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EDITOR/PUBLISHER
Angelo Lynn publisher@vtsports.com

STAFF WRITER
Evan Johnson evan@vtsports.com

ART DIRECTION & PRODUCTION
Shawn Braley braley@gmail.com

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Christy Lynn ads@vtsports.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Greg Meulemans
greg@vtsports.com | (802) 366-0689
Dave Honeywell | (802) 583-4653
dave_golfhouse@madriver.com

READER ATHLETE EDITOR
Phyl Newbeck phyl@together.net

GEAR AND BEER EDITOR
Hilary DelRoss gear@vtsports.com

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
John Morton

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Brian Mohr

EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION OFFICE
Vermont Sports | 58 Maple Street
Middlebury, Vt. 05753 | 802-388-4944

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Vermont Sports is independently owned and operated by Addison Press Inc., 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, Vt. 05753. It is published 10 times per year. Established in 1990.

Vermont Sports subscriptions in the U.S.: one year \$25. Canada: US funds, please add \$5 per year postage. Other international subscriptions, please call 802-388-4944 for information. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Vermont Sports, 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, Vt. 05753

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ON THE COVER:

Kip Roberts gets some early season tracks at Vermont's Mad River Glen.

Photo by Brian Mohr/Ember Photography



A kayaker cruises in the early morning mist this fall on Lake Dunmore near Middlebury.

Photo by Lisa Gosselin

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

Page 6-7

VERMONT 100 DOCUMENTARY

When Zak Wieluns wanted to make a third attempt at the Vermont 100, a hundred-mile run over varied terrain, two friends made his journey into a film. Here's the story of this duo journey — the run and making the documentary.

Page 8

GETTING YOUR SKI LEGS READY

Getting ready for those first ski runs of the winter means much more than getting your skis or board tuned; it also means getting your quads ready for the pounding. Here are six exercises to get them in shape before the snow piles high.

Page 9

RATCHET IT UP A NOTCH!

This winter, take your skiing or riding to the next level — from beginner to intermediate to advanced and expert — with a few pointers from the pros.

Pages 10-11

TUNING THOSE BOARDS!

The first snows of the winter are here, so don't delay getting your skis or snowboard tuned. Here are tips to get your equipment ready to go on Day One.

Page 12-13

Q/A: WHEELS OF CHANGE

Vermonters Jim Dang and Dylan Peterson have biked more than 1,000 miles around the United States, volunteering along the way to fund their adventure.

5 PUBLISHER COMMENTARY

16 OUT & ABOUT

18 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

21 GEAR AND BEER

22 READER ATHLETE
Marsha Bancroft

23 READER ATHLETE
Don Houghton, Jr.

26 NEWS BRIEFS

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publisher commentary *by Angelo Lynn*

You have to love the excitement of winter.

The first snow of the season hit this past weekend, and the crazies were out in force. Killington opened for the season on Monday and Tuesday with skiing on a few regular runs. At Sugarbush Resort, where snowmaking is putting down a nice layer on the upper half of the mountains, locals were hiking up after hours, we're told, and catching a few first runs via headlamps. Ditto at Mad River Glen, but au naturel — that is, no snowmaking, just shushing through the snow-covered grass.



No doubt it's the same at every mountain from Jay Peak to Stratton and south. Let the hollering begin, winter sports are here.

That doesn't mean we won't still be running, mountain biking, climbing and kiting, just that we'll wear different clothes, use different gear and employ different techniques. That's sport.

In Vermont, it means we move into the mountains with alpine, Nordic and backcountry skis; we still climb, but do it when the ice forms in Smuggler's Notch or the east face of Mount Hor at the edge of Lake Willoughby. We'll still kitesurf, but rather than with a board skimming the water we'll put on our skis and race over the ice. We bike, but we stick to the mountain bike trails or go with fat tires on snow, or trade out the tires for skis on a bike frame and ski-bike. We walk mountain trails, but we trade our boots for snowshoes and bring an extra layer for the winds on top of Camel's Hump, Mount Abe, Hunger Mountain, Mount Equinox or wherever we happen to be.

In Vermont, it's whatever works, presents a challenge and brings a smile — an apt motto for this state in winter.

But honestly, we're in a momentary lull. We're a few weeks away from full-on winter and unlimited skiing, and the transition from those glorious days of summer and fall are just a few days past — leaving us a couple weeks to get ready and psyched for the new sports to come. In short, it's time to train. We have to get those quads in shape for skiing the bumps and absorbing the drops at Mad River Glen or Sugarbush's Castlerock area, or the bumps at Killington's Outer Limits. We have to stretch our hamstrings and expand our lungs for the rigors of Nordic races and the thrill of the chase. We have to strengthen our ankles for pond hockey, league play or long skate gliding over long distances.

To help, we focus on a Winter-to-do list: tune those boards, strengthen those quads, and get psyched to take your sport to the next level. The first two are self-explanatory, but helpful — basic skills and exercises that put us in a place to pursue our sports to the fullest.

Ratcheting it up a notch to improve our skiing or riding to the next level, however, offers an interesting perspective by extreme skier and Sugarbush Resort Chief Recreation Officer John Egan about overcoming fears before we can successfully take a leap forward. Combine that with his application of the laws of physics to skiing and riding, and new horizons seem possible for those seeking to go from just being a good skier to being far better.

Two other stories present tales on the screen. We focus on a new documentary film shot by a couple New Englanders that capture the tale of the Vermont 100 — a grueling 100-mile run through the mountains of central Vermont. The star, Zak Wieluns, attempts the race for the third time, hoping to finish. That journey is captured on film by his two friends, and is making the film festival rounds this winter.

Warren Miller's 65th annual ski flick, No Turning Back, is also making the rounds throughout the Northeast this early winter and premiering in Middlebury and Burlington in early December. Our roving reporter Evan Johnson got a sneak peak of the movie and writes a preview.

Another feature highlights the story of two Vermonters in their early 20s who are on a cross-country bike tour, working for food and money along the way. They're 1,000 miles along their journey with another 2,600 miles to go along their circuitous route. Check it out on pages 12-13.

Dozens of events are listed in the calendar, John Morton takes the bozos in the NFL to task, and we offer a few "parting shots" of hiking amidst the fall foliage as a sign-off to summer and fall sports — just as we also urge you to seize the moment this winter and get outside to enjoy.

Angelo S. Lynn



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Left: Will Peters on location for the Vermont 100, which they shot during the summer of 2013. Above: Mike Mooney and Will Peters at the opening reception for the Vermont International Film Festival, where the film was screened.

VERMONT 100

NEW DOCUMENTARY TELLS A TALE

By Evan Johnson

West Windsor — The film “100: Head/Heart/Feet” starts in a barn in central Vermont, a checkpoint on Vermont’s 100-mile cross-country race. With a little more than 10 miles remaining, runners straggle in, one wearier than the next. Inside, medical staff check runners’ weight, monitor their mental state and offer them food and drink.

Zak Wieluns – bib number 315 – stumbles into the barn.

“I smell terrible,” he says deliriously to his coach and crew chief. “The downs [downhills] are killing me.”

“Don’t worry about the downs,” the coach replies, kneading Wieluns’ calves. Then he adds: “Oh my God, you do smell.”

So begins the documentary “100 Head/Heart/Feet,” a film that takes as its focus Zak Wieluns, age 35, of Portland, Me., as he prepares for his third attempt at the Vermont 100.

Documenting Wieluns’ journey are two friends, Will Peters and Mike Mooney, a two-man team that comprise Hammer & Saw Productions.

Wieluns’ first run of more than a few miles wasn’t until his freshman year at Colby Sawyer College in New London, N.H. when he was trying to impress the girl that would years later become his wife. Not being in very good shape, he seriously

underestimated the six-mile run but still made a valiant effort.

His college buddy, Mike Mooney, was there and still remembers the occasion.

“I laughed a lot,” he recalls. But Wieluns stuck with running – and the girl. After graduating from Colby Sawyer in 2002 he ran his first marathon with his wife shortly after they moved to Slovakia in 2003. He finished in over five hours – not a very satisfying finish, he says. But while writing his master’s thesis in European history, he took breaks to go on longer runs. He returned to the U.S. five years later as a long-distance runner.

His first race longer than a marathon was a 50k near Gloucester, Me. in 2009. When he finished, he knew he had found a sport he truly enjoyed.

“I felt really good about it,” he says. “I had gotten better. Before every race, at the end of those training cycles, you learn a little bit more about how to get ready for these kinds of races and I had found patterns that worked for me.”

GOING FOR 100

Established as a fundraiser for Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports in 1989, the Vermont 100 is one of the oldest ultra running events in the country. Running through 77

different parcels of property in 11 towns, the course features 14,000 feet of elevation gain and 14,000 feet of elevation loss over a 100-mile course with a time limit of 30 hours.

As Wieluns continued to race long distances, he knew that he would eventually run a 100-mile race.

“There’s something about that style of racing that I find really appealing,” he says. “I like getting up into the high country, the diversity of terrain and facing challenges other than a road in front of you.”

For his first attempt at the Vermont 100 in 2011, Wieluns asked his friend Mike Mooney to be part of his support crew. By this time, Mooney and fellow Colby Sawyer alum William Peters began producing films as part of their new film production company, Hammer & Saw Films. Most of their early works were short films ten to 15 minutes long.

During the race, with just eight miles before the finish, Wieluns reached the point of total exhaustion and had to quit at mile 92.

“I was probably a little bit under-prepared and my body just wasn’t working,” he recalls.

Mooney, while he was helping Wieluns, realized the potential for a film.

“The 100-mile race is capped at 300

[runners],” he says. “And every one of them has a story. I got to thinking about my friend and everything that he had to balance to get here. The seed for the movie was planted then.”

Wieluns’ second attempt in 2012 failed unexpectedly when a baker’s cyst in his knee burst, a common but extremely painful running injury. Wieluns managed to tough it out until mile 40 before deciding to quit. The next day, he called Mooney and told him he was going to try again the following year.

It was then that Mooney decided to start filming.

“I said, ‘Okay, that’s impressive. It’s also crazy, so we want to follow you,’” he recalls.

Filming began shortly after that second attempt and continued for the following year.

The early scenes of the film show Wieluns’ alarm going off at 4:31 in the morning for a ten-mile workout before running to the office (he would run home in the evenings as well). On the weekends, he drove to the White Mountains in New Hampshire for runs of 20 or 30 miles on hiking trails. He monitored his progress closely in weekly posts on Facebook and in interviews with the filmmakers. He continued training with a local trail running club, but this time, the presence of a film



Clockwise from above: Zak Wieluns, center, takes a walk during his third attempt at the Vermont 100 while Will Peters follows. Peters and Mooney respond to audience questions following a screening at the Newburyport Documentary Film Festival. Zak Wieluns, the subject of the film, sits for an interview.

crew kept him on-task.

"I used to be a high school athlete but I'm in no way a particularly gifted runner," he says. "That added pressure of a film crew filming me helped focus my training. The more I wrote about it and the more I kept track of it, it forced me to focus on what I needed to do to get ready for race day."

