesion, and removing scabbed polyethylene is another. Here in the frozen wastelands of the Upper Midwest, we use a lot of hard glide waxes—hard graphites, powdered hardeners, pure fluoros. We ski on cold fresh pointy snow, old transformed icy snow, and ice pellet man-made snow. Our ski bases are used and abused. They're gouged, burnished, overheated, and glop embedded. To get good wax adhesion, our ski bases require exposed, clean, structured polyethylene. When the race season is here, you can either be THE person with skis ground and ready to go, or the person realizing they need a full stonegrind or refresher grind in order to get there. There is no problem doing a full stonegrind or refresher grind just before your race. Getting your skis up to speed is not a big deal. With a clean ski base and a correctly applied and brushed wax job, your skis will give you optimal performance.

Call or email us with your stonegrind questions. Or come in with your skis and we will assess their condition.

— Tom Novak, Head Stonegrinder at Finn Sisu