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NOVEMBER 2012
VOLUME XXII NO.1
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ENJOYING A DAWN SKIN UP
STOWE MOUNTAIN RESORT
BEFORE THE LIFTS OPEN.
PHOTO BY PETER
WADSWORTH



Photo by Peter Wadsworth.

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PAYING FOR PLAYING

IN THIS ISSUE, we have a piece about the effort to save the Bolton backcountry, the 1,161-acre tract of land that includes Bolton's gorgeous Nordic trails and backcountry ski access (see page 20). Access to this gem was in question when an interested buyer intended to close the land to skiers. As you'll read in Sarah Galbraith's story, the Vermont Land Trust is spearheading an effort to buy the land and make it publicly accessible forever.

This story has me thinking deeply about access to land. The interested buyer isn't the bad guy here—while the decision to close land to skiing was a punch in the gut, all of us, whether or not we have the financial resources, have the same right to make an offer on land. And we can't expect private land to be accessible forever. It's our job, as passionate outdoors people, as people who care about the environment, and as members of a democracy to contribute to public policy discussions and support the organizations working on our behalf. Public radio nails it when they say, if you're listening, then public radio is important to you, and you use it (so donate). Likewise, if we're using land for recreation, we shouldn't take it for granted. Helping to purchase land, as in this case, and helping to maintain already public land, is our duty. And while real dollars make a big difference, support doesn't have to be financial—going to public hearings and having your voice heard, writing to decision-makers, volunteering, and participating in fundraising auctions or events are all important ways of contributing. Shopping at businesses

who make investments in what is important to you is another way of contributing. For instance, Onion River Sports has donated a \$1,000 shopping spree that will be raffled off and Outdoor Gear Exchange is hosting a film night with proceeds from both supporting the Bolton purchase.

Having access to the outdoors isn't strictly a personal matter either. As policymakers continue to struggle with what to do about Vermont's aging population and try to recruit skilled, young professionals to come here to work, Vermont's outdoors can be a key component. So access to the outdoors is an economic issue. I'm a young professional who came from out of state, and I choose to live and work in Vermont, largely because I can get a quick ski in before going to work, hike to view a sunset with very little driving or planning, and at a lot of Vermont businesses, it's understood that many employees will come down with colds on powder days.

We're fortunate to live in a place where many of our policymakers understand the importance of access to the outdoors. But we have to keep doing our part too and not be complacent or take our trails, mountains, streams, and lakes for granted. The Bolton effort is an incredible showing of this kind of spirit. I look forward to writing the piece about the sale being finalized—and how we all helped.

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Race Recap

USA TRIATHLON AGE GROUP OLYMPIC DISTANCE TRIATHLON

AUGUST 17, 2012

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

DONNA SMYERS of Adamant was named Grand Masters Champion at the USA Triathlon National Championship in Burlington. The 55-year-old physical therapist completed the course which consists of a 1,500-meter swim, 40-kilometer bike and 10K run in 2 hours, 24 minutes and 30.2 seconds, winning her age bracket for the second time in two years.

VS: How many USA Nationals have you done?

DS: I've probably done a dozen. I kept promoting Burlington to the organizers since I've had to travel to places like Shreveport, Louisiana, St. Joseph, Missouri, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama; places with awful brown water and alligators.

VS: How does Burlington compare to other locations?

DS: I may be a little biased but I think it was one of the nicest places they've ever held the nationals. The only problem was some weeds at the end of the swim, but the bike course was really nice and we had beautiful weather both years, which is unusual. I would guess most participants would say it was one of the most beautiful courses we've ever had, but I have to admit I missed the years it was held at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho which might have been equally nice.

VS: What is your favorite leg of the Burlington course?

DS: I think the bike course was a work of genius. I didn't have my best time there, although I did well last year. Closing Interstate 189 and including Dorset and Spear Street was just fantastic, particularly since those are the roads that many of our cyclists train on. It also didn't appear to impact the traffic into Burlington, which I thought was a really good thing. I did better on the run which was also familiar because it's part of the Vermont City Marathon. It was awfully nice coming in on the waterfront and it was a pretty easy run. Everybody groaned about Depot Street, but it's only a quarter of a mile, maximum, at the beginning and then there are no hills.

VS: Were there any improvements on the course from last year?

DS: Breaking it into two days helped with the traffic back-up. That didn't impact me since I was in the second wave, but last year I saw traffic back up into South Burlington. It didn't affect us but you could see the drivers were irritated and we didn't see any of that this year. The other change from making it two days was that we had a much bigger transition area. It wasn't crowded at all although some people thought they didn't put the numbers far enough apart.

VS: If you were in charge of the Burlington course, would you do anything differently?

DS: I would try to figure out how to not have people swim through weeds at the end of the swim. There was a lot of milfoil and it would have been nice if they could have harvested it. It was an OK exit but it would have been nice to have a cleaned up channel. I think they changed it the second day. Also, I would change things so you don't swim directly into the sun. We started the swim by going into the hard waves and then made a 90-degree turn directly into the sun so we couldn't see anything. I think they may also have changed that for the sprint.

I thought they did a fantastic job

with the organization, designing the course and the venue set up. It would be great if Burlington could keep having a destination triathlon but Peter Delaney [Executive Director of RunVermont] said there wasn't enough community support. That was sad to hear. I'd love to see them continue this as an event, but it sounds like it's not going to happen. It's great for businesses and the state and great for tourism. All the local hotels were sold out for the weekend. If you got people coming for the race, they'd see what a nice place it is to swim, run, and ride, and they'd come back for vacation. It would be a huge tourism boost. Look what happened to Lake Placid. They didn't have all those triathletes in town until they started running races.

—Phyl Newbeck

Phyl Newbeck lives in Jericho with her partner, Bryan, and two cats. She is a skier, skater, cyclist, kayaker, and lover of virtually any sport that does not involve motors. She is the author of *Virginia Hasn't Always Been for Lovers: Interracial Marriage Bans and the Case of Richard and Mildred Loving*.



PHOTO / RYAN BONNEAU

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AURA 65

THRU-HIKING / OVERNIGHT TO EXTENDED TRIPS



LOOKING TO IMPROVE your performance, avoid injury, or recover from one? Massage could be the answer.

Everyone knows that a massage feels good, but are there really benefits to getting regular bodywork? General results for athletes include increased flexibility, reduced muscle soreness, and quicker recovery. However, there are even greater benefits from sport-specific massage: the more specific the technique, the more targeted the results.

Sport-specific massage focuses on the muscles and connective tissue used in a particular activity and often stressed from overuse. Targeted techniques such as compression, friction, and stripping to specific areas can be used to improve your performance, avoid injury, or aid in the recovery from one.

Repetitive motion of any type can lead to adhesions within the tissue, resulting in restrictions and reduced range of motion, which can inhibit performance. Massage is ideal for loosening adhesions and correcting muscular imbalances, resulting in greater strength and improved flexibility. In fact, a massage can actually make you stronger; a tight muscle is not



performing at its optimal strength.

For example, runners typically exhibit tight hip flexors, adductors, and calves; hamstrings and glutes can be tight or weak. The symptoms are rarely symmetrical. A massage therapist trained for sport-specific work will look at muscular imbalances and develop a treatment plan to keep you strong and performing optimally.

Strength and flexibility are key

in preventing injury. Most strains and sprains are the result of muscular imbalances. Targeted massage to loosen restricted areas can release strain in surrounding muscles; for example, tight calves can create too much strain on the hamstrings, making them vulnerable to injury.

Massage can also aid in recovery from injury. The Feb. 1, 2012, issue of *Science Translational Medicine* published a study that confirmed that massage actually helps in recovery from physical exercise. Muscle biopsies were taken from men who were asked to exercise to exhaustion. Biopsies were then taken from both legs; one leg was massaged after exercising, the other was not. They concluded that massage "appears to be clinically beneficial by reducing inflammation and promoting mitochondrial biogenesis."

Different age groups have different needs. For older adults, recovery time is longer, flexibility is reduced. Women going through hormonal changes may experience increased fascial tightness due to hypothyroid conditions and an increase in the inflammatory response during this time of life.

Sprains and strains, tendinitis, spasms and cramps, even nerve compression can be eased with focused massage. A trained sports massage therapist will develop a treatment plan to keep you healthy or get you back on track as quickly as possible.