Training for 100 miles did not fit easily into Wieluns' daily schedule. He was working 50 to 60 hour workweeks and his wife was writing her dissertation for her doctorate. On top of that, their baby daughter was born in February 2013. Training, he says, was a delicate balancing act.

"It's a huge time commitment and I think the more you do it the more your training adjusts to what the rest of your life is," he says.

RACE DAY

The day of the race, while Wieluns confronted 100 miles of grueling dirt roads and hills, the filmmakers faced a challenge of their own. Peters and Mooney had recruited a team of 20 volunteers – many were friends and alumni from Colby Sawyer – and stationed them throughout the course as best they could with cameras. Communication between aid stations on the course was done via ham radio as the course has minimal cell reception. In addition to hardly any ability to communicate between the camera crews, they weren't familiar with the course since the map is kept secret.

"We basically said, 'These are the shots we need. Good luck, we'll see you in 30 hours,'" Peters recalls. During the race, the directors traveled between checkpoints with Wielun's support crew.

The directors also put a GoPro camera on Zak for the first 30 miles of the race. A friend running alongside him as a pacer wore a camera pointed in Zak's direction.

During the race, Wieluns says the presence of the cameras kept him focused, just like they did during his training.

In the world of distance running, many runners describe "the wall," a point where the body and mind reach a seemingly insurmountable level of pain and exhaustion. But in a race as long as 100 miles, Wieluns describes three circles of running hell to endure: the wall, the pit and the abyss. Mentally overcoming these obstacles, he says, is a key to success.

"Part of what I've learned is while there are the low moments where your stomach may feel bad, you may get a twinge in the leg or your quads may be on fire, if you can mentally battle through that, it will pass. Somehow you're going to be able to continue going if you can keep mentally focused on what you need to do," he says.

As he kept running, the film crew continued to record.

"It was a little bit surreal," he says of all the extra attention. "I had to bear-down because it was a little bit of added pressure."

By the end of the race, his feet were on fire and he was having difficulty thinking clearly. But he had made it, and waiting for him at the finish line was his family, friends and parents. Best of all was his time: 21 hours and 45 minutes — far faster than he had expected and far ahead of his pace in 2012.

PAST THE FINISH LINE

With so much physical and mental torment, there was also the chance that Wieluns might not finish. In 2013, intense heat and humidity caused 40 percent of runners to drop out.

The only thing they could do, Peters says, was wait and see.

"One of the risks of making a film like this is you have no idea what to expect when the film is done," he says. "The story evolves as you film it. One of the appeals of documentary film making is you have to leap into the abyss and hope that there's something worth watching at the bottom."

By the end of the race, Mooney and Peters had collected well over 100 hours worth of footage. Over the next year, they produced a 100-minute documentary – the longest film they have produced.

Mooney and Peters released their film with a small screening this past May at their alma mater. Now, they've gone public and are submitting the film to festivals.

While the film focuses on running, the two hope it will have a broad appeal.

"Everyone goes through those things where you have to balance your life," Peters says. "Obviously, this was one of those huge life goals for him and if he threw in the towel after three attempts he probably wouldn't have been very happy with himself. To complete it one of the most important things for him, so I think in that sense even non-runners can identify with the process of training; to do something and seeing it through to the end."

After screenings at film festivals in Vermont and New Hampshire, "100: Head/Heart/Feet" will move to festivals in Las Vegas, Nv., Madison, Wi.; Lubbock, Texas and even Mexico for the Festival Sayulita. Hammer & Saw are planning a national tour and have scheduled screenings from Hartford, Conn. to Juneau, Alaska.

As for Wieluns, he returned to the Vermont 100 this past July and Mooney ran with him for the last 12 miles as a pacer. This year, he cut one hour and 42 minutes off of his time.

Currently, he's resting and looking forward to the snowshoe-racing season and the US national qualifiers.

As for his next 100-miler, he says he's ready for a different race.

"I've done Vermont for four years now and I like to keep things fresh and set new goals," he says. "There are a lot of races out there that I'd like to try, but I want to keep a balance. Maybe we can make a family vacation out of it."

GETTING YOUR SKI LEGS READY FOR BUMPS & CARVING

By Evan Johnson

Middlebury — Getting ready for the first big storm of the winter means much more than getting your skis or board tuned. Emily Miner knows this for certain. At 32, she is the membership director at Middlebury Fitness and a certified trainer with the TRX training system, a method of exercise that utilizes two suspended straps designed by a U.S. Navy SEAL.

A lifelong skier, Miner first learned skiing at the Middlebury Snow Bowl and participated in the ski racing program at Killington. She continues to enjoy the Snowbowl and Bromley, while her personal favorite, Jay Peak, is where she and her husbanded honeymooned, and where they still drive to ski whenever they have the extra time for a get-away.

As the season gets closer, Miner has been getting ready with workout regimens to exercise key muscle groups.

The exercises in her programs are designed to build muscular endurance and therefore emphasize using lower weights with higher reps. For these exercises, she says, start with one to three sets of eight to 12 reps. You can also try the exercises for 30 to 60 seconds at a high intensity while maintaining proper form.

Here's how to perform the six exercises:

WARMING UP

To get started, Miner warms up with 20 minutes of intense interval workouts on the Stair Master. Running, she says, is a good option as well, but whatever you do, make sure to include at least 20 minutes of a cardiovascular workout, if at all possible.



HAMSTRING CURL

Miner says her first day of the season is always a full day and this exercise is one that helps prepare her.

"I have not found another exercise that gets my hamstrings to where they need to be for my first day out," she says.

To do the curl, lie on the floor and secure your heels in both of the TRX loops with your knees extended. In one motion, draw your knees towards your chest. For an easier option, position yourself closer to the anchor point. To progress, move fur-



ther away.

Miner likes to use this exercise in a combination with three movements — a bridge, a hamstring curl and then a hip press. These three movements exercise your calf muscles, glutes and your ankles, an area she says is often overlooked.

"That's where most of the movement comes from when you're skiing," she says. "Even though you're stuck in that boot, you have a little bit of play, so it's important to strengthen that."



CROSS-OVER LUNGE

A good movement for boosting your heart rate and strengthening your lower body, specifically your quads, is the cross-over lunge. In the starting position, stand holding the two TRX loops away from you. Drop your right leg behind your left leg as you squat with your left knee. This can also be enhanced to include a lateral hop to provide some ankle flexion. Be careful not to hang from the rungs as this will reduce the effectiveness of the exercise.



SINGLE-LEGGED LUNGE

Stand upright with one foot looped in a single TRX loop and your arms by your sides. Drop your body down toward the floor, bending at your hips and knees and leaning your torso slightly forward. Rapidly push off your front foot, coming up to jump off the floor. Land in a squat position and repeat.



BOSU BALL SQUATS

The BOSU ball is half of a rubber ball with a flattened side. This tool can be useful for balance and lower body exercises. Miner recommends two kinds of squats on both

sides of the ball — one on the flat and the other on the rounded side. These will develop muscle strength and balance.

"The rounded side is particularly good for simulating moguls," she says.



TUCK AND PIKE

Miner combines these two exercises for a more intense core workout.

TUCK: Suspend your heels in the TRX straps and raise yourself in a bridge position off the floor on your arms. Draw your knees into your chest while keeping yourself stable and then return back out to the straight position.



PIKE: Start in a straight body position with your hands on the floor in front and your feet looped through the handles. Pull your feet toward your body while lifting your hips into the air with your legs straight. To make it harder, place your hands on a BOSU Ball or a weighted medicine ball.



SIDE BENDS

Stand with both hands in the TRX straps with your feet planted on the floor. Lean to one side holding the handles overhead with your arms straight. Arch your torso over to one side and reach your arms to this side. Pull your body back up to the start position. Complete reps on one side before switching to the other side.

One of the driving forces of sports is the desire to get better. Skiers and snowboarders take that desire to the extreme, but even the beginner skier or rider yearns to improve — if only to ride the lift all the way to the top and not die of fright on the way down. Getting better in skiing and riding, then, is at the very core of the sport.

But it's easy to get stuck at a certain comfort level, be that beginner, intermediate or advanced. To help get past those plateaus and move on to the next level, we asked several area pros for their tips and advice. Here are their pointers, separated by ability levels:

BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE

Control through turning

If this is one of your first winters on skis or a board, a good way to measure your progress is if you're able to control your speed by turning both ways. If you're a snowboarder, that means being able to turn on both your heel and toe edges.

"For newer skiers, that wedge shape becomes their main way to control their speed," says Chris Saylor, director of skiing and riding programs at Okemo Mountain Resort. "Our job is to get them to use turning to control their speed."

Balance

"There's no doubt that for a new skier or rider, the feeling of sliding with skis or a board on their feet is going to take some time to get used to," says David Bowyer, director of the skiing and riding school at Stratton Mountain Resort. "Take some time to move around and get used to the full range of sensations that come with being on the snow."

Avoid "sitting in the back seat"

Skiing demands you stay responsive and that means a forward stance in the front of your boots. The next time you're skiing, focus on feeling your shin pressing into the tongue of your boot.

Develop your turning skills

When it comes to making a well-defined turn, your turn should involve your whole leg, Bowyer says. "Your ability to put the skis or board directly across the hill is where you're going to get the most control," he says. "If you're skiing in a wedge or starting to make parallel turns, the ability to round out that turn is critical."

Look down the hill

As you work on turns of different radii, where you look has a strong bearing.

"If your eyes are right on the tips of your skis, obviously you're going to

RATCHET IT UP A NOTCH!

TIPS ON TAKING YOUR SKIING AND RIDING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

By Evan Johnson, Angelo Lynn

have a hard time staying responsive to the changes in the terrain," Saylor says. "Depending on how fast you're traveling, you should keep your vision a few turns ahead."

INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED

Build up mileage

While the most basic skills of skiing and riding can be learned in a relatively short amount of time (a few days with instruction will move you from beginner to skiing blue slopes), you can expect to take more time to develop the skills you'll use on steeper terrain.

"Most people when they start skiing and riding stick to what they know on green circle terrain," Bowyer says. "But the way to improve is to start to vary your size of turn and speed on new terrain. That doesn't necessarily mean steeper, but it can mean more undulating or different terrain from what they've been working on."

Get comfortable with speed

When skiing on mostly flat terrain, the body is in a relatively static position, but that will change as you develop speed. While it's important to test your abilities, Jeff Spring, operations director at Smugglers' Notch, says selecting the correct terrain at this point is critical.

"When you've built up mileage and comfort, you're going to be able to get into a position of neutral balance where you're able to steer the skis," he says. "That neutral position isn't going to happen when fear gets in the way. You've got to replace it with fun."

Try some ungroomed terrain

If you're skiing at an intermediate level, consider seeking out trails that haven't been touched by the groomers.

"When we talk about blue square terrain, it's a little more static," says Spring. "We're trying to promote a dynamic lower body that's flexing and extending, but sometimes you won't experience it until you get into that ungroomed terrain."

