

ROLL WITH IT

Pushing round a park on what look like short skis with wheels – what could be the point? I went along to find out and discovered that, as an all-round workout for skiing and snowboarding fitness, this really could and should catch on.

“Push and glide, push and glide – it’s a virtuous circle to success,” my instructor, Iain Ballentine, tells me, somewhat confusingly. But it’s a beautiful autumnal morning in London’s Hyde Park and, despite the hippy vibe, I’m fast becoming a convert to what’s been christened rollerskiing – cross-country skiing without the snow.

Wobbling along on converted cross-country skis, with what look like toy scooter wheels at the front and back, I can feel muscles in my body that haven’t been used for a long time. Pushing off with one foot to glide along on the other is a lot like skating, and is great technique training for cross-country skiers. But, more of interest to me, it’s



beneficial for downhill ski and snowboard fitness too. Plus, Iain tells me, it improves balance – and the exercises he has me doing, such as skating along on one ski, quickly lead to less wobbles. Most importantly, though, it’s fun!

Call Iain Ballentine on 07968 286129 or visit www.rollerski.co.uk to find out more. For nationwide opportunities, look for your local cross-country club on www.escnordic.org.uk. RM