

# Roller ski training

A few pointers to get you started and help your students and athletes enjoy roller skiing from the get-go:

## What?

- ✓ Wearing a helmet is essential, you may want to consider reflective vests if you are training on a road. Train your students/athletes to put on their helmet before they put on their roller skis.
- ✓ Light weight roller skis are preferable for younger skiers. Heavy roller skis are too hard on the legs and may lead to back problems.
- ✓ Roller skis come in different speeds. It is important to ensure that the speed of the roller skis matches the terrain in which they will be used. Speed reducers can also be fitted for slowing down on downhill slopes.
- ✓ Roller ski poles need to have sharp tips to dig into the road or path properly. If they do not grip, this can be problematic as it can cause arm action to change. Carbide or Tungsten tips are best.

## Where?

- ✓ An empty or little used car park is an excellent location for introducing roller skiing. If that is not available, use a smooth flat stretch of road with little traffic.
- ✓ When roller skiing on the road, try to set up signage or use a parent to notify drivers you are using the road and to drive slowly.

## How?

- ✓ Warm up with some balance and agility exercises such as a game of tag.
- ✓ In the beginning, focus on skating technique.
- ✓ Introduce your skiers to roller skiing without poles.
- ✓ Your first few roller ski sessions should be short in length (approx. 30-40 minutes) as beginners may develop shin pains the first few times they try it.
- ✓ Start your roller skiers with simple activities until they develop a sense of comfort. Simple agility courses can be set up to help your students/athletes develop skills that will provide them with a general sense of control, such as turning and stopping.
- For initial instruction, use easy terrain or a very gradual uphill so that balance is maintained more easily. Steeper uphill cause skiers to have to push too hard and not concentrate on correct technique, and steeper downhills can be intimidating and dangerous.