Snow of varying conditions is going to reinforce those fundamentals in a big way.

"If you hit that deep patch of snow or that bump and your weight isn't forward, you might get bucked," he adds, and that's a reminder that proper stance really matters.

Develop your edging abilities

Your ability to use your edges isn't an on-off switch. Instead, think of it as a dimmer control and you'll use varying amounts depending on the terrain — more on the hard stuff, less in soft powder.

Once you get to that intermediate level, most people are comfortable on the edge and tend to ski that edge a little too long," says Bowyer. "It's getting them to release the edge and transition over to the other that becomes the focus for getting students to move to the next level."

Keep a still upper body

While you're skiing downhill, imagine you're holding a camera in your hands that you're using to film the lift line at the bottom. It's a common game that many instructors use with students to emphasize separating the torso from the lower body.

"Your lower body is doing the work and your upper body stays still," says Spring. "That upper-versus-lower body separation is a signature skill that takes you from an intermediate to the next step."

ADVANCED TO EXPERT

We talked to extreme skier and Sugarbush Resort's John Egan about teaching skiers how to go from an advanced level of skiing on up.

"At this level, Egan focuses less on movement and more on the fundamental principles to understand, and the most basic problem that lies at the core of every level of skiing — overcoming fear.

"The natural instinct in humans when they're in a state of fear," Egan says, "is to back off, to rear up and extend their bodies with arms up." In skiing, that extended, back in the seat, off-balanced position can spell disaster and what all skiers at any level have to

overcome before they can move to the next level.

Fear and the human instinct

At the advanced level, Egan says, "nine times out of ten the biggest problem facing skiers on steep or difficult terrain is not transferring their weight quickly from foot to foot, and in some cases they are not reaching down the hill, or not facing straight down the hill."

In steeper terrain, Egan explains, "most people are worried about getting across the hill to slow down." Even advanced skiers fall back into the trap of cutting horizontal to the fall line to cut speed. The cause of the breakdown in the skier's ability is usually fear.

"If you break it down and watch them ski," Egan says, "you'll see the point at which the skier gets scared, and then they become human (and end up in the worst position possible for skiing)... If we were animals, we'd be better skiers; we'd ball up in a crouched position, be at the ready to spring one way or the other, and we'd come out fighting aggressively if the danger increased. Instead, humans open up and fully extend our bodies and scream."

To address the problem, Egan says, he first finds the point of fear. Then moves the skier to comfortable terrain where fear is not an issue and Egan and the skier work on technique. Then, Egan says, he takes them on tougher and tougher terrain until the skier is comfortable at each level.

It is important to remember, Egan says, that it is usually fear that stops everyone at whatever level they are stuck in... Fear also travels down the body. You can actually see part of their body not moving with the rest of it." Egan noted that a lot of skiers have tired quads, for example, because while they can relax their upper body, they keep tension (rigidness) in their quads, rather than to flex their thighs to control speed and momentum. "When you can relax the mind and let the muscles react to the terrain without fear (or restraint), then you can progress to the next level."

Egan's law of perpendicularity

We mostly grow up playing in a flat world, Egan says. Think of football, baseball, tennis and most other sports. They are played on perfectly flat surfaces and the body naturally understands that it is balanced at 90 degrees to the playing field.

"In skiing, we start on a slope and that's the first thing a beginner skier has to learn. At first, you don't know how to move because gravity is pulling you downward, and your natural reaction is

Continued on page 25

PRE-SEASON TUNE-UP:

GETTING YOUR SKIS READY FOR THE SEASON WITH A PRO

By Evan Johnson



Middlebury — While the first snows of the season have yet to fall, you won't want to wait until opening day to make sure your gear is ready for that first big Nor'easter of the season.

Edges need to be re-beveled, sharpened and removed of rust. That rock or stump you went over last spring may have really done a number to the bases of your skis or board. You'll also want to make sure that your bindings are still functioning properly.

You can do this on your own or there are professionals in every ski town — at some pretty reasonable package prices for the season — to lend a hand and, most importantly, the expertise.

Vermont Sports talked with Patrick Dempsey, a ski and bike mechanic at SkiHaus in Middlebury, who walked us through the basics of tuning skis for the season, including base grinding, stone grinding, beveling and sharpening edges and waxing. At 27, Dempsey is going into his ninth season as a ski tech and is well underway preparing skis and boards for the season's first snows.

CHECK YOUR BINDINGS

When Dempsey begins working on a pair of skis, the first step is the most important: checking the bindings. Dempsey uses a force release-testing machine, which exerts enough torque on the boot to cause it to release from the bindings, simulating a crash or any event when the boot becomes forcefully ejected.

Bindings are mechanical devices that

can deteriorate with wear and use over time. The test will ensure that the reading on the DIN release scale is, in fact, the value at which the bindings release. It's far better to check now, than ruin a season with a leg injury because a binding didn't release when it should have.

BASE REPAIR, GRINDING, STONE GRINDING

The bottoms or bases of the skis occasionally hit a rock, stump or patch of dirt. To keep the ski gliding smoothly (which helps transition from turn to turn), the nicks or scrapes on the bottom need to be filled-in using a material called PTex, a malleable synthetic that melts when heated. Your ski shop feeds it into a hot glue-gun type of device that runs for around \$100, but it melts easily at home with a lighter. Drip into the scratch or gouge and let it dry, then scrape with a waxing tool to smooth it off.

If the damage to the base is serious enough, you'll want to have the bases grinded. It is possible to flatten bases using belt grinders, but that's risky business to do at home on an expensive ski. It's just not worth it. Most ski shops will have a number of machines to do the job, which is an annual cost at most.

Skis are constructed with an increasing variety of materials, but the base of the ski, the bottom that makes contact with the snow, is universally made with high-molecular weight polyurethane. A base grind will flatten the base and create a uniformly smooth surface, while the stone grind that follows uses a diamond belt to

add structure to the base that wax will sink into.

"Those striations act as little puddles that will hold the wax," Dempsey says. "What that does is reduce surface tension between the ski and the snow." That, in turn, makes the ski easier to turn and perform as it is built to do.

Depending on snow conditions and your style of skiing, stone grinding belts can apply a number of finishes to the bases of skis, but leave the obsessing about the merits of arrow versus linear patterns to the world-class skiers. A good base grind at the beginning of the season will have you moving faster through the snow, you'll ski or ride better, and you'll have a lot more fun.

REMOVING BURRS AND BEVEL- ING EDGES

Burrs result when a finely tuned edge on your ski or board gets dinged or worn, resulting in small filaments and protruding edges. The first step is to remove these with a diamond stone and then with a fine ceramic stone. You can wet the tools first to make them last longer.

New skis come with factory edges and will hold and perform while the skis are new. But with wear and tear, edges inevitably wear down. For carving turns, edges must be sharp along the entire length that makes contact with the snow. Therefore, having them re-beveled and sharpened at the beginning of the season can boost the performance and extend the life of a ski's edges.

Base edge beveling lifts the edges off the snow a slight amount (.5° – 1.0°) so they will only engage until the ski is lifted onto an edge. This can be done at the workbench at home using a file and a guide. Guides come in a variety of qualities ranging from the cheap plastic kind to the ultra-professional, but the key is to bevel the base edge correctly the first time before you sharpen the edge. Once you set that edge, there's no turning back.

As a tip, Dempsey advises putting a thin line of magic marker on the edge and using coarse to fine stones (in that order) until you've sharpened off the marker.

"That means you've touched the entire edge but you haven't taken off much material," he says.

He also adds that while sharpening your edges is important, it is something not to get too carried away with.

"People think they need to sharpen their edges every time they ski, that they need crazy angles on their edges and that the more material they take off and the smoother the edge the better," he says. "Technically speaking, these things are true. But I've seen skis that are two seasons old that no longer have viable edges for tuning because there is no material left." That's going too far, and shortens the life of the ski or board, he says.

Now that the bevel is set and the angle is sharp, it's important to remember to detune a portion of the edge. If the edges remain as sharp and defined as you (or the machine) made them, it will be difficult to either initiate or come out of a

turn. This is because the sharpness in the tip and the tail works to continue your skis in the direction of travel.

As models of skis develop and change every season, so do the techniques of tuning them. Newer and wider skis designed for powder have a more rockered shape than traditional models, meaning a difference in where the tuner detunes the edges. While with traditional models, it is normal to de-tune one to two inches from the tip to the tails, with fatter skis you can expect to detune four to six inches from both ends. As you become familiar with your skis, it's possible you might like your edges to be more or less detuned.

After dulling the edges with a file (to detune), use a diamondstone or ceramic stone to remove any burrs.

After sharpening and detuning, many shops will wipe down the ski with base cleaner to polish and remove any excess material. If you're working on a workbench at home, you may not be able to get the high-end varieties that most shops use. Instead, you can use denatured alcohol or even a citrus based cleaner.

"Avoid anything that reacts heavily with plastics," advises Dempsey. "You can damage the materials in your base."

WAXING

Like bases, this is another area of ski maintenance and tuning that's easy to get bogged down in the minutiae. Back

when all ski bases were made of wood, waxing was necessary to make the ski slide down the hill.

While the polyethylene bases of today are more durable and produce less friction, repeated waxing is still important throughout the season. Waxes come in a variety of types for alpine and Nordic skiing and suit a variety of temperatures.

Wax works to overcome different kinds of friction with the snow by acting as a lubricant under your ski and protecting the bases from forces that contribute to oxidization. A properly waxed base is easier to turn, more durable and faster than going waxless.

Dempsey says any skier should know how to wax their skis and should do so along with checking their edges every week. When it comes to waxing, he says, diligence and precision are more important than the wax you choose.

"It's all about prep and quality of the wax job," he says, "and less about which of the waxes you choose."

Drip the wax on with the iron (not the same one you use for clothes!), then scrape off with a plastic scraper while the wax is still molten or warm. Repeat until you don't see any dirt or discoloration in the wax scrapings – this means the base is now clean. Then clean off the bases with a brush, brushing in the direction of travel.

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Wheels of Change

Q/A



Jim Dang takes a rest at the top of the Appalachian Gap on Route 17 after leaving Waterbury this past September. Photo by Dylan Peterson.

Waterbury — They have biked 1,000 miles down the eastern seaboard, but Jim Dang and Dylan Peterson are still in high spirits.

The two friends met at college at Springfield State in Springfield, Mass. Half-way through their college education, the two made a cross-country bike trip in 2011, traveling 3,600 miles in 75 days to raise awareness for the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation. Now, after graduating this past spring, they're pedaling across the country again, this time for a different cause.

"We're pedaling with the notion of how easy and rewarding it is to help those in need of support," the pair write on their

blog, www.jdwheelsofchange.com. Along the way, they've volunteered with missions and local food shelves. They plan on volunteering as much as possible throughout their trip, which will lead them in a figure eight shaped route around the United States. After starting in Waterbury on Sept. 18, the two remain in high spirits. They anticipate being on the road for 14 months.