SPORT-SPECIFIC MASSAGE FOR ATHLETES

In choosing a massage therapist, decide what your goals are and find a therapist who has experience working with similar issues.

If you want to enhance your training, flush out toxins after an event, or play pain-free, consider integrating massage into your training program. Whether you compete or play for fun, massage is a great way to play at your best and avoid overuse symptoms. Anyone participating in regular physical activity can benefit!

Lynne Walker is a certified neuromuscular therapist practicing in Norwich, Vermont. She grew up in New England on the back of a horse, and now rides mostly bicycles.



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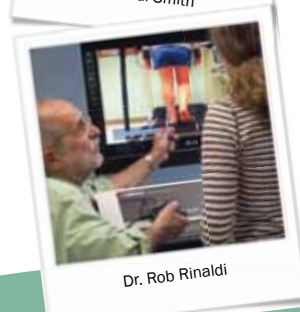
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ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 23, nearly 200 teenagers from all over New England braved the chilly midday air at Killington Mountain Resort to tackle a seemingly impossible mission: The Spartan Race Vermont High School Challenge. The four-mile journey consisted of mud, barbed wire, bone-chilling water, fire trenches, and twisted-rope climbs. Sponsored by Spartan Race, a globally recognized leader in obstacle racing, the 13-mile course, dubbed the “Spartan Beast,” tested the abilities of athletes from around New England.

Fair Haven High School’s 15-year-old Austin Beauregard recounts his own Sunday race adventure. “I had this feeling overwhelm me, because I’ve been training and waiting for this for months. I went at a full-out sprint, and then I got to the hills and thought ‘Oh boy, here we go!’” The Vermont High School Challenge was the first three miles of the 13-mile Spartan Beast. Due to the difficulty and the steep incline of the course, the average time to complete the four-mile challenge was an hour and 40 minutes. No matter how grueling the race may seem, completing the challenge yields immense personal satisfaction. For Austin, he cannot wait for the next race.

“The part I enjoy most is the challenge. I’m really looking forward to the obstacles I couldn’t do.” Participating on a team, or as individuals, the teens made a collaborative effort to finish the race. “One girl got down on her hands and knees to let someone else climb on her back and over a wall,” Austin says. Because organized obstacle racing is fairly new to high schools, Fair Haven High School principal, Brett Blanchard, hopes students like Austin will help promote participation at the school.

Blanchard, along with Spartan Race coordinator Jen Macari, started the obstacle course racing program at Fair Haven High School. The new program is an informal club that meets regularly. They started the program because they wanted students who didn’t participate in “traditional” extracurricular sports to “find their own kind of adventure,” Blanchard says. The goal of Fair Haven’s new program is to inspire kids to engage in lifelong fitness. Blanchard believes that is why obstacle racing is perfect for high schools nationwide. “All you need for obstacle racing is a good pair of shoes, a shirt, and some shorts,” Blanchard says. The low budget makes an obstacle program a readily available option to get kids involved in fitness.



Additionally, this type of physical conditioning is conducive to participating in a variety of life sports and does not require specific skills. When the club meets, Spartan Race provides a Workout of the Day, or they travel to Benson, Vermont, where they practice at the Shale Hill Adventure Course. Shale Hill is an all-purpose recreational facility that offers activities from paintball to snowshoeing. “Obstacle racing isn’t skill-specific like other sports. It is more fitness based. If you’re in good health, you can finish a course. Building grip strength will help you for a multitude of hanging, climbing, or swinging obstacles. Learning how to climb a rope using your legs and feet to lock you in place will help you climb when back strength hasn’t been developed yet,” Macari explains. Macari is the assistant trainer for the Fair Haven program and works for Spartan Race, following each event across the country while presenting and connecting schools with the program and local races.

Obstacle racing could not be more relevant for today’s youth. As high schools nationwide battle obesity, “nature deficit disorder,” and more sedentary teen lifestyles, obstacle racing is a remedy as well as an alternative to joining the soccer or hockey team. Recently, the Vermont Principals Association approved obstacle racing as a sport. The benefits of obstacle racing extend far beyond physical results: racing improves self-esteem and motivation. Because everyone who participates in obstacle racing is equal, the only competition is with yourself. “It’s not at all a competition to win. It’s a competition between you and yourself

to become better. And after the Spartan Race, you are a completely different person,” Austin says. The perspective the race gives a person is evident in Austin’s pride with his achievement. Another benefit of obstacle racing is mental endurance and discipline. “Racing gives

kids a sense of control, which helps build motivation skills,” Blanchard explains. He hopes obstacle racing will become a national high school activity and lead to lifelong fitness practices. “There are a lot of hoops and hurdles to bring obstacle course racing into schools,” Macari says. “But even if a facility cannot be built on property, training can take place anywhere. It’s about getting away from our sedentary lives and starting to run, climb, jump, and play again.”

If you would like to learn more about school obstacle course racing or Spartan Race, contact Brett Blanchard at Fair Haven High School (mrbblanchard@gmail.com) and Jen Macari (jenniferm@spartanrace.com).

Madeline Murray-Clasen is writing for Vermont Sports as part of a Community Based Learning Project at Montpelier High School, where she is a senior.



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ALTERNATIVE ENERGY, FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, AND MORE SNOWMAKING

WHAT'S NEW AND IMPROVED AT VERMONT'S SKI AND RIDE AREAS

By Paul Morris

VERMONT'S ALPINE ski areas have been working overtime this summer stringing up four new lifts, building two new lodges, and cutting new glades and trails. But really, what's the true Alpine ski experience about without a brand new sushi takeout bar? Here's what's waiting for you this season.



A skier under the tram at Jay Peak Resort. Jay is opening the Sky Haus, a new restaurant in the tram station, the building in the center of the photo. Photo by Jeb Wallace-Brodeur.

ASCUTNEY MOUNTAIN RESORT

Wish we had better news to report, but we don't. An Ascutney Mountain Resort Liquidation Trust has been formed and has sold the mountain's detachable quad chairlift to Crotched Mountain. The lodges are boarded up and the trails are posted against trespassers, hikers, and skiers alike. Take heart though, New England history has proven that many a mothballed ski area has been resurrected by individuals or co-op groups with a dream, a management team, and of course, a healthy business checking account. Perhaps next season?

BOLTON VALLEY

As the Alpine operations gear up for another season, the big push here is on the Nordic side. Last March, the owner of the ski area and adjacent lands agreed to sell 1,161 acres of prime backcountry and Nordic skiing terrain to the Vermont Land Trust, provided it can raise just more than \$1 million by mid-March 2013 (see story page 20). In addition to many modest donations by individuals, an anonymous donor has upped the ante by \$100,000, and yet another donor has agreed to match all donations, dollar-for-dollar. If the fundraising effort is successful, the Vermont Land Trust and the Friends of Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry hope to add the acquired land to the Mount Mansfield State Forest. For info on how to donate, visit vlt.org.

BROMLEY MOUNTAIN

Another \$200,000 dropped on snowmaking upgrades and \$135,000 on base lodge remodeling will please many fans of "Sun Mountain." More than 3,000 feet of snowmaking pipes have been replaced, and 60 new HKD-brand tower guns installed to provide better coverage when nature doesn't cooperate. Down in the base lodge, look for a more efficient cafeteria layout, and new walls and lighting.

BURKE MOUNTAIN

There are big changes in the wind spinning the turbine at the summit here. The mountain was sold this year to a consortium headed by Jay Peak's Bill Stenger and partner Ari Quiros. With the recent extension of the federal EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program—a mechanism for foreign investors to attain permanent US legal residency—Burke is expected to receive approximately \$108 million for improvements. For this



New snowguns at Burke.

season, the mountain is adding 140 new snow guns to increase snowmaking capacity by an estimated 50 percent. Within the next three years, watch for four new mountain lodges and base area real estate expansion.

COCHRAN'S SKI AREA

Cochran's is still keeping it real: bare-bones, affordable family skiing and riding. Their Race Trail has more snowmaking coverage and has been widened top to bottom to allow more space for race training and school groups.

