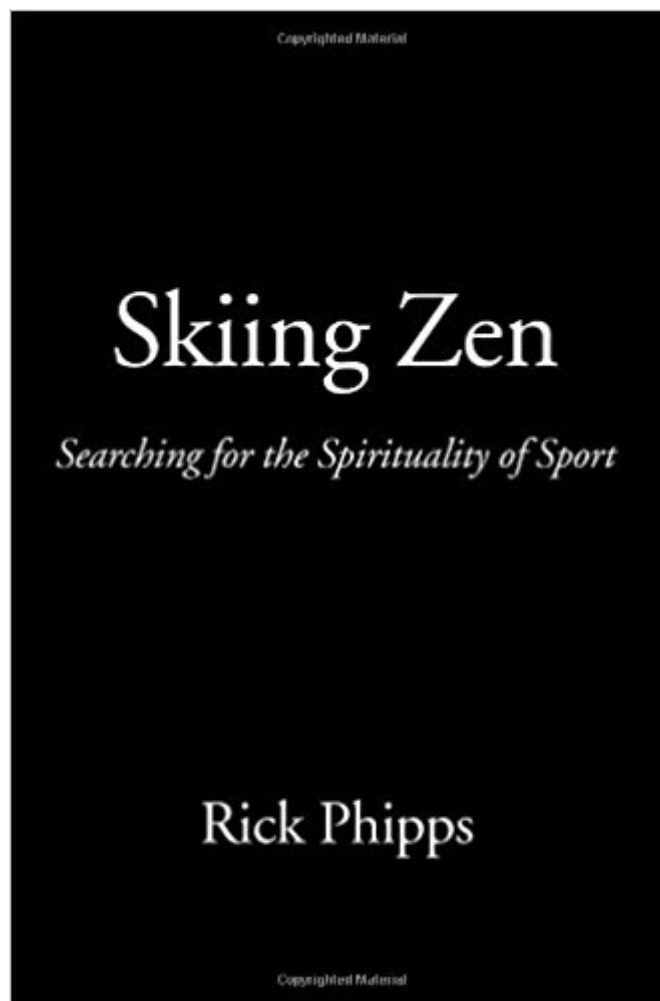


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Skiing Zen: Searching For The Spirituality Of Sport



Synopsis

Guided by a strange epiphany, Richard Phipps traveled to Japan with \$600 and a pair of skis. The result, *Skiing Zen*, is much more than a ski adventure. It is a tapestry of thought about sports and awareness, about differences between Eastern and Western thinking, and about individualism amidst group pressure. Woven into the travel anecdotes, cultural insights, and skiing action are intriguing concepts such as the spectrum of attention and distraction, the evolving spiral of learning, the power of guided imagery, and the correlation between Zen and love. Stunning in scope and yet penetrating in its earnest insight, Phipps is indeed *Searching for the Spirituality of Sport*.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Icen Books (May 15, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1587364506

ISBN-13: 978-1587364501

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,146,185 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 in [Books > Sports &](#)

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Customer Reviews

Rick Phipps discovered the benefits of self-consciousness in Japan, in the thoroughness of its arts : pottery, calligraphy, tea ceremony, flower arts, poetry, martial arts, etc. In his book, "*Skiing Zen. Searching for the Spirituality of Sport*", he tells how Zen buddhism allowed him to improve his skiing skills, after he spent a season with the great Japanese ski champion Yuichiro Miura, the first skier to have skied down the Everest in 1970. Within his team, he learnt how to move softly, play with gravity and control his gestures. Above all he noticed that Japanese ski beginners are not given any detailed instructions : designed for the brain, they produce disruption when one needs to apply them. On the opposite, learning is made by watching champions and imitating their moves. The movement goes straight from the eyes to the body, without being rationally interpreted by the brain. An essential reading for whoever wants to capture the essence of skiing.

Rick Philips does an amazing job capturing the thrill and freedom of skiing, as well as the beauty and complexity of Japanese Culture. It will want you to grab what you can into a backpack and start off on your own adventure. For me though the best part of this book was his experience in trying to fit into an insular society that he encountered in Japan. It reminded me of my own experiences in trying to fit into the surfing and paddling community on the North Shore of Oahu, and made me reminisce about that time in my life. If you have had a similar experience this is the book for you.

What a disappointment. Perhaps it's just too hard to live up to Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance when blending the mundane, a personal, spiritual journey, and zen. I found the writing in this book forced, the attempt to convey profound subjective experience far from compelling, or even engaging, and the net effect boring. More restating than illuminating, no sense of character development in a book that is ostensibly nothing but character development. Great intent, probably a great personal journey, but not well transmitted to the reader. I hate to be so critical of an author because I know how hard it is to write well, but despite being a skier and a zenist and having begun reading with great interest, this book doesn't do it for me at all.

Great book for someone with varied interests and desires to enjoy seeing the world in a new way!
Fun and light yet stimulating for me!

Rick's sports and journey to ski and understand, would be good for today's players to read. As an old hockey, footballer and skier -- I feel it covered many of the runs I did back in the day.

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