The two spoke with Vermont Sports about the ride so far from Waynesboro, Va. where they were resting before hitting the road for a 400-mile ride to Ashville, N.C., where they plan to volunteer with the local YMCA.

Vermont Sports: Describe where you are now and how far you've traveled so far. How are you guys feeling?

Jim Dang: We just got off Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. We've gone about 1,000 miles so far and tomorrow we hit the Blue Ridge Parkway to Ashville, N.C. We're feeling great. We're feeling really strong. The Shenandoah National Park was a really good training route; there was a lot of climbing and a lot of descending. We're feeling great and looking forward to the Parkway to make us even stronger.

VS: The two of you did a similar trip in

2011. What was it about that ride that made you want to have a similar cross-country ride again?

JD: We were only 20 years old at the time and we got to thinking, "Wow, we're only 20 and very fresh to the world." This was really our only worldly experience and we got to thinking about the likelihood of another trip and what would it be like if that one was even longer and made it even a little bigger by using our college degrees to become more well rounded. Once we ended that trip, we thought we knew a lot about ourselves, but it was only the tip of the iceberg. We wanted to keep testing ourselves.

VS: How long ago did you start preparing for the trip that you're on now and what kind of preparations in logistics and training did you have to make?

JD: We'd been juggling the idea and we always thought the timing would be best when we finished college. In the summer of 2013, we decided that when we were done with our summer commitments [after graduating], we would depart. Dylan had an internship at a local TV station in Springfield and I was working at a summer camp as well as with individuals with disabilities. Once all that freed up, we decided it was time to hit the road.

But as far as training? No training. After the last ride, we did a mini tour for a week from Vermont, through New Hampshire and all the way across Maine to see Dylan's dad who retired out there. But we didn't own our own bikes then. I was borrowing a friend's and Dylan was using an extremely rickety bike that actually fell apart at the end of the trip. We only bought bikes for this trip right before we left. I got the bike I'm riding on now a week before the trip. I went on a 30-mile bike ride with two friends and they really gave me a nice reality check.

We're pretty flexible. We did a general outline of the places we want to go to based on really close friends that we wanted to see and were in areas that we had never been to. We thought the idea of doing a figure eight was really enticing. A lot of people that go cross country go either north or south and we thought we'd take all four corners of the country and then, at the same time while we're seeing so many towns and communities, why not volunteer and apply what we can to connect to people. We really try and take it one state at a time and pick up a map and look at the landmarks we want to get to. There's a website called adventurecycling.com that gives you maps and places to go to. We know where we're going but we're letting the experience unfold day-by-day and hour by hour.

VS: Describe your equipment. How much are you guys carrying? How about food?

JD: I'd say we both have about 35 to 40 pounds depending on what we're trying to do. We recently stopped at a grocery store to stock up on food for the next part of our trip so we're carrying the most weight right now. We both ride a Specialized Tri-Cross that we purchased from Ski Rack in Burlington, Vt. and we have saddlebags on the back, no front bags. We have our small tent from TC Outdoors Store, two sleeping pads, pillows and sleeping bags. We have very minimal clothes that are pretty universal. We each have two shirts with socks for riding that Darn Tough supplied us with. We've got some zip off pants and wind pants, biking shorts, a long-sleeved shirt to hang-out in, a long-sleeved shirt to bike in, rain jackets, insulating jackets, a hat and sunglasses. We're pretty minimal. We recently picked up a computer, so we have an ongoing blog and we're shooting videos with a GoPro camera. We do our cooking on a Jetboil Helios stove and we also carry fuel bottles. We usually carry breakfast with us and pick up dinner at



Volunteering really brings us as much pleasure as cycling through new places or conquering tough new terrain. In a car you can drive through a place and it's a good feeling but the windshield is such a barrier, you're not able to get out and meet people.

night. Lately we've been experimenting with pasta dishes. They haven't been delicious but at the end of a long day anything will taste good. Most recently, we made pasta with a can of queso, meat sauce, and beans. We're looking at food in terms of what has the most calories

VS: You've said a major part of the trip has been volunteer work. Where are some of the places you guys have volunteered and what did you do there?

JD: The first was in Manhattan and we volunteered for the Bowery Mission. It's a homeless mission that feeds individuals in that area dinner Monday through Friday. We did a lot of dishes in the beginning and then served about served about 200 people

food. The most recent one was in Leonardtown, Md. And it was at a church called the First Saints Church. We fed about 100 people there in conjunction with the people that worked there and handed out provisions. Today we've been playing phone tag with man in Ashville, NC who works with the YMCA. We'll be working in their food pantry when we get down to there.

It's really beautiful when we're riding on our bikes, seeing the landscape and such. But at the same time, as cool as the land is we want to know what the people who live there. Volunteering really brings us as much pleasure as cycling through new places or conquering tough new terrain. In a car you can drive through a place and it's a good feeling but the windshield is such a barrier, you're not able to get out and meet people. And we're on the road a long time. What do we have to lose by spending a few hours or a day meeting people that we wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to?

VS: When you meet people and tell them what you're doing, how do they respond?

JD: Well, first they assume we're on motorcycles, then they ask us like, "Why are you doing this?" or "Are you crazy?" They're really inviting. They love hearing about what we're doing, it's especially surprising to them when we say that we con-



Dang and Peterson pose for a picture in the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia.

Below: Dang and Peterson during a rest day in Central Park, New York City. Photo provided by Jim Dang and Dylan Peterson.

sciously try to stop and volunteer. They understand that the places we stopped at, we were there for a good reason.

VS: You've written on your blog that a few times you've had to rely on the good will and generosity of strangers. Was this intentionally planned and does it concern you at all?

JD: As this trip has gone on, we've really had our faith reaffirmed. We both come from different backgrounds and have different ideas of faith or religion, but on this trip we can't say anything other than we've been blessed by the company of the people who we just end up meeting at the right time and place. We've had to ask people, "Excuse me sir, but would you mind if we set up our tent in your backyard?" A man in Colpepper, Va, thought about it for literally two seconds and then said, "Yeah, that's fine." He showed us his back yard and we thanked him. Eventually, he ended up inviting us inside, letting us sleep in his basement in two guest beds. He let us shower and asked if we wanted pizza. He gave us a ton of snacks and gave us a hot breakfast the next morning. The little things that people are doing for us mean the world to us. We've also recently found out about this website called warmshowers.org, which is an organization for bicycle tours and once we became members, there's 50,000 people either on a tour or are available to host. We've had to use it two or three times and the people we've met have just been great. We do our best to take care of ourselves, but if we get in a tight spot, people have been willing to help. We're just two kids and I don't think we look very threatening. They just feel like helping and building karma.

VS: Your page on gofundme.com is still active and you're still accepting donations. Where does the money go and why should people donate to you?

[Jim hands phone to Dylan Peterson]

DP: The money goes directly to our bank accounts and helps us with things like food and bike maintenance. It basically fuels our fire and if people are interested in philanthropy, we're the epitome of that right now because we're on a mission to promote active lifestyles on our bicycles and to show people that realizing their dreams is cool and also to lend a hand where we're able to. And that's something that most people can do every day. Doing the work we've done is something that fills you with joy, there's nothing that can replace that feeling.

VS: If someone were considering a long distance ride like yours – maybe not quite as long – what would be some words of advice that you'd give them?

DP: Don't be afraid, commit, trust yourself, be honest with everyone, be open, get out of your comfort zone. Prayer can help too.



Warren Miller's 65th ski flick revives iconic flare

By Evan Johnson

When it comes to shooting, producing and generating hype around the ski season, the Warren Miller crew knows how it's done. For the past 65 years, the annual releases are billed as the ski event of the season and make no mistake, the latest film, "No Turning Back" is well worth the wait.

Directly from the start, the filmmakers present a tour-de-force featuring big-time skiers skiing big-time lines spanning five countries and four states.

The first ten minutes will have you running out of the theater to do the snow dance in the middle of the street after watching Ingrid Backstrom and Jess McMillan ski 1,800 vertical feet at a sustained 57-degree pitch on a remote peak in the Chugach Mountains of southern Alaska.

Other names and sites include Heather Paul, Seth Morrison, Miles Smart and Tim Petrick rappelling into couloirs on Chamonix and on Mont Blanc; Rob Kingwill and Seth Wescott carving snow-bound mountainsides in Niseko, Japan; and Tyler Ceccanti and

Josh Bibby laying down fresh tracks on the snowcapped summit of Mount Olympus in Washington state.

When casting the film, director Chris Patterson said the producers were looking for people that brought more than high-level skiing talent.

"Obviously we're looking for people that can contribute their skiing and riding abilities," he said in a recent interview with Vermont Sports. "At the same time, we also want people to observe the dynamic between two or three people. By the end, we want the viewer to feel like you actually get to know these people. They're no different than you and I, they just perform on a totally different level."

At other times, the film takes a more cinematic approach. In one example, a dreamy Montana sequence features Julian Carr and Sierra Quitiquit shooting pool and exploring the small-town vibe of ski towns and smaller "mom-and-pop" sized areas in Montana.

Aside from fearsome lines on big mountains, "No Turning Back" has fun in a few freestyle scenes, showing what

Top: Seth Wescott slashes turns through deep snow in Niseko, Japan. Photo provided by Chris Hrenko.

you can do with a mechanical winch and a well-positioned kicker in front of a football crossbar, windmill or apartment balcony handrail; and there's a segment in Beaver Creek, Colo. reflecting the racing heritage of the region with American and European stars going head-to-head at speeds of 70 to 100 mph downhill toward stands packed with screaming fans at the bottom.

In between the stylish shots, "No Turning Back" takes some introspective turns with vintage footage from the 1950s, '60s and '70s. A central theme to the film is progression and the film pays homage to the earliest days of the sport in all of its zaniness, while looking beyond the horizon to what the unpredictable future might hold.

In one of the film's final segments JT Holms and Ulei Kestenholtz blur the line between big mountain skiing and flight by soaring over cliffs in the Swiss Alps with the aid of parachutes. The parachutes, GoPro cameras and entire arsenals of new skis have expanded the way we enjoy and share our enjoyment of the sport.

Using the latest in camera technology and techniques, the film is impeccably shot hundreds of feet above the action on helicopters and with GoPro cameras mounted on the chests, helmets and ski tips of the pros. Chris Patterson says the tiny, mountable cameras have revolutionized the way ski movies are shot.

"The equipment has been amazing for us," he said. "We've been able to do things like that scene with JT and Ulei in a way we would have never been able to do before. It's like a frozen version of Star Wars."

The latest installment of the Warren Miller ski film dynasty continues to share stories of experiences in the mountains that most of us only dream about — and that's the point. It's a movie that seeks to fulfill our dreams, that sparks desire and anticipation, that lets us hoot-and-holler in an adrenaline rush just watching these athletes fly off 30-foot cliffs, dodge avalanching powder stashes on 50-degree slopes, ride rails and hit jumps in ways that make our palms sweat. It's our aspiration to be so good that we'd be paid to spend a few years skiing and riding around the world, even if the reality is that the biggest jumps of the year for most of us might be leaping out of our theater seats in the excitement of the upcoming ski season and viewing this year's Warren Miller thriller. "No Turning Back" will be screened in Middlebury at the Town Hall Theater on Dec. 3 and 4 at 8 p.m. and December 5 at the Flynn Center in downtown Burlington at 6:30 p.m.