HAYSTACK MOUNTAIN

This place is back from the dead with a vengeance. With a dedicated commitment from owner Jim Barnes and EB-5 dollars, this venerable family-friendly mountain, which operated on a limited basis last season, will be sporting a new fixed-grip quad that transports guests of the nearby Hermitage Inn to the ski trails. The foundation for a new luxurious base lodge, complete with wellness center and lap pool, has been poured. Completion is expected next year. For this year, four lifts will be spinning and 10 new fan guns have been added to the snowmaking arsenal. Although technically a pricey private club—a 25 grand initiation fee with \$4,900 annual dues—you can ski and ride here by booking a ski/stay package through the Hermitage. Future plans include a chondola lift, hotel, and of course, a water park.

JAY PEAK

As owner Bill Stenger travels to South Asia this fall to drum up more investment dollars, the latest \$30 million in resort improvements come on line. Look for two new lifts, a fixed-grip quad running out of the State Side base area that will provide easier access to the Tram side, and a moving carpet for the learning area. To go along with the beginners' carpet is a 8,500-foot Mountain Learning Center



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photo Peter Marhis



Photo by Jeb Wallace-Brodeur.

with rentals, a café, and day care. Up on the summit, the tram's summit station, Sky Haus, has been recreated as a 120-seat restaurant.

KILLINGTON AND PICO

This year, the resort's major improvement focus has been on building the new Peak Lodge. The foundation and new sewer lines are in place, with major construction resuming next spring. The Beast of the East will power its K-1 Express Gondola this season with "cow power," electricity generated from manure from Vermont dairy farms. As always, the powerful snowmaking system will be tweaked and the trails fine-tuned in anticipation of a November opening day. In future years, watch for replacement of the Snowdon Quad, a new lift on South Ridge, and the permitting to fall into place for the base village project.

MAGIC MOUNTAIN

Volunteer corps were busy this fall sprucing up the base lodge and pruning trails. A snowmaking-system check was successfully conducted on Sept. 16. This season, there's a new year-round ropes course in the trees with zip-lines for family fun.

MAD RIVER GLEN

As a successful cooperatively owned skiers-only area, current management doesn't want to mess with a good product. No new water park this year, only regular trail and lift maintenance, thank you. Ski history lives here.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE SNOW BOWL

The most prestigious, competitive ski

racing event in the state, the 2013 NCAA Skiing Championships will be staged here on March 6 to 8, with the cross-country events at the nearby Carroll and Jane Rikert Nordic Center on March 7 to 9. You know both venues will be pulling out all the stops to insure world-class skiing and riding surfaces this season.

MOUNT SNOW

For aspiring riders and those who wish to improve their snowboarding skills, the mountain has opened an Official Burton Learn to Ride Center. The center will feature the latest designs in learning equipment and serve students as young as three. Need some raw fish on your next lift ride up the mountain? Mount Snow has you covered with their new Go Fish Sushi takeout counter in the main base lodge.

OKEMO

Three new glades, two grooming machines, 42 tower guns, and a Waffle Cabin round out the news here. The new guns will be cranking out snow in the main base area and along the Arrow and World Cup trails. Look for the entrance to the new glades off of the Upper Mountain Road and between Coleman Brook and Exhibition. Crave a waffle? Head to the new cabin at Jackson Gore base.

QUECHEE LAKES SKI AREA

This southeastern-exposed ski area bounced back from the ravages of Irene with a renewed commitment to snowmaking. Although a private club, anyone can purchase a lift ticket with no blackout dates. The chairlift and T-bar

spin Friday afternoons, weekends, and holiday weeks.

SMUGGLERS' NOTCH

A cool million was invested in 150 new tower guns and an electric air compressor to insure better skiing and riding surfaces. The new guns will be spread throughout the resort's three peaks. With more than 20 natural features, the new terrain park, located in the Knight's Revenge Glade, should be a hit this season. To offset all the kilowatts sucked up by the pizza ovens in the Village Lodge, 35 solar tracker units have been installed.

STOWE

Seven miles of new snowmaking pipeline lead the battle against poor natural snowfall seasons here. Add to that 325 new HKD tower guns, 150 ground guns, and 16 Super Pole Cat fans, and one can see this place is taking their snowmaking seriously. All tallied, their investment is an impressive \$4.7 million in blowing snow on the hill.

STRATTON MOUNTAIN

Sunbeam, a 2,962-foot long blue square on the Sunbrook side, is the latest addition to the trail network here. To meet the increased demands of freeskiers and riders, the Sunrider Supertrail and Big Ben terrain parks in the Sunbowl will be expanded this season along with a new

boardercross course. The new course will be the setting for training camps coached by Olympic medalists.

SUGARBUSH

The push here this season is on real estate development in the Lincoln Peak base area. The mountain's powers-that-be have visions of building a "vibrant, slopeside community" with 15 new townhomes and condominiums in three separate buildings slated for the Rice Brook Residences project, starting around \$500,000.



Artist rendering of Rice Brook Residences at Sugarbush.

SUICIDE SIX

The trails are mowed, the lifts greased, and a new mountain manager is in place in anticipation of the season.

Paul McMorris of Taftsville has covered the national and international ski-and-ride scene for more than two decades for a wide variety of publications.



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SPLITBOARDVILLE

NEW BACKCOUNTRY GEAR FOR 2012–13 SHARES THE LOVE AMONG SKIERS AND RIDERS *By Brian Mohr and Emily Johnson*

WHILE BACKCOUNTRY SKIING gear has been evolving by leaps and bounds in recent years, splitboards, or snowboards that separate into two long pieces (like skis) for the approach, have been quietly gaining traction as a popular tool for enjoying the Northeast's backcountry. Since the release of Voile's first DIY splitboard kit in 1994, splitboards have made accessing and enjoying backcountry snow increasingly fun and practical. And nearly 20 years later, refinements to splitboard bindings, skins, and hardware, as well as two-dozen splitboard designs on the market, are helping to grow splitboarding even further.

Recognizing this trend, this year's backcountry gear review expands our focus from ski equipment to include splitboards.

Few shops in the region are more dedicated to splitboards than Power Play Sports in Morrisville, Vermont. Caleb Magoon assumed ownership of the shop just one year ago, excited to make outdoor sports and gear more accessible. Specializing in both new and used outdoor gear, including Voile and K2 splitboards, Power Play also offers the conversion of your old or existing snowboard. For \$300, and using Voile's splitboard hardware kit, Power Play will custom cut your board, install the conversion hardware, including a binding adapter for climbing, and set you on your way. Line up some climbing skins and poles too, and you'll be exploring like never before.

"It's a great way to get into splitboarding without dropping a ton of cash into a new splitboard setup," says Magoon. "Nearly any wood-cored snowboard will do, and the splitboard binding adapters work well with just about any neglected bindings you have laying around."

NEW SPLITBOARD GEAR FOR 2012-13

VOILE ARTISAN SPLITBOARD

156–168 CM, MEN'S; 146–156 CM, WOMEN'S
\$850

Voile's all-mountain, twin-tipped board received rave reviews from testers throughout the industry this past winter and spring, and given Voile's long-standing reputation, it's no surprise. Made in Salt Lake City, and featuring a solid sidewall construction, the artfully decorated Artisan is a more stable and hard-snow-friendly alternative to Voile's new freestyle-oriented split, the Palindrome. Voile's reliable splitboard hardware makes it easy to switch from climbing to downhill mode, and while the transition might take a minute or two longer than it does for skiers, most first-time splitboard users never look back.

K2 PANORAMIC SPLITBOARD

154–168 CM
\$600

The versatile Panoramic, now in its second season, is K2's initial foray into the splitboard realm. Relying on a few successful elements of its popular backcountry ski line, K2 has put together a well-designed and user-friendly splitboard with a true all-mountain shape and flex. While the board can be purchased independently of any accessories, K2 also offers a kit that includes its own proprietary climbing skins and bindings (\$900). The climbing skins feature a rugged tip and tail attachment system that helps to ensure that your skins will stay on no matter how many runs you try to squeeze into your day in the mountains.

SPLITBOARD SKINS

G3 ALPINIST

\$170

Running with the success of their skiing skins, and responding to demands for a better splitboard skin, G3 entered the splitboard market last season. Featuring a clever tip and tail attachment system that utilizes swiveling stainless steel "hands," these skins are designed to stay on your boards through even the longest days. The Alpinist skins are made with a nontoxic, solvent-free glue that tends to stick to your bases as well as any other on the market, especially on colder days—and especially if you keep them clean and dry. Their proprietary, synthetic plush offers good traction and glides better than most skins on the market.

SPLITBOARD BINDINGS

SPARK R&D BURNER

\$330

Compatible with Voile's splitboard hardware, Spark's bindings have steadily earned a positive reputation among dedicated backcountry riders. The bindings are constructed with rigid and lightweight aluminum, and they are designed for hard-charging riders who enjoy longer days in the backcountry. Utilizing Burton straps, a relatively stiff highback, and with a forward lean adjustable to 25 degrees, the Burner is a very comfortable and responsive binding. All of Spark's bindings synch up perfectly with Voile's splitboard hardware.

SKIS

BLIZZARD SAMBAS

159–173 CM; 131/98/116 MM
\$700

Designed with aggressive female and lighter-weight male skiers in mind, the wood-cored, smooth-flexing Samba is a sturdy, semifat, all-mountain ski with a soft-snow bias. With plenty of side cut, a touch of camber, and a slightly rockered tip and tail, the Samba's shape and flex are ideal for the varied terrain and snow conditions that characterize skiing in the Northeast. The skis are also beautifully decorated, with a deep red tone and heart motif at play. Like most downhill-oriented skis on the market these days, the Samba can be mounted with Alpine, all-terrain (AT), or telemark bindings.

BOOTS

SCARPA TERMINATOR X (AT/TELEMARK NTN)
\$670

Refined with Rottfella's new NTN Freedom binding in mind, the updated, mid-weight, three-buckle Terminator X is Scarpa's most versatile backcountry ski boot. Designed with the male user in mind, the boots offer excellent free-heel and telemark skiing performance when paired with either of Rottfella's NTN bindings, while touring most efficiently with Rottfella's new NTN Freedom. The tech-fittings on the Terminator X make it compatible with any tech AT bindings, and therefore allow the boot to be used for fixed-heel skiing too. This year's Terminator X also features a more comfortable, heat-moldable liner, a stiffer cuff, and improved flex all around.

ALL TERRAIN BINDINGS

MARKER TOUR F12

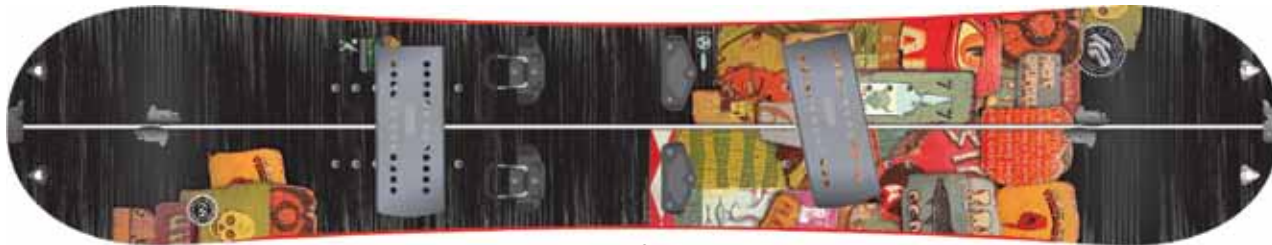
\$430

The Tour is Marker's take on an Alpine-style AT binding that offers a nice balance of downhill power and touring performance for that occasional foray off-piste or into the backcountry. The Tour is a couple of pounds lighter than Marker's heavier-hitting Duke binding, and for all but the most aggressive skiers, it's intended to serve nearly as well as the Duke when skiing in bounds. This year's Tour features overhauled toe pivot hardware for increased durability and easier transitions between climbing and skiing. This binding requires skiers to remove their skis to change between skiing and touring mode, which can be cumbersome.

Brian Mohr and Emily Johnson of Moretown, Vermont, have spent much of their lives on self-supported ski adventures in the Arctic, the Andes, the Alps, and in North America. Look for one of their slideshows this winter, or catch some of their stories and images on emberphoto.com.



VOILE ARTISAN SPLITBOARD



K2 PANORAMIC SPLITBOARD



MARKER TOUR F12



SPARK R&D BURNER



SCARPA TERMINATOR X



G3 ALPINIST SKINS



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SKINNING DIPPING

RESORTS RESPOND TO
THE GROWING INTEREST
IN UPHILL TRAVEL

Story and photos by Peter Wadsworth

SKINNING WAS ONCE a niche activity practiced only by adventurous backcountry skiers seeking out uncrowded powder slopes far from the crowded lifts. But in recent years, the activity—in which skiers and snowboarders apply climbing skins to the bottom of their skis so they can climb up hill without slipping back down—has exploded in popularity, thanks to the advent of easy-to-use and widely available backcountry ski gear. ➔



Jake Evans earns dawn patrol powder turns at Mad River Glen before heading to his job in the backcountry ski department at the Outdoor Gear Exchange.



Andrea and Steve Charest, owners of Petra Cliffs Climbing Gym, get some exercise before the sun rises at Stowe Mountain Resort.



Nick Weinberg and Jen Borofsky try to stay ahead of the crowd on a powder morning at Stowe before they have to head into the office.



Jake Evan's "rush hour" morning commute.

In fact, the use of skins is becoming so prevalent that I hesitate to use the word "backcountry" here. Recent shifts in the market now mean that much of this gear is being used in the frontcountry, to climb up ski resort trails, far from those uncrowded powder slopes. This has presented a quandary for ski areas, where, for many years, there has been uphill travel only via chairlifts.

But there are a number of reasons why a skier might not want to use a lift at a ski resort. Many people are just looking for some exercise in the outdoors, and some are practicing with their backcountry gear in a controlled environment before heading out into real wilderness where a gear failure could be more serious. I often hear of season pass holders at smaller resorts using skins as a new way to enjoy a mountain that they love, but may have grown tired of skiing the same way. Or, like me, they skin up ski resorts before dawn or at night because the lifts don't run during the hours we have off from work and family.

While there are several good reasons for enjoying a skin up your local ski resort, there are many risks, several of which are not entirely obvious to most skiers. This intersection of the usually unticketed and unaware skinner population with the litigation-wary and business-minded resort management (that has bills to pay) has caused significant debate in recent years. Do ski resorts respond by stepping up enforcement and keeping skimmers off their slopes, or do they embrace this new surge and try to bring skimmers into their fold? Resorts that had never considered an "uphill travel policy" are now drafting and posting rules to clearly state their intentions. Other resorts that have had official uphill travel policies have been revising them and reaching out to the skin-to-ski community to communicate their rules and expectations.

Mad River Glen has long been known as friendly to uphill traffic. Usually in the pre- or postseason, or for ticket-purchasing snowshoers, but in an official newsletter last winter to co-op members, mountain management wrote, "Over the past couple of seasons we have seen a major uptick in the number of folks skinning up the mountain, generally, and when we are running the lifts in particular. Because of the increased potential hazards with downhill traffic and mountain operations, we have decided to enforce the [previously unenforced, though, official] policy of not allowing skinning during operating hours going forward. ... We hope that you can appreciate our safety concerns in regard to this issue."

A similar policy is in effect at Smugglers' Notch Resort. Karen Boushie, public relations at Smuggs, told me, "Our policy is that we allow uphill traffic when we are not open for skiing or snowboarding. We request that people not use trails that are groomed or have



Jessie Janowski gets a jump on the season by earning "snowliage" turns in October.

operations in progress." She added, "We updated the policy last year ... because there were a few individuals exhibiting dangerous behavior such as skiing under winch cables, skiing on trails with zero visibility, and skiing behind snowcats in the dark. We have posted this publicly in our parking lots at night."

Bolton Valley Ski Resort goes one step further and officially prohibits uphill travel on their downhill trails at any time. When I asked Josh Arneson, director of sales and marketing at Bolton, if he foresaw any debate or change in this policy going forward, he said, "I do not foresee it changing anytime soon. ... Uphill traffic on an Alpine run is dangerous. The downhill skier or rider is not looking for uphill traffic, so it poses a risk to both the downhill and uphill skier. We have 100K of Nordic and backcountry terrain that is open for those who want to skin or hike up."