And by the way, Vermont Sports will be there too, giving out issues and high-fives. If you're going to be in town, come by and stay hello.



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BAD BOYS IN THE NFL

Just a few weeks into the current NFL season the headlines are all about the disgraceful behavior of several, high-profile players off the field. Last summer, a video clip from an Atlantic City hotel surfaced showing Baltimore Ravens running back, Ray Rice dragging his fiancée from an elevator. The star player was suspended for two games for domestic violence.

More recently, a second, far more disturbing video hit the internet showing Rice knocking his fiancée out with a punch to the face. The public outcry forced the Ravens to cut Rice from the team and the NFL to suspend him from the league indefinitely.

Before the Rice situation subsided, an alarming story emerged from Minneapolis, where the Vikings' record-setting running back Adrian Peterson was accused of child abuse for beating his four-year-old son with a switch to the point of breaking the skin and leaving visible bruises. Then it seemed that the floodgates opened with Sports Illustrated and other sources reporting a series of recent cases of violent, off-the-field behavior by NFL players.

Ray McDonald, a defensive end for the San Francisco 49ers, is being investigated for beating up his pregnant fiancée. The Carolina Panther's star defensive end, Greg Hardy, a player who will earn \$13.1 million this season, is appealing a judge's ruling that found him guilty of "assault on a female and communicating threats."

On Sept. 17, Arizona Cardinals running back Jonathan Dwyer was deactivated after being charged with domestic violence. Back in November 2013, Vikings cornerback A.J. Jefferson was arrested for domestic assault by strangulation. And just so New England Patriots fans don't get too smug, let's remember that Aaron Hernandez will soon go on trial for murder.

This recent spate of alarming, violent incidents involving NFL celebrities prompts three observations, at least two of which could be considered quite positive.

- First, I'm reminded of some nearly forgotten, college

introductory psych course in which I first learned about the bell shaped curve, which I've more recently discovered applies to almost everything. As a brief review, the bell shaped curve is a graph which represents that on either extreme of almost anything, there are relatively few individuals, while the vast majority are somewhere in the middle. Considering college applicants, for example, there will be a few students with the grades and test scores to be successful anywhere they apply. At the other end of the spectrum, there will be a few applicants who do not have the scores or high school grades to be successful in college, while the vast majority of applicants, between the extremes have the grades and skills to be admitted to the college of their choice.

It's important to remember the bell shaped curve in regard to the misbehavior of NFL football players. The vast majority of players are dedicated athletes and conscientious citizens. A smaller segment of NFL players are remarkable, community advocates leveraging their celebrity to advance worthy causes from youth sports to a wide variety of medical challenges. Unfortunately, a relatively small number of NFL players allow their wealth and fame to distort their perspective and they behave in ways the general population finds unacceptable.

- A second observation is an admission that we are all partly responsible. Many of us, perhaps a majority of us harbor a fascination with violence. Would NASCAR racing be the most popular spectator sport in America if there weren't the occasional, multi-car pile-ups or the flaming spin-outs into the infield? We are grateful that recent enhanced safety measures insure that most of the time the drivers walk away from those horrendous crashes, but honestly, wouldn't NASCAR be boring if there were no accidents?

NFL football is exciting because of the speed, athleticism and skill of the players. We cheer for a linebacker who fights through the offensive line, reaches the opposing quarterback and slams him to the turf.

Our heroes are receivers who get open, miraculously catch a pass drilled at them like a bullet, then hold onto the ball when blind-sided by a defensive cornerback with the force of a freight train. We are fascinated, engrossed even enthralled by the violence. And while we compensate the athletes very generously who entertain us, it might be unrealistic to assume that they can simply turn on and off that level of violence. We have learned since Vietnam that soldiers forced to endure months of fierce combat often have trouble readjusting to civilian life. Although the NFL is not the life and death combat our military has faced in recent years, professional football demands a level of physical violence not common in other 21st century occupations.

- Finally, and perhaps most optimistically, our national culture is changing. One hundred and fifty years ago, during the western expansion gunfights and random acts of violence were relatively commonplace. As recently as the 1950s, Americans in the south were lynched with impunity simply for the color of their skin. In 2014, national celebrities are disgraced, held to account and perhaps suspended from their powerful positions for striking women and children. A generation ago these incidents would not have been national news. Today, the commissioner of the NFL may lose his \$30 million-a-year job because he underestimated the public's disgust over the indefensible behavior of a few of his athletes.

It may be slow, but I believe we are making progress.



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, mortontrails.com.

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SPORTS NUTRITION DONE RIGHT

By Evan Johnson

Craftsbury — With so many training plans, diets and supplements out there it's tough to know what's good for you and what's not.

Vermont Sports talked with Allison Van Akkeren, a professor at Sterling College who specializes in nutrition, to help readers separate hype from fact, and understand the fundamentals of a good nutrition plan for athletes pushing themselves in recreational or competitive ventures.

Van Akkeren, 53, earned her master's degree in nutrition and worked as a registered dietician in the university hospitals at the University of Wisconsin in Madison before coming east to work as a nutritionist and a coach for the Craftsbury Outdoor Center in 1985. Today, she teaches nutrition, environmental education, cross-country skiing and skills for winter camping at Sterling College. She's also a dedicated cross-country skier and enjoys ski orienteering with her husband.

Van Akkeren takes what she calls a "whole-foods" approach to sports nutrition. By keeping as many unprocessed foods as possible in athletes' diets, she says they will be healthier overall, perform better and recover faster.

It's a point she drives home with every one of her students.

"When students don't know an answer on one of my tests, I tell them to write down, 'Eat whole foods.'" In a question-and-answer format below, Van Akkeren discusses how nutrition affects performance and provides tips for how and what to eat at various stages of your training – before, during and after. For more sports nutrition advice, she recommends athletes look for R.D. Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Guidebook.

Vermont Sports: How do you view sports and nutrition interacting?

Allison Van Akkeren: When I talk about nutrition, I'm talking about using a whole foods approach, which means using foods as close as possible to their natural state. Those foods carry compounds that interact with each other in highly complex ways that synergistically benefit our overall health. So, if you separate them out and put them in a bar, they don't tend to be as active. Our natural foods know what's the right way to balance so that



they work best for our health. It's the best way to eat for our overall health by preventing diseases, healing and then enhancing our performance.

VS: Do the nutritional needs of athletes differ from non-athletes?

AA: There are complications that athletes have, for example at races you need food immediately after the race. You can't just immediately run down to the general store and expect to find good whole foods that you want to be eating. It takes a little bit more planning. I also like to talk about what to eat before, during and after the race. It's not necessarily that athletes have completely different needs, it's that there are ways that you can eat to optimize your performance.

VS: What are some common or basic mistakes that you see athletes making in their diets?

AA: Mistakes being made at both ends: Some people think that in order to build muscle you need to eat lots of protein. But that can't happen without the exercising along with it and you need the carbohydrates to give you the energy to build muscle.

On the opposite end, there are a lot of athletes who are trying to lose weight. There are a lot of studies that show that if you're trying to lose weight while competing, your performance is going to go down. Other kinds of misconceptions are that people need to have a special bar or a special combination (of high energy food) to meet your needs. There are some uses for athletic foods, like energy gels and bars, but that doesn't have to be the entire way you fuel yourself.

VS: Walk us through what athletes

you have worked with are eating before their races, during their events and then directly after. How should this be structured?

AA: First, overall, being well hydrated is very important. For high school athletes that can really be a problem. I see it in our cross-country skiers – trying to get them to drink water during the day of a race or even being well hydrated the day before that. In school, they can forget to drink and I think it is a key component for all athletes.

You can stop drinking two hours before the race so you won't have to urinate during the race, but take small sips. If you're in a shorter race, you may not need to drink at all, but if you're talking about marathon ski races, you'll want to be getting water in you during the race. In the first half hour, I usually start drinking something and then after an hour, I like to have something with a carbohydrate mixed in as well. For those long competitions, you'll want to be drinking four to eight ounces every 20 to 30 minutes. It's been found that winter sports athletes don't feel the effects of dehydration as badly; that you won't see decreased performance as badly as you do during the summertime.

That depends on what level of performance you're at. When I was younger and I was racing marathon ski races all the time, I could get by with less. Now that I'm older, I have to be eating a lot more during the race. Each person has to figure that out for themselves.

But usually, when you're an hour into the race, you'll want some extra fuel and not just be drinking water.

In the pre-competition, stick with familiar foods. Don't try something you've never had before. Make sure it's something your stomach can handle. Usually, you'll want to be eating until three

or four hours before a race and have that time to let your food digest. In case the event is delayed for an hour or two, make sure you have something to hold you over so you're not coming into the race really hungry.

During competition, you'll want to optimize your glucose availability and avoid dehydration. Those are the two things you want to be working toward. If you're going for an hour, you'll need to be more systematic about what to eat. After an hour in, you'll want to be eating 100 to 250 calories in carbohydrates. Again, use familiar foods – practice ahead of time using what you're going to be competing with. If there's going to be a feed station, bring along some foods that you know you're comfortable with because you can't always count on what they're going to have there. It's really about what you feel comfortable with.

The big part in post-competition is looking to restore your fluids, replenish your glycogen stores so that you can be ready to train again in the next day or so, and stop the muscle breakdown that happens after you've been working out. Immediately after the race, somewhere within 30 minutes to an hour, you'll want to get some food in you even though that might not be when you're really hungry. You want to consume 30 to 60 grams of carbohydrates with about eight to 16 grams of protein. That can mean a cup of chocolate milk, a handful of dried fruit and nuts or any number of energy bars.

VS: How about sports drinks? When it comes to electrolytes and restoring the salts and sugars in your body are they the way to go?

AA: I think there's certainly merit to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

VERMONT'S WINTER SPORTS HEADQUARTERS!