Stowe Mountain Resort does not allow uphill travel during operating hours and "discourages" it during nonoperational hours. In a letter to the editor in The Stowe Reporter last February, Vice President of Mountain Operations Scott Reeves wrote, "In recent seasons, we have seen a marked increase in off-hours use of our trails. ... Stowe Mountain Resort does not recommend the use of our terrain during nonoperational times. However, grooming, snowmaking, and other operations take place 24 hours per day throughout the resort. Skiers and riders must understand that they put themselves at great risk when they come in proximity to these operations." Reeves continued with several safety tips and etiquette requests for those who might choose to disregard the official discouragement. These tips mostly center on avoiding grooming and snowmaking operations at any hour and making yourself easily visible to all resort staff via headlamps and reflective clothing.

Reeves, and several other people contacted regarding this story, specifically mentioned the danger posed by winch cats. Winch cats are large grooming machines that use long

TIPS FOR HAPPY SKINNING IN THE FRONTCOUNTRY

Be sure to check out the official uphill-traffic policy of your favorite resort before going.

Remember that the resort company controls access to the trails and bears the liability, even on leased state (public) land. Resort access guidelines on US Forest Service land, such as the White Mountains in New Hampshire, are currently under review.

BE SAFE! THIS INCLUDES:

- Avoid all snowmaking and grooming operations.
- If it's dark or dusk, wear a headlamp so you can be seen.
- Always stay off of roped-closed trails.
- Ski with a partner.

BE COURTEOUS! THIS INCLUDES:

- If you arrive early on a powder day, be sure to park out of the way so the resort can still plow the lot for other customers.
- Control and clean up after your dog. Never bring your dog when lifts are running.
- Don't litter.
- Do not boot pack in an existing skin track.

BE GRATEFUL

- Buy a meal, a ticket, or a pass from the mountain that allows you to skin.

fixed cables to ascend or descend steep slopes. The cables are near invisible in the dark and can be lethal to a skier who hits one. Indeed, Greg Hill, who made international headlines by skinning 2 million vertical feet last year, and recently survived an avalanche in the Himalaya that killed 11 people, suffered his only injury last year when he broke several ribs colliding with a winch cat cable while skiing before dawn at a Canadian resort.

Because of dangers like these, Bromley Mountain does not allow winter access of their trails outside of normal operating hours. However, unlike the resorts discussed so far, Bromley has an official policy during business hours “not to restrict uphill access to skiers with climbing skins. Uphill access may occur area wide.”

Jay Peak and Magic Mountain have similarly inviting policies for skidders. Steve Wright of Jay Peak Resort recently said skiers may “have at it, just about anywhere on the mountain,” with safety in mind, of course. Geoff Hatheway of Magic Mountain proudly pointed me to the official policy highlighted on their website that reads, in part, “If you pass a skier or snowboarder going the wrong way (uphill) at Magic Mountain, don't be alarmed! Magic Mountain will be embracing uphill traffic via telemark, Alpine touring (randonee), and splitboard snowboards this season and well into the future. Magic will be offering free access to the mountain for anyone willing to “earn their turns.” ... Touring is a complimentary activity.”

When asked further about this policy, Geoff said, “Magic is all about the sport of skiing and riding. We celebrate those who take it seriously, want to be challenged, and are willing to test their limits. Those who climb our hill and ski down may not be providing direct revenue for us, but we also know that they are the type of folks who will probably stop in for a bevie at the bar. Maybe (they'll get) a bite to eat, and tell others what a good time they had at Magic.”

Mount Snow and Stratton have similar policies, inviting skidders to enjoy the mountain. But both resorts ask that skidders check in with mountain operations so they can familiarize themselves with the best terrain for uphill travel.

The response of Vermont ski areas to the rise of resort-skidders is varied from encouragement to banishment. Without fail, every person contacted about this issue highlighted the safety risks involved. I do hope you go out and earn some turns this season, whether in the backcountry or at a resort. Find out the policy before you go, and be safe, be seen, and be considerate of mountain operations employees trying to get their jobs done.

Peter Wadsworth is an engineer, photographer, and Cloudveil Mountain Ambassador. Last year he skinned four times the height of Mount Everest, sometimes at resorts, before heading into the office in the morning.



BOLTON'S BIG DEAL

THE HEAT IS ON TO SAVE BOLTON NORDIC AND BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS—AND YOU CAN HELP

By Sarah Galbraith

Photo by Tristan Von Duntz.



What is a sweet powder day worth to you?
Photo by Sarah Galbraith.

LIKE MANY other outdoor enthusiasts, my heart sank when I heard the news: the 1,161-acre tract of land known among Vermont's hikers, runners, skiers, and snowshoers as the Bolton Valley nordic and backcountry area was for sale. On a February morning in 2011, you could virtually hear the collective gasp as news spread of the impending purchase by an out-of-state buyer. Facebook and Twitter were abuzz. The objectives of the interested buyer were unknown, leaving many afraid the public would lose access to this special place.

The Bolton Valley nordic and backcountry land is a contiguous forest to the north and west of the ski resort's lift-served terrain. Nestled between Camel's Hump State Park and Mount Mansfield State Forest, this land is home to moose, bear, and myriad other wildlife and serves as important headwaters to the Joiner Brook watershed. The Bolton uplands have long been considered a top priority for conservation by the Chittenden Country Uplands Conservation Project. This land also gives access to some of the



Tristan Von Duntz enjoys a sunset ski on Bolton Valley Nordic Center's groomed trails. Photo by Sarah Galbraith.

region's best outdoor adventure. Half of Vermont's population lives within 30 miles from it. The land contains the Bolton Valley Nordic Center (a network of roughly 100 kilometers of groomed and natural ski trails) plus serves as the jumping-off point for wilderness exploration in all seasons. Trails on this land connect users to the Catamount and Long Trail systems, and the famed Bolton-to-Trapps Trail travels across this property. While the Catamount Trail is protected by an easement, access and development of the remainder of

the land would be subject to the new owner's plans (and local and state regulations), a possibility that has left many hikers, runners, skiers, and snowshoers concerned.

With the help of a group of longtime Bolton backcountry enthusiasts, Friends of Bolton Nordic and Backcountry, and many donors, this gem is well on its way to being conserved. The Vermont Land Trust, a Montpelier-based land-conservation organization, is contracted to purchase this property from its owner, Burlington-based realtor and developer Redstone. Gil Livingston, President of VLT said, "It became obvious to us almost two years ago that the broad community of people who appreciate the natural beauty and ecological resources of the land were determined to see it permanently protected. Spurred on by their passion, the Vermont Land Trust was able to secure an agreement to buy the land. Together VLT and the Friends of Bolton Valley Nordic will create a lasting legacy for future generations." Ultimately, the organization will transfer ownership to the State of Vermont to add this parcel to the Mount Mansfield State Forest, making it forever accessible to the public.

HALF OF VERMONT'S POPULATION LIVES WITHIN 30 MILES FROM THE BOLTON UPLANDS.

VLT has until March 31, 2013 to raise \$1.85 million, the full cost of conserving this property. VLT has made significant headway by raising 75 percent of these funds to-date, including an \$800,000 grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and two anonymous donations of \$100,000. One anonymous donation is a gift, and the other is a one-to-one matching challenge, meaning that every dollar raised this fall towards conserving this land will be matched by this donor, up to \$100,000. According to Milena Zuccotti, membership and outreach manager for VLT, fulfilling the matching challenge would put VLT 85 percent of the way towards raising the funds needed to conserve this land. But there is still work to be done. Despite the great success so far, there is a real need for individual donations and fundraising events throughout this fall and winter. Elise Annes, vice president

for community relations at VLT said, "To protect this incredible resource, we need the help of those who love the property: those who ski and hike there, and those who appreciate the unique natural resources and beauty of the uplands region." A priceless recreation spot and important natural resource now has a price tag, but that can be a good thing. As Ann Gotham, coordinator of FOBVNB puts it, "We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to preserve this incredible land."

For more information about the campaign to save the Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry land, to make a gift, or to learn more about upcoming fundraising events, visit vlt.org/bolton.

Sarah Galbraith of Marshfield skis, bikes, hikes, runs, swims, and backpacks her way through Vermont in all seasons. Her favorite partners in adventure are her man Tristan Von Duntz and their brown dog, Odin.

HERE ARE SOME FUN WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE TO SAVING THE BOLTON VALLEY NORDIC AND BACKCOUNTRY LAND.

GREEN DRINKS WITH SKINNY PANCAKE

TUESDAY, OCT. 30, 6-8 P.M.

Main Street Landing Atrium Room, Burlington
Skinny Pancake's Green Drinks events are an informal opportunity for folks interested in the natural world to connect and learn more about local green initiatives. Drop by for complimentary snacks, a free Wolaver's ale, and a chance to learn more about the campaign to save the Bolton backcountry.

OFF-PISTE IN THE NORTHEAST: A CELEBRATION OF SKIING ADVENTURE BY EMBER PHOTOGRAPHY

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 7, 7 P.M.

MAIN STREET LANDING FILM HOUSE, BURLINGTON

Join Ember Photography for a multimedia slideshow celebrating off-piste and backcountry skiing throughout the Northeast. A huge raffle will follow: grab your chance to win something special from Outdoor Gear Exchange, EMS, Skirack, Vermont Brownie, Darn Tough, Backcountry Magazine, and many others.

WILD AND SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL, PRESENTED BY THE MOUNTAIN GOAT OF MANCHESTER AND PATAGONIA

THURSDAY NOV. 15, 7-9 P.M.

BURR & BURTON ACADEMY, MANCHESTER

Tickets: \$10 at the door, \$8 if reserved ahead
Join us for an incredible evening of award-winning short films on a range of topics that explore the relationship between individuals and communities and the world around them. VLT members are invited to reserve in advance. 262-1241.

SHOWING OF POWDERWHORES "CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE—A SKI ODYSSEY"

THURSDAY, NOV. 15, 8 P.M.
OUTDOOR GEAR EXCHANGE, BURLINGTON

Tickets: \$10; \$7 with student ID
See amazing telemark skiing from all over the world on the big screen. Cash bar by La Villa Bistro. Proceeds support the VLT's effort to save the Bolton land.

WINTER WILDLANDS ALLIANCE'S BACKCOUNTRY FILM FESTIVAL PREMIER, PRESENTED BY ONION RIVER SPORTS

TUESDAY, NOV. 20, DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 P.M., FILM STARTS AT 7 P.M.
SAVOY DOWNSTAIRS THEATER, MONTPELIER

Cost: \$15 (Raffle Tickets for sale at the door)
Join Onion River Sports for the Vermont Premiere of the Winter Wildlands Alliance's Backcountry Film Festival to view compelling and entertaining films of non-motorized backcountry exploration. There will be snacks, a cash bar, and an awesome raffle. Space is limited. RSVP to events@onionriver.com or buy tickets at the door.

SUPERHEROES OF STOKE: 20 YEARS OF EXTREME SKIING, PRESENTED BY ONION RIVER SPORTS

FRIDAY, NOV. 30; DOORS OPEN AT 7 P.M., FILM STARTS AT 7:30 P.M.
VT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS CHAPEL, MONTPELIER

Tickets: \$15

Join Onion River Sports for a screening of Matchstick Productions' hip new film. Tracking 20 years of ski evolution, "Superheroes of Stoke" features incredible big mountain skiing from around the world. The evening will include a great raffle with prizes from ORS and Bolton Valley Ski Area, and a Three Penny Taproom Beer Garden for those over 21. Event proceeds will benefit the Bolton Backcountry campaign.

BOLTON NORDIC AND BACKCOUNTRY HOLIDAY PARTY AND RAFFLE DRAWING, ONION RIVER SPORTS

FRIDAY, DEC. 7, 5-7 P.M.
ONION RIVER SPORTS, MONTPELIER

Onion River Sports has donated a \$1,000 in-store holiday shopping spree in support of the Bolton Backcountry campaign. Raffle tickets are being sold to win the spree. ORS will be hosting a rollicking in-store party on raffle-drawing day. Complimentary snacks and drinks will be served. Stop in for some good old-fashioned holiday cheer you might just be a winner!

And there's more in the works! Visit vlt.org/events or contact Milena Zuccotti at milena@vlt.org or 262-1241 for more information.

muscles not motors

Photo: Kip Roberts, general manager



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GEAR: LEKI PEAK VARIO S SKI POLE

If you're not familiar with Leki's unique Trigger S ski pole grips system, allow me to introduce you to what has become one of my favorite pieces of gear. Out on the slopes, when I want to do something seemingly simple, like read a map or grab a tissue, ski gloves don't afford the necessary dexterity and must be removed, which often leads to fumbling around with equipment and the laborious and annoying task of removing gloved hand from pole strap, and then hand from glove. This, in turn, presents the risk of dropping a glove into the snow (or worse, off the lift). Leki removes most of this inconvenience by creating straps that attach to your gloves like a harness and then clip into the pole handle, rendering gloves virtually undroppable. Since the strap is fixed on your glove, you can simply pull your hand out of the glove, leaving the glove securely attached to the pole by the harness. What's more, by designing a system in which the push of a button allows easy detachment of strap from pole, the system allows a seamless transition when it's time to get back on the lift. Leki even makes special gloves with loops of durable fabric between thumb and forefinger so you can clip your glove directly into the grip, eliminating the need for straps entirely if you want. The only disadvantage to the system that I see is that it disables ski-

ers from palming the tops of their poles when climbing, if that is their preference.

This particular pole, the Peak Vario, is also adjustable, making it ideal for back- and sidecountry endeavors, but certainly fine for lift-serve as well. It is lightweight and strong, incorporating aluminum in the top shaft and carbon fiber in the lower portion. The locking mechanism is as easy and bombproof as any other system I've ever used. Bottom line: I wish I discovered these poles years ago.

\$169.95; Boot Pro, Ludlow; Equipe Sport, West Dover; Outdoor Gear Exchange, Burlington.

GEAR: VASQUE SNOW JUNKIE

Brand-new to the market this year, Vasque's Snow Junkie is not your ordinary, run-of-the-mill hiker. This boot incorporates Thinsulate insulation for added warmth, making them quite comfy in winter, whether you're snowshoeing or just shoveling the drive. Vasque incorporated UltraDry fabric, making the uppers completely waterproof, and the tread is ideal for icy winter conditions. The Snow Junkie has beefed-up features without added weight: just 2 pounds 5 ounces per pair (men's size 9). Some companies cut weight by taking out padding, leaving the footwear un-



comfortable, but these did not twang any strange pressure points during my testing. A solid piece of gear for the winter enthusiast.

\$130; Willey's Store, Greensboro; Umiak Outfitters, Stowe; The Mountain Goat, Manchester Center.

BEER: THE SHED MOUNTAIN ALE




First crafted in Stowe in its namesake's restaurant, this fine brew had become a perennial favorite in central and northern Vermont. But about a year ago, The Shed closed its doors, leaving many avid drinkers wondering what they would do without their beloved Mountain Ale. There was much remorse. But now we

can rejoice: Otter Creek acquired the company and now produces The Shed Mountain Ale in Middlebury—and it's being bottled and distributed to all of Vermont and beyond! The murky, unfiltered amber ale with orange highlights—perfect for imbibing on cold fall and winter days—can again be enjoyed in your home. While you won't get the distinct smell of The Shed's venerable popcorn machine that once accompanied drinking this beer, you will get the smells and tastes of herbs and spices, dates, and raisins, which seem unadulterated by the bottling process. Maybe I'm just nostalgic, but I can hardly tell the difference between the bottle and the old-school variety.

Josh Gleiner is the Beer and Gear Editor for Vermont Sports. He can be reached at gear@vtsports.com.





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VISIT GMAA.NET FOR MORE INFO & REGISTRATION FORM





Age: 39 | **Residence:** Middlesex | **Family:** Husband, Barry Goodman | **Occupation:** Nurse practitioner

Primary sports: Backcountry skiing and cycle touring



Photo by Jerry Lasky

ELISA VANDERVORT IS HAPPIEST WHEN SHE'S OUT IN THE WOODS, SKIING ON LITTLE-TRAVELED BACKCOUNTRY TERRAIN. SHE'S DEDICATED ENOUGH TO SPEND PART OF HER FALL HELPING TO MAKE THOSE TRAILS NAVIGABLE, AND WHEN SHE'S DONE WITH THAT VOLUNTEER WORK, SHE HEADS OUT TO DEVELOPING NATIONS TO HELP LOCAL WOMEN FIGHT AGAINST CERVICAL CANCER.