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FEATURED EVENTS:

JANUARY 31

CRAFTSBURY MARATHON

A classic technique wave start cross-country ski race of 25 or 50 km on January 31 at the Craftsbury Outdoor Center. It is on a 12.5 km loop with three aid stations. The Craftsbury Marathon online registration begins on November 1, 2014. The fee starts at \$60 and goes up in \$20 increments to \$120 on race day. Students starting at age 14 enter at half the adult rate and

children under 14 may enter at \$5. Vermont high school students may register separately with their team at a special rate of \$5.
www.craftsbury.com

FEBRUARY 7 – 8

CANADIAN SKI MARATHON

A weekend of Nordic ski tours from Lachute to Gatineau, Quebec. Skiers may opt for the shortest 12k option, a series of tour loops, a half marathon or the longest 160k tour. www.csm-mcs.com

ALPINE SKIING

November

- 22 **THE BIG KICKER** Mad River Glen and Sugarbush kick off the 2014/15-ski season with a freestyle party with rail jams, ski movies and local food and drink at Waitsfield's American Flatbread. www.sugarbush.com, www.madriverglen.com

December

- 3-4 **WARREN MILLER'S NO TURNING BACK**
The Town Hall Theater in Middlebury hosts a screening of the newest release from Warren Miller Films. www.townhalltheater.org
- 5 **WARREN MILLER'S NO TURNING BACK**
The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts hosts a screening of the newest release from Warren Miller Films. www.flynncenter.org

MOUNTAIN BIKING/ CYCLING

November

- 8 **PARADISE CROSS FRENZY** Paradise Sports Shop in Windsor hosts a cyclocross race in the area near the shop. www.paradiseshop.com
- 9 **24TH ANNUAL WEST HILL SHOP CYCLOCROSS RACE** The West Hill Shop in Putney hosts a classic cyclocross race next to the shop. The course is 1.5 miles long and mountain bikes (without bar ends) are welcome. www.bikereg.com

January

- 10-11 **RIKERT FAT BIKE ROUND UP**
The Rikert Touring Center holds a full day of fat bike riding with tours, games and a cookout. www.rikertnordic.com

BACKCOUNTRY/TELE/AT

November

- 6 **SECOND ANNUAL BACKCOUNTRY SKIING FORUM** The Rochester Area Sports Trail Alliance hosts its second annual meeting at the Pierce Hall Community Center in Rochester, featuring updates on the development of new and proposed backcountry skiing zones, discussions of a backcountry skiing code of ethics and other issues. The meeting will also include a potluck dinner, multimedia presentations and live music. www.vtbc.org
- 15 **CATAMOUNT TRAIL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING** The Catamount Trail Association hosts its annual meeting at the Killington Grand Resort to discuss backcountry skiing and get excited for the upcoming season. www.catamounttrail.org

FIRST-AID/EMT

November

- 17 **PRE-SEASON TUNE UP WORKSHOP: PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF WINTER SPORTS INJURIES** Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center hosts a free informational session on treating and preventing winter sports-related injuries. There is no need to pre-register, however, the auditorium only holds 150 people. Entrance is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org

CLIMBING/MOUNTAINEERING

November

- 6 **REEL ROCK 9 FILM TOUR: VALLEY UPRISING** Petra Cliffs Climbing Center in Burlington hosts a screening of the latest installment of the Reel Rock Film Tour, "Valley Uprising." www.petracliffs.com

- 7 **TELLURIDE MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT** The latest releases from the Telluride Mountain Film Festival come to Burlington with a variety of outdoor films between 2 and 20 minutes long. The screening will be from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Davis Center on UVM's campus. www.gearx.com
- 15 **BURLY BOULDER BRAWL** MetroRock in Essex Junction hosts a bouldering competition with divisions for all levels of climber. Details are available on the event's Facebook page.

SKI AND SKATE SWAPS

COCHRAN'S SKI & RIDE SALE

Equipment drop off:

Friday, Nov. 7 from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Camels Hump Middle School in Richmond.

Sale Hours:

Saturday, Nov. 8 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Additional details:

The sale will accept new and gently used equipment for all winter sports: alpine, Nordic, snowboarding, skating, hockey, winter clothing and boots, snowshoeing and more. Consigned gear should be clean and in good condition. No straight skis accepted.

WAITSFIELD PTA SKI AND SKATE SALE

Equipment drop off:

Friday, Nov. 14 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Waitsfield Elementary School

Sale hours:

Saturday, Nov. 15, Sunday, Nov. 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Waitsfield Elementary School. Unsold items must be collected by 3 p.m. No helmets or straight skis accepted. The Waitsfield PTA takes a 20 percent commission on all sales.

MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH SCHOOL SKI & SKATE SWAP

Equipment drop off:

Friday, Nov. 14 from 3:30 to 8 p.m.

Sale hours:

Saturday, Nov. 15 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Additional details:

Regional stores will also be in attendance, offering deals on new gear. All proceeds to benefit the MUHS Nordic and Alpine Ski Teams.

BRATTLEBORO RECREATION DEPARTMENT SKI & SKATE SALE

Equipment Drop off:

Friday, Nov. 7 from 12 to 7 p.m. at the Gibson Aiken Center, 207 Main Street, Brattleboro.

Sale hours:

Saturday, Nov. 8 from 8 to 11 a.m.

Additional details:

The sale will accept miscellaneous winter sports gear including hockey, cross country skiing, alpine skiing and snowboarding clothing and equipment.



OKEMO MOUNTAIN SCHOOL SKI AND SNOWBOARD SWAP

Equipment drop off

Saturday, Nov. 15 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Sitting Bull Restaurant at Okemo Mountain in Ludlow.

Sunday, Nov. 16 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sale hours:

Friday, Nov. 21 from 4 to 7 p.m. (3 to 4 p.m. preview hour; \$5 admission)

Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 23 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Additional details:

Gear up to seven years old may be sold on consignment. Twenty-five percent of the selling price will be donated to Okemo Mountain School. Equipment donations are tax-deductible.

VTXC SKI SWAP

Equipment drop off

Friday, Nov. 21 from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday morning at the Trapp Family Lodge Outdoor Center in Stowe.

Sale hours:

Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 23 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Pick-up and after party to follow from 3 to 5 p.m.

Additional details:

The sale will specialize in Nordic skiing equipment of all varieties, however the sale will accept all other winter sports equipment.

STRATTON MOUNTAIN SCHOOL SKI SALE:

Equipment drop off:

Friday, Nov. 28 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Stratton Mountain School.

Sale Hours:

Friday, Nov. 28 from 3 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 29 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Additional details:

Admission: \$5 for adults; kids free. No helmets will be accepted, only equipment and clothing in good condition and less than seven years old will be accepted.

NORDIC SKIING

December

6 – 7 DEMO DAYS AT CRAFTSBURY OUTDOOR CENTER

The Craftsbury Outdoor Center hosts two days of demos for cross country equipment. www.craftsbury.com

7 ZAK CUP SERIES: QUARRY ROAD OPENER

A 10k skate race with a mass start in Waterville, Me. New England Nordic Skiing Association (NENSA) membership at the time of race is required for Zak Cup scoring. www.nensa.net

20 – 21 NENSA EASTERN CUP OPENER AT RIKERT FROST MOUNTAIN NORDIC SKI CLUB AND RIKERT NORDIC CENTER

will host, for the first time, the opening weekend of Eastern Cup competition, December 20-21. Saturday's classic races will be an interval start. Sunday's freestyle races will be a mass start. Prior to Sunday's races, there will be a Bill Koch freestyle race. This will be run in 1-2 waves depending on registrants. www.nensa.net

27 ZAK CUP SERIES: MT. HOR HOP

A 10k skate race with an interval start in Westmore, Vt. NENSA membership at the time of race is required for Zak Cup scoring. www.nensa.net

28 SANTA'S REVENGE AND RESOLUTION RELAYS

Sleepy Hollow Cross Country Ski Center in Huntington hosts a series of skate races. Santa's Revenge will be a Freestyle 5-10k race (depending on conditions). The Resolution Relays will be informal 4X2km relays. 600m Lollipop at 9:00am, 2km BKL to follow, Open Race to follow. Resolution Relay will follow the completion of all events.

28 – January 4 FORT KENT NEW YEARS NORDIC SKI FESTIVAL

The 10th Mountain Outdoor Center in Fort Kent, Me. hosts biathlon and cross-country ski races in classic and skate divisions. www.nensa.net

January

10 ZAK CUP SERIES: BOGBURN CLASSIC

A classic-style 13k men's and 7k women's race with an interval start in Pomfret, Vt. NENSA membership at the time of race is required for Zak Cup scoring. www.nensa.net

10 STOWE NORDIC MINI MARATHON

A long-distance, non-competitive ski event at Stowe Mountain Resort's Cross Country Center gives children an opportunity to

acknowledge their own abilities. Distances include 22k, 15k and 5k. Terrain is best suited for classic skiing. www.stowenordic.org

10 LADIES NORDIC SKI EXPO

The Catamount Trail Association hosts their annual ladies Nordic skiing event at the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe for a day of lessons and demos in classic and skate styles of skiing. www.catamounttrail.org

17 – 18 WOMEN'S WINTER ESCAPE

An all-women's weekend at Great Glen Trails Outdoor Center in Gorham, N.H. offers a variety of classic and skate ski clinics, yoga, equipment demos and preparation lessons. www.greatglentrails.com

19 ZAK CUP SERIES: 41ST GESCHMOSEL CLASSIC

The 41st Geschmossel is a 15k (3x5k laps) classic ski race held on the Ammonoosuc Trail System of the Bretton Woods Nordic Center. www.brettonwoods.com

24 ZAK CUP SERIES: WHITE MOUNTAIN CLASSIC 30K

The Jackson Ski Touring Foundation in Jackson, N.H. hosts a 30k classic race and the NENSA club championships. www.jacksonxc.org

25 14TH WOMEN'S XC SKI DAY

The Rikert Nordic Center hosts a day of women's-only day of tours and demos for skiers of all abilities. www.rikertnordic.com

(Continued on next page)

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calendar of events

29 – 30 **USSA SUPER TOUR AND SKI FESTIVAL** The Craftsbury Outdoor Center hosts three days of Nordic ski races including the Super Tour, The National Masters Championship and the Craftsbury Marathon. www.craftsbury.com

RUNNING

November

- 8 **LAMOILLE OBSTACLE RACE** A 5k run through a network of maintained trails with obstacles of varying difficulty placed at random intervals. Proceeds benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Vermont. www.lamoilleobstaclerace.weebly.com
- 8 **FALLEN LEAVES 5K SERIES II** A three-race series on a flat and fast 5k course that starts and finishes on the Montpelier High School track. www.cvrunners.org
- 15 **FALLEN LEAVES 5K SERIES III** A three-race series on a flat and fast 5k course that starts and finishes on the Montpelier High School track. www.cvrunners.org
- 22 **FAIR HAVEN UNION HIGH SCHOOL TURKEY TROT** Fair Haven hosts a pre-Thanksgiving run starting and ending at the Fair Haven High School For more information, contact the Fair Haven Union High School.

- 23 **MIDDLEBURY TURKEY TROT** Middlebury hosts 5k and 10k races, starting in the country and finishing in town. Race headquarters is the municipal gym. www.middleburyfitness.com
- 27 **EDGAR MAY THANKSGIVING DAY 5K** The Edgar May Health and Recreation Center in Springfield hosts a 5k run starting and finishing at the Springfield hospital. www.myreccenter.org
- 27 **GMAA TURKEY TROT 5K** A certified 5k race on the UVM cross-country course in Burlington. Race day registration is only allowed. www.gmaa.net
- 27 **GOBBLE GOBBLE WOBBLE 5K** A timed 5k run starting and finishing in the village at Stratton Mountain. Prizes and cash awarded to the top men and women finishers in each category. www.stratton.com
- 27 **JARED WILLIAMS TURKEY TROT** A 5k and 10k race/walk starting and finishing at the Round Church in Richmond. Prizes are awarded to the top men and women finishers and the first walker. www.nevergiveupever.com
- 27 **KILLINGTON TURKEY TROT** A 5k fun run and walk starts and finishes at Jax's (1667 Killington Rd) and benefits local charities and organizations. www.killingtonturkeytrot.com

- 27 **RUNNING OF THE TURKEYS** Arlington hosts the 19th annual 5k run at the Fisher Elementary School www.runsignup.com
- 27 **ZACK'S PLACE 8TH ANNUAL TURKEY TROT 5K** A 5k running tour of historical Woodstock starting and finishing at the Woodstock Elementary School. www.zacksplacevt.org
- 28 **STRAFFORD NORDIC CENTER TURKEY TROT** The Strafford Nordic Center hosts a 5k race on trails around the center. www.straffordnordicskiing.com
- 28 **TURKEY HANGOVER HILL CLIMB** Mount Snow hosts post-Thanksgiving fun-run up to the summit. www.mountsnow.com
- 29 **OKEMO TROT IT OFF 5K** A 5k run around the base area of Okemo. Proceeds support the Wendy Neal Scholarship Fund and Black River Good Neighbor Services. www.okemo.com

December

- 6 **NEWPORT SANTA RUN** Kingdom Games hosts a 5k run on the Newport Bike Path, Santa costumes are provided. www.dandelionrun.org

Sports Nutrition - continued from page 17

them and different drinks are slightly different. Especially in longer distances like 50ks, or 50 milers, you can't just be drinking water. Any time after an hour of intense exercising, you need to be replacing electrolytes, so those drinks can do some replacement. We used to say we wanted to replace as much liquid as we lost in sweat. The thought now is we don't have to replace quite that much anymore. As our glycogen breaks down, we're also releasing water. Once you get past an hour's time you need to be replacing some of your sodium and potassium and every person is different in terms of how much salt they sweat out. A well-trained athlete won't lose as much sweat or won't lose as much salt in their sweat. You can even make your own energy drink without using the pre-made ones.

VS: Are there any other vitamins and minerals that are important for athletes? Where are some good sources to find them?

AA: The number one nutrient that's concerning for athletes would be iron. It's in the hemoglobin and allows the attachment of oxygen to the red blood cells. If you're not able to attach oxygen to your red blood cells, you're not going to be able to have as much oxygen in your system, causing you to feel tired. As an athlete, if you're building more muscle you're going to need more iron to build the muscle. It's a nutrient that can be difficult to get.

Some of the best sources of iron can be liver and organ meats. When I talk with people about eating meat, I usually encourage them to look for grass-fed meat. There's a lot of great research that shows that grass fed is healthier for you than more industrial meats. This is also a case where supplements like vitamins do help.

Athletes who are vegetarians also have to be careful about getting their iron. There is a lot of iron in leafy greens (like kale) and they're a lot more viable if you

cook them. There are also ways to enhance iron absorption, like cooking in an iron skillet and taking vitamin C.

VS: We're moving into winter sports in Vermont. What are some things that athletes should be watching out for while they train during the colder weather?

AA: The cold can dampen our thirst mechanism and even our hunger mechanism sometimes. When you're exercising, you might not realize that you're depleting yourself. If you're out for a long time, make sure that you bring a snack along with you. It's way healthier and you'll perform better if you're feeding yourself during your exercise. If you go out for a four-hour cross-country ski, don't think about having a big meal when you finish. Instead focus on bringing some of that meal with you. If you're going to eat sugars and sweets, it's best to eat those while you're exercising, but when you're out in the freezing cold eating your cookies, it's not as enjoyable as eating them by a fire with a cup of hot chocolate.

VS: Finally, it's common for many people to eat a snack — a hot chocolate or hot tea with cookies or a desert — right before they go to bed, or even to lie down on the couch right after a big meal. Is this something to avoid and how does this impact the digestive system?

AA: As an athlete – or really anyone but if you are working out you want to be sure you have a good store of energy for your workouts – it is best to eat even size meals through out the day. However. Having a snack in the evening is not problem especially if you have a difficult time eating before you exercise if you exercise first thing in the morning. I know that I certainly feel a need to lie down on the couch after a big meal - your body uses some energy to digest food. I don't believe there is any harm to in it.



GEAR: Patagonia Nano-Air Jacket

It's that time of year. Most of the leaves have found their way to the ground, soon to be covered in snow. The air is crisp, even during daylight hours. Road and trail traffic has quieted as leaf peepers and summer vacationers have retreated. Late fall is the perfect season to get outside a few more times before the first Nor'easter hits, and you'll want to layer up with a few good pieces before hitting the trail.

Enter the Nano-Air, the latest insulating layer from Patagonia. When the team at Patagonia tells you to "put it on and leave it on" they mean it. The rip stop shell fabric and lining offer four-way stretch to allow for unrestricted movement. It's also water repellent in case you come into light precipitation like sprinkles or flurries, but add a waterproof shell in wetter or cold conditions for extra protection and warmth. The Nano-Air's greatest feature is its breathability. Put it on to warm up at the beginning of an ascent and you won't take it off again, even as you heat up. Pair this jacket with a moisture regulating first layer and forget about the sweat and chill cycle when pausing aerobic activity during breaks. Patagonia claims this is the most breathable item on the market and Outside Magazine rated it Gear of the Year for 2015.

The Nano-Air's comfort and breathability come from Patagonia's "FullRange" 100% insulation, a structurally stable synthetic polyester fill that can be paired with shell and liner fabrics that have an open weave. The more open the fabric weave, the greater the air flow. A close fit and brick quilting keep the insulation close and securely in place to enhance function and add style.

Additional features are few, keeping total weight to a minimum, but zippers are well placed and well planned. A wicking storm flap on the full length zipper keeps drafts and moisture out, helping to main-

tain a consistent internal temperature, and the zipper garage keeps it off your chin. The pockets – two side and one chest – are also zippered, low profile and out of the way of packs and harnesses. Adjust the draw cord to keep heat in at the hem. Available in men's and women's jacket and hoody styles so everyone can get warm and stay comfortable. This is a great transition piece, I haven't taken this jacket off since it arrived in the mail this fall and I plan to keep it on all winter. \$249

GEAR: Ibex Wool Aire Hoody

When temperatures dip, nothing provides warmth quite like wool. Harness the naturally insulating properties of wool in Ibex's 90 percent merino-filled Wool Aire Hoody. The Australian merino wool stays warm, even when it gets wet, and stays put with no bunching or shifting between the shell and lining. The wool insulation is blended with 10 percent Inego, a plant based polymer that boasts a 60 percent lower carbon footprint than traditional materials. Ibex even keeps plastic fabric additives to a minimum in the 88 percent recycled rip stop nylon shell, which is treated with DWR for water repellency.

The Wool Aire is available for men and women as a jacket, hoody and vest. Expect a close, athletic cut, with roomy arms in the jacket and hoody to allow a range of motion. The full length zipper zips high up the neck, eliminating drafts even with the hood down, with a garage so it doesn't irritate your face. Two side zip pockets are well placed for harness and pack compatibility and an internal mesh pocket doubles as a stuff sack with a loop for clipping it close at hand.

Pairing the Wool Aire with wool first and/or second layers, depending on how low the temperature dropped, kept me reliably warm and dry on chilly mountain excursions. The wool insulation isn't bulky and looks flattering enough to wear on trips into the city. Sustainable and durable,

this jacket is a great base or outer layering piece to add warmth in New England's unpredictable autumn weather. \$350

BEER: Bent Hill Brewery Coconut Porter

Central Vermont is home to nearly 15 fantastic breweries and just a short scenic drive to another 25 or so in the rest of the state. New operations are popping up across the state at a rate that can be hard to keep up with. Bent Hill Brewery opened its doors to the public this past summer, and invites you to stop by and taste their four flagship offerings, which are also available locally in large format bottles or on draft in and around their hometown of Braintree, Vermont.

Bent Hill's Coconut Porter is a great pick for the cooling weather and shorter days. This dark colored porter has enough toasty smokiness to conjure feelings of warming by a campfire with a mildly nutty and tropical coconut flavor and light body which nod to the recently befallen days of summer. The

coconut is roasted right at the brewery and added during second fermentation. The addition of coconut certainly adds a complexity to the aroma and flavor, but does so subtly so the malts and hops can also make an appearance. At 4.4% ABV, you'll want to enjoy a couple pints of this easy drinking porter.

Bent Hill's flagship beers are distributed locally, but they also brew smaller batches of new recipes and sample them at the brewery, which is a 15-minute scenic jaunt from the interstate. Check them out on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and fill up a growler of your favorite while you're there.

Hilary grew up in southern New England where she developed her love of nature and outdoor recreation, including learning to ski at Rhode Island's only ski hill. After exploring the Rocky and Cascade Mountain ranges, she transplanted to the Green Mountain State where she snowboards, skis, hikes, bikes, kayaks and stokes campfires from her home base in Montpelier.

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Age: 76 | **Residence:** Middlesex | **Family:** Children, Cathy, Betzy, and Coe; grandchildren, Dale, Missy, and Brady

Occupation: Intake specialist/paralegal | **Primary sport:** Triathlon and running



MARSHA BANCROFT STARTED DOING SPRINT TRIATHLONS WHEN SHE WAS IN HER 50S AND WAS NATIONAL CHAMPION FOR HER AGE GROUP IN 1993. SHE STOPPED COMPETING FOR ALMOST TWO DECADES BUT RECENTLY PICKED UP RIGHT WHERE SHE LEFT OFF. FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS SHE HAS FINISHED SECOND IN HER AGE GROUP AT THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP.

VS: When did you start doing triathlons?

MB: I started doing triathlons around 1989. I began running in 1979 when I lived in New Jersey. I had retired from being a professional horse person and I wasn't getting enough exercise. I started with 10Ks and after a year I began to train for marathons. I ran marathons for quite a few years before getting injured and that's when I started cross-training, which was a perfect lead into triathlons. I did triathlons for several years and was the National Champion for the 55-59 age group in 1993.

I stopped doing triathlons for a while, but I continued to do road races in distances up to half marathons. I had a lot of trouble with my feet, which kept me from doing the longer distances. When I moved to Vermont I was still running but then I got divorced and stopped racing for a while. When I got my paralegal certificate I also decided to change my lifestyle and began training again.

VS: Could you tell us about your trip to the Nationals this year?

MB: It was fun, but there was one glitch. The swim course goes under a bridge and for some reason there was an enormous current when I went through. I'm not a timid swimmer. I used to be a swimming counselor and I swam in the ocean as a kid, so it wasn't fear. I just wasn't making any progress. I wasn't going to stop, but it was a struggle for a while. One of the kayakers directed me to go over to the left and I was able to complete the swim, but I was kind of tired and disheartened by the experience. When you have that much

expectation and something takes the wind out of your sails, it's tough. My bike ride was okay, but my run wasn't as good as usual although it was faster than the woman who beat me. Still, it was an awesome experience.

VS: What was your most memorable race?