VS: What is the allure of backcountry skiing?

EV: I love just being out in the woods. I grew up in Saskatoon, and my primary sport was rowing, but winters are so long in Canada that you spend a lot of time doing dry-land training. Cross-country skiing was good cross-training so we did that on weekends and in the evening. It was a wonderful place to grow up, and it instilled in me a deep love of winter, although I have to admit I don't miss the -40 degree temperatures. Later, I worked as an experiential educator and led backpacking trips. I just love the quiet of the woods.

VS: Where do you like to ski?

EV: We're so lucky here in Vermont to have so many great places, but I have to say that 80 percent of my time is in the Bolton backcountry. You can start out on regular trails and then get way off the beaten track. We also enjoy skiing the Mount Mansfield backcountry trails. I started out as a cross-country skier so the uphill has never been a problem for me, but I had to learn to tele-ski and negotiate the downhill. It's really fun to learn new skills; there's a thrill to not being good at something and then figuring it out. We're lucky here in Vermont to have so many good and generous skiers who are willing to share their time and expertise.

VS: I understand you're involved in the Vermont Land Trust effort to save Bolton Valley. Can you tell us about that?

EV: It's been an interesting process. It's pretty amazing how far we've come in a short period of time. It was about a year ago that Ann Gotham, a nurse practitioner and a volunteer patroller at Bolton, first learned that the land was going to be sold, and she mobilized the skiing community. The Vermont Land Trust stepped in to purchase the property for \$1.85 million. They got some grants

and many individuals and organizations have stepped forward to donate money, but they don't have the full amount yet. It's been very exciting, and it's a big relief in terms of hopefully preserving a tract of land that is so important in terms of community, wildlife and the history of skiing here in Vermont.

VS: Are you one of the people who does volunteer trail clearing at Bolton?

EV: I'm a Catamount, which is what they call the younger members of the Old Goats. I've been doing it since 2000. My seasons are marked with time in the woods with people like Clem Holden and Herm Hoffman. Some of those guys are getting older, so I've learned how to carry Clem's chain saw. It's been a lovely way to get to know other folks and build community and give back in some small way since we spend so much time using the resort. I worry sometimes because it's an older crowd, and we need more young people to carry on the tradition.

VS: Tell me about your bicycle touring?

EV: We're really two season people. In the winter, we're out on skis, but as soon as mud season is over, we're on our bikes. We do some bike commuting, though not enough, but what we really like is to be out on the dirt roads. They're quieter and more shaded, and they're safer because there is less traffic. There are some lovely scenic routes. In addition, we like to do an annual four- to five-week bicycle tour with camping. We generally do about 1,000 miles. Our first trip was in the summer of 2000 along the mostly dirt Continental Divide Trail. It was an awesome trip without much traffic. We've done some touring in the Northwest and also in Chile and Argentina, and we've gone to Turkey twice. This year we spent five weeks in central Europe, starting in Venice and traveling through Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, and Austria. Bike touring is a wonder-

ful way to travel, and it's a little less insulated than other ways to get around. You're outside every day. You might only be pedaling for six hours, but you're still outside for eight to 10 hours, camping and meeting the local people and giving your language skills a workout.

VS: Can you talk about your work with Grounds for Health?

EV: I've been doing primary care as a family nurse practitioner for 10 years, but before that, I did some international work. Now I work part time with Grounds for Health, which is an international women's health NGO that was founded 16 years ago by Daniel Cox of Coffee Enterprises. In visiting coffee producing countries, he discovered that cervical cancer killed women at a ridiculous rate. Grounds for Health started as a way to provide screening for cervical cancer in the form of Pap smears, but it has shifted to be more capacity-building. We are trying to create health care pro-

grams in these countries so we start with building relationships and then we train the doctors and nurses. We had to come up with an alternate to the Pap smear because it takes too long to determine the results. We've got a 5 percent vinegar acetic acid with which we paint the cervix so the results are instantaneous, and women can start getting treatment right away. We work in Tanzania, Nicaragua, and Peru, and I'm headed to Peru in October. When I'm not traveling with Grounds for Health, I worked at the People's Health and Wellness Center in Barre treating people who are uninsured or underinsured. I also do some work at the Student Health Center at the University of Vermont. It's a nice mix.

—Phyl Newbeck

➤ **For more information on VLT's Bolton Valley acquisition, go to vlt.org.**

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calendar of events

All area codes are (802) unless otherwise noted. Events are subject to change or require registration, so please call or e-mail ahead of time to double-check the information. Due to space limitations, we cannot print all of the events posted on our website, so be sure to check www.vtsports.com/events for a comprehensive listing.

ALPINE & NORDIC SKIING/ SNOWBOARDING

November

- 7 **SLIDESHOW & FUNDRAISER: OFF-PISTE IN THE NORTHEAST.** Hosted by Main Street Landing and the Vermont Land Trust, this show is a benefit for the Bolton Valley Nordic & Backcountry Lands Project. Photos by Brian Mohr and Emily Johnson, featuring photographs of skiing in the Northeast and the Alps. Big raffle too! 7 p.m., The Film House at Main Street Landing, Burlington. emberphoto.com.
- 8 **TELLURIDE MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL.** Great films on all types of outdoor activities and lifestyles to benefit the UVM Outing Club. 7 p.m., UVM Davis Center, Burlington. gearx.com.
- 15 **"CHOOSE YOUR SKI ADVENTURE: A SKI ODYSSEY."** Telemark skiing from all over the world on the big screen. 8 p.m., Outdoor Gear Exchange, Burlington. gearx.com.
- 15-16 **TDBANK EASTERN CUP SEASON OPENER.** 1.4K classic sprint with heats, adaptive sit-ski races (4.8K women; 6.2K men); freestyle 5K through 15K varies by age and gender. Varied race times. Craftsbury Outdoor Center, Craftsbury. craftsbury.com.
- 16 **SKI SWAP.** Sell your new or slightly used cross-country gear or snowshoes to benefit the VTXC Racing Team and Coaching Program. Drop off on the 16th from 3-7 p.m., sale on the 17th from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe. trappfamily.com, 253-5719.
- 17 **THE BIG KICKER.** Sugarbush and Mad River Glen invite you to a rockin' party for all ages to kick off the 2012-13 ski and ride season. 5 p.m. The Big Picture, Waitsfield. sugarbush.com.

December

- 17-21 **VALLEY SKI & RIDE WEEK.** Improve your skills with on-snow ski and ride instruction all week from 9 a.m. to noon. Kick-off breakfast, instruction, and après-ski party Thursday. For ages 18 and over. Sugarbush Resort, Warren. (888) 651-4827.
- 29 **MOUNT HOR HOP. 10K,** freestyle classes for juniors through masters. Varied start times. Mount Hor ski trails, Westmore. mstf.net

January

- 16 **CHIC-CHOCS BACKCOUNTRY FESTIVAL.** For skiers (downhill and telemark) and snowboarders (splitboarders) who are ready to skin up to the top. All day. Chic-Chocs Mountain Lodge, Quebec. sepaq.com, 800-665-3091.
- 27 **NEW ENGLAND'S WOMEN CROSS-COUNTRY SKI DAY.** Experience cross-country ski clinics for every level of skier, from first-timers to seasoned masters. Wax demos, prizes, and lunch included. 9 a.m., Bretton Woods, N.H. nensa.net/women.
- 5 **BOGBURN CLASSIC.** Family oriented, low-key race. 13K classic for J1-master men; 7K for J2 and women. 4, 3, and 2K for Bill Koch League III, IV, V. Race times vary. Haydock House, North Pomfret. rhaydock3@gmail.com.

February

- 2 **TDBank Craftsbury Marathon.** 25/50K classic ski marathon from Greensboro to Craftsbury. Registration opens Nov. 1. craftsbury.com

March

- 14 **MAGIC MOUNTAIN RANDO RACE.** Part of a three-event rando race series in MA and VT. Challenge the mountain both up and down without chairlifts. 9 a.m., Magic Mountain, Londonderry. facebook.com/NERandoRaceSeries.
- 24 **BROMLEY MOUNTAIN RANDO RACE.** Part of a three-event rando race series in MA and VT. Challenge the mountain both up and down without chairlifts. 9 a.m., Bromley Mountain, Peru. facebook.com/NERandoRaceSeries.