MB: The marathons were probably the ones that meant the most to me because they took so much time and effort. I would have kept doing them if not for injury. I raced with two other women from my age group in the Avon International Marathon for Women in Ottawa in 1981. Avon was sponsoring marathons to encourage women to race as an incentive for the International Olympic Committee to accept women for marathons. Two of us were running together and the third was ahead, but she was slowing down so she ended up waiting for us. We decided to hold hands so we'd be clocked at the same time. They took a beautiful picture of us and asked if they could use it to publicize their next marathon in San Francisco. We gave our permission, but suggested that they should sponsor us and pay for us to go to that marathon and they did. It was an awesome race with awesome friends and our support people came out as well. I finished in 3:16:14, which was my best time ever. That was very exciting and I think it was my most fun race. I felt wonderful all the way through and I never felt that I was stressing myself.

VS: Do you also do winter sports?

MB: I haven't competed, but I ski downhill and cross-country and at this tender age, I'm trying to do some backcountry

skiing. I ski downhill with my family at Mad River Glen; both kids and grandkids, but I can't keep up with the five-year-old any more. I've skied there since 1960 and I'm a co-op member.

VS: Tell us about your work with Disability Rights Vermont.

MB: We're part of the national Protection and Advocacy system and we provide legal services for people who have concerns with their treatment and rights violations. I do intake so I get to do a lot of active listening. I love my job; it's very rewarding.

VS: In addition you're on the board of the Brain Injury Association of Vermont. Can you talk a bit about that?

MB: I'm trying to cut back a little on that responsibility. For a while I was president of the board and on the state Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council. I've helped out with the annual Walk for Thought, but when I turned 75 I decided to start cutting back. For ten years I facilitated an evening brain injury support group, but now I co-facilitate a day group. This is a demanding job and my racing is demanding, as well. I also recently moved from my house to a home-share and that has been a little stressful, although in the long run I think it will give me more time.

VS: How do you find time to train?

MB: I run or walk every morning; usually running four times a week and walking three times a week. I find I run more comfortably and happily if I do it less often. At the moment I'm in a letdown period because of moving and the end of the tri-season, but I take spin

classes at least twice a week and I swim in the early morning on days that I walk or do a short run. When it gets warm, I try to do longer outdoors bike rides and open water swimming, usually at Wrightsville Reservoir on the weekends.

VS: Is it disappointing not to have more competitors in your age group?

MB: Yes, because it means I have to beat myself all the time and that's hard, particularly at my age. I usually race in the Northfield 5K and I've only been beaten once since I started running again. This year my two 5K times before the triathlon were better than last year, but I don't know if I can keep that up. The Montpelier Mile was an exception. Last year I broke the record by some astronomical margin and I didn't do as well this year.

I know I'll deteriorate as I age, but I still want to do better and it would be nice to see more competition.

— Phyl Newbeck

Phyl Newbeck lives in Jericho with her partner, Bryan, and two cats. In the winter she alternates skiing with Nordic skating, while the summers find her on her road bike, swimming or kayaking. She is the author of Virginia Hasn't Always Been for Lovers: Interracial Marriage and the Case of Richard and Mildred Loving.



Age: 67 | **Residence:** Craftsbury Common | **Family:** Wife, Mabel; son, Nico | **Occupation:** Retired educator | **Primary sport:** Kayaking



OUR YEARS AGO, DON HOUGHTON VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST AN OUTDOOR SWIM IN HIS KAYAK. NOW, HE'S A REGULAR AT EVENTS ACROSS THE NORTHEAST KINGDOM AND HAS EVEN TRAVELLED TO ARIZONA TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE AT AN OUTDOOR SWIM. WHEN NOT ACCOMPANYING SWIMMERS, HE AND HIS WIFE ENJOY PADDLING ON THE MANY LAKES IN THE KINGDOM, BUT THEY'D LIKE TO BRANCH OUT WITH A TRIP ON THE NORTHERN FOREST CANOE TRAIL.

VS: When did you start kayaking?

DH: When my son was young we bought a canoe for family outings. Maybe 12 or 15 years ago I bought my wife a kayak for her birthday and then I bought one for myself. A kayak is so easy to put on top of your car and we have so many lakes here. We both enjoy getting out on the water.

VS: How did you get started as a kayaker for outdoor swims?

DH: I answered a call four years ago from Phil White, who was looking for kayakers to accompany swimmers at one of his Kingdom Games events. I was just curious. I didn't know Phil or anything about the swims, but I sent in my name. The event had three-, six- and ten-mile options and I wasn't sure I could kayak ten miles, but Phil paired me with a high school swimmer from Ithaca, N.Y. who was doing the ten-mile swim.

I went to Newport the night before the swim for the big dinner and met her parents and brother and we instantly hit it off. I'd never done anything like that before, but her family appreciated that I was asking the right questions and showing proper attention to her needs. The next day she jumped into the water and finished in an incredible time. She was first among all female swimmers.

I've kept up a relationship with her. I've accompanied her twice at the Memphremagog event, as well as at some other lake swims. She didn't win every time, but she's always competitive and she's a lively, pleasant and impressive young athlete. These swimmers are really amazing. They do 60 strokes a

minute for four hours. They don't kick; they just pull themselves with their arms. I got very enthusiastic about my role and the fact that I could be out on the water and doing something useful for my swimmer. I've definitely gotten the bug.

VS: Tell us about your role in these events?

DH: Before the race I talk to the swimmer and determine what their needs are. I'm responsible for direction and they need to tell me which side they want me to be on or whether they want to follow me. I'm also responsible for feeding the swimmer. My Ithaca swimmer had both water bottles and protein drink bottles and wanted to drink every 15 minutes so I would alert her when it was time and throw her the bottles on a rope. In 20 seconds she'd be done and I'd reel them back in. It's a big responsibility. Every swimmer has a different formula and some are more complicated than others.

VS: Have you accompanied other swimmers, as well?

DH: At this point I've accompanied 15 to 20 other swimmers. Sometimes it's ongoing and sometimes it's just one time. It's nice when you get to work with the same swimmer because you get to know them, build their trust and learn what they expect of you. There's not a lot of talking when they're on the water so you need to know what they need ahead of time.

VS: Have you travelled beyond the Kingdom accompanying swimmers?

DH: In May I travelled with Phil to the

S.C.A.R. Swim Challenge in Arizona. It's a four-day swim for a cumulative distance of 41.7 miles. It was absolutely beautiful and you kayak from one dam to another accompanying the swimmers. I had three different swimmers for the first three days, but the fourth day was 17 miles and I got assigned a relay team. They were in a pontoon boat and took turns swimming. Two of us were supposed to accompany them, but the other kayaker had a physical problem and needed to get out of the water so it was a very long day for me — but I'm thinking of going back next year.

VS: Do you also kayak for fun?

DH: Absolutely. My wife and I like going out to area lakes. Our favorite is Green River Reservoir because of the quiet, the loons and the fall foliage. We're Quakers so we enjoy silence and the silence there is just incredible. I'm really grateful to Phil because he helped us discover other area lakes we hadn't been to before. Some summer when things aren't so busy we'd like to go out on the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

VS: You may be retired, but it looks like you have a number of volunteer positions.

DH: I've been on the board of the Craftsbury Town Library for a number of years. We're very proud of our little library. I'm also president of the Craftsbury Historical Society. I used to do photography for a living and that's what got me interested in the town's history and how I got corralled into being president. I've been digitizing old photographs to make them more available.

VS: I understand you're also a volunteer loon watcher.

DH: Eric Hanson, the biologist for the state's loon program, lives here and assigns different lakes to volunteers. We've monitored four or five lakes every year and I'm happy to say that the loon numbers are improving.

VS: Do you enjoy other sports?

DH: I work part-time at the Craftsbury Outdoors Center in the winter at the ski shop and I do a lot of walking. It's not a sport, but I also spend a lot of my spare time playing guitar. I've done that since I was 14 and now that I have more time I like to go out into the community. I like to sing with people, not to people and I organize what I call Houghtonnays. I sing at the local retirement home every month and pass out song books so the residents can sing along with me as best they can. The retired Vice President of Sterling College plays the banjo. We harmonize together and have been getting out and organizing events. Since his name is Houston we call ourselves How Two.

VS: You must really enjoy your role in these swims to keep volunteering.

DH: I love being out on the water. Phil knows that I'm committed and I'll keep doing what I can to keep supporting these swimmers. It's a wide open world that I'm just learning about, but I'm enthusiastic about playing my little role. For me it's pure pleasure. I just love doing it.

— Phyl Newbeck



news briefs

Pomainsville Wildlife Management Area sees broad expansion

PITTSFORD, Vt. – A central Vermont wildlife management area popular with birders and waterfowl hunters has nearly doubled in size, thanks to a donation of land by the Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO).

The Pomainsville Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Pittsford has added two sections of land that will increase the total area from 360 acres to 572 acres. The additions include a small section of floodplain forest along Otter Creek and a large parcel of softwood forest on the east side of Route 7.

The WMA was originally purchased by Ducks Unlimited in 2004 and was donated to Vermont Fish & Wildlife a year later. The lands were purchased to create a forested buffer along Otter Creek and to restore 46 acres of formerly drained wetlands, the largest wetland reserve project ever completed in Vermont at that time.

"The grasslands at Pomainsville WMA are beloved by birders looking to spot grassland birds such as bobolinks," said Jane Lazorchak, land acquisition coordinator for Vermont Fish & Wildlife. "The new additions to the WMA include a large area of important deer wintering habitat, which also serves as a travel corridor for wildlife looking to cross Route 7. There is also seasonally flooded forest along Otter Creek that supports nesting wood ducks and other wetland wildlife such as otters."

The restoration project along Otter Creek has turned what were at one time seasonally flooded hayfields into productive wetlands and natural fish ponds. The ponds fill with water when Otter Creek floods in the spring, bringing in fish that use the ponds as spawning grounds before returning to the main flow of the creek. The young fish remain relatively protected from predators as they grow in the ponds and are able to return to the main flow of Otter Creek during the next flood cycle.

The increase in fish provided by these natural ponds benefits local anglers, and additionally serves to keep mosquito numbers down as the fish prey on mosquitoes and their larvae.

"These ponds are just incredible in terms of the amount of fish they produce for the Otter Creek system," said Shawn Good, fisheries biologist for Vermont Fish & Wildlife. "We sampled the ponds again this fall and found that they were once again loaded with northern pike, along with many other fish species."

The new lands were purchased by VELCO in 2004 as part of a mitigation agreement with the understanding that they would turn the lands over to the Fish & Wildlife Department within ten years. "VELCO has once again been a fantastic partner in helping to conserve wildlife habitat in Vermont," said Lazorchak.

Second backcountry skiing forum announced

ROCHESTER, Vt. – On Thursday, Nov. 6 at 6 p.m., the doors will open for the Second Annual Vermont Backcountry Forum & Celebration at the Pierce Hall Community Center in Rochester. Co-hosted by the new Vermont Backcountry Alliance (VTBC), its parent organization Catamount