BIKING/CYCLING

November

- 11 **WEST HILL CYCLOCROSS RACE.** 22nd annual cyclocross race. 9 a.m., West Hill Shop, Putney. westhillshop.com.

June

- 22 **LONG TRAIL CENTURY RIDE TO BENEFIT VERMONT ADAPTIVE SKI AND SPORTS.** 20, 50, or 100 mi ride supporting sports for people with disabilities. Long Trail Brewery/Killington Area. longtrailcenturyride.com.

CLIMBING/MOUNTAINEERING

November

- 2 **REEL ROCK 7.** Climbers and outdoors lovers come together to celebrate the ultimate in adventure filmmaking. 6:30 p.m., Petra Cliffs, Burlington. info@petracliffs.com.

Ongoing

- LADIES NIGHT CLIMB.** Valley Rock Gym, 5:30 p.m., Tuesdays, Sugarbush Health and Sports Center, Warren. 583-6700.

FIRST-AID/EMT

Ongoing

- SOLO WILDERNESS FIRST AID.** Two-days of lecture and hands-on learning of practical wilderness first aid. Nov. 10-11 or Dec. 8-9, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Kingdom Adventures Mountain Guides, LLC, East Burke. kamountainguides.com, 274-4112.

- HULBERT OUTDOOR CENTER SKILLS CERTIFICATION CLASSES.** Classes in Backcountry Search and Rescue, Wilderness First Responder Certification and Recertification, EMT Wild Day, and EMT Module. Various dates Nov.-Dec. Hulbert Outdoor Center, Fairlee. alohafoundation.org.

RUNNING/WALKING

November

- 4 **RACEVERMONT.COM FALL HALF-MARATHON.** Beautiful run through Shelburne. Last racevermont.com half-marathon of the year. 7:30 a.m., Shelburne Health & Fitness at the Field House, Shelburne. racevermont.com.

- 10 **RUN YOUR CAN OFF.** Donate food or goods as your entry fee in this six-hour event. Run as many 1.25 mi loops as you'd like through the Gilbrook Natural Area. 8 a.m., Gilbrook Natural Area, Winooski. runyourcanoff.blogspot.com.

- 17 **WESTFORD TURKEY TROT.** 10K run, 2 mi walk/run, or 100-yd dash for ages 5 and under. Registration day of race only. Supports Westford Committee for Children and Families. shearv@aol.com, rogerswsc@comcast.net.

- 22 **ZACK'S PLACE 5K TURKEY TROT.** Meanders through the village of Woodstock. All proceeds benefit Zack's Place. 10 a.m., Woodstock Elementary. zacksplacevt.org.

DANA POINT TURKEY TROT. One of the largest Turkey Trots in the nation. Dana Point, CA. turkeytrot.com.

GMAA TURKEY TROT. Certified 5K on the UVM women's cross-country course. Great footing (not counting snow or ice) on cinder/paved path and grass. Some single-track. 11 a.m., Gutterson Field House, UVM, Burlington. gmaa.net.

GOBBLE GOBBLE WOBBLE 5K FUN RUN. Registration at 7 a.m., race at 9 a.m. Stratton Mountain Resort. stratton.com.

GOBBLE WOBBLE TURKEY TROT 5K RUN/WALK. New course this year. Prizes, t-shirt and family rates. 9:30 a.m., Barre Town Municipal Building, Websterville. barrecongregational.org.

December

- 2 **RI RA'S SANTA 5K, PRESENTED BY NEW ENGLAND FEDERAL CREDIT UNION.** All race participants must wear Santa suit on course (provided). Irish breakfast following the race. 10:15 a.m., Ri Ra's Irish Pub, Burlington. leslie.davisstone@gmail.com.

SNOWSHOEING

January

- 26 **TUBBS ROMP TO STOMP OUT BREAST CANCER.** Raise money for Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation while snowshoeing through beautiful Stratton Mountain. 9 a.m., Stratton Mountain. tubbsromptostomp.com.

SWIMMING

Ongoing


- TRIATHLON-SPECIFIC MASTERS' SWIM CLASS.** Masters' swim program specifically geared toward triathletes and open-water swimmers. Thursdays, 6 p.m., First in Fitness, Berlin. firstinfitness.com.

YOGA

December

- 1 **IMPROVE YOUR SKIING.** Improve your performance and style by understanding the interrelationship of your legs and torso. 3:30 p.m., Evolution Yoga, Burlington. feldenkraiss.com.

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FALLEN HEROES

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN an uncanny coincidence, but not long ago, the release of the Freeh Report to the trustees of Penn State University appeared to confirm that the late, legendary football coach Joe Paterno knew more than he had previously admitted about his former assistant coach Jerry Sandusky's destructive attraction to young boys. Within what seemed like a matter of days, Lance Armstrong announced that he would no longer contest the US Anti-Doping Agency's efforts to strip him of his victories based on mounting testimony and evidence that he used performance-enhancing drugs throughout his career. After more than a decade of defiantly fending off accusations and innuendos, Lance, somewhat abruptly, tossed in the towel, in effect conceding the charges against him.

The two stories are similar, primarily in the incredible stature of the sports figures involved and their precipitous falls from grace. It is all too common to hear of college coaches who bend recruiting rules to attract talented players, or overzealous, young athletes caught for supplementing their natural ability with performance-enhancing drugs, but Paterno and Armstrong were the standard-bearers of their professions. There could scarcely be a better example of the old adage, "the higher they fly, the farther they fall."

Much has been written about the scandal at Penn State since it became national news last November. It is widely recognized that during his 46-year tenure as head football coach, Paterno became the winningest collegiate football coach in history. He also played a significant role in bringing Penn State national recognition, not only for athletics but for academic excellence and research as well. Although some at the university may have had legitimate concerns regarding the influence and stature of the football program, most in Happy Valley idolized Paterno and proudly recounted the millions of dollars he and the football program contributed to the library and other academic programs.

Soon after the scandal broke, nearly a year ago, Paterno's home was besieged by the media. A frail, old man with the signature coke-bottle eyeglasses stood pathetically on his front step and admitted that "he should have done more." He was referring to his action of simply passing on to his athletic director the report of an assistant coach who had observed Sandusky sexually abusing a young boy in the Penn State football locker room. Although more may come out as investigations continue, it appears that several Penn State administrators, including Paterno, failed to take decisive action, fearing the negative publicity it might generate toward Penn State football.

Much has also been written during the past decade about Lance Armstrong's alleged use of performance-enhancing drugs in claiming his unprecedented seven Tour de France victories. And the plot gets more convoluted as the story unravels. Lance has maintained for more than a decade that "he has never done anything illegal" and "has never failed the hundreds of doping tests he has taken." But for years, unethical athletes, coaches, and sports scientists have been creating slight variations of proven enhancements simply to avoid using the drugs on the list of banned substances. And although Lance never failed a test, there have been several mysterious irregularities, test samples that disappeared, etc. In fact, part of the current evidence against him involves samples taken years ago, but retested recently using more sophisticated, advanced testing methods that reveal illegal performance enhancement.

Some might say, so what? The Tour de France has been notorious for doping for decades. For a time, doping was almost synonymous with endurance cycling. Is Lance a cheat if he is simply doing what had become tradition among the leaders of the sport? And consider the witnesses who have agreed to testify against him, nearly a dozen, many of them fellow riders who doped themselves, lied about it, and eventually came clean.

I suspect that Joe Paterno tried to protect his beloved university and football program from a scandal, and when he fully understood the extent of Sandusky's crimes, Paterno's deep regret, sense of guilt, and sorrow hastened his death from lung cancer.

I believe that Lance Armstrong is a fierce competitor who "saw how the game was played" and did what he had to do to win. I don't think that either Paterno or Armstrong are evil, they simply got swept up in situations that overwhelmed their judgment, their basic sense of right and wrong. Perhaps the real lesson here is that sport should remain healthy and fun and that our sports heroes are just normal people who have the good fortune of making a living playing a game. When sport becomes entertainment, generating millions of dollars and creating positions of power and influence, we inevitably get into trouble.

John Morton is a former Olympic biathlete and Nordic ski coach. He lives in Thetford Center where he designs Nordic ski trails. You can reach him through his website, www.mortontrails.com.



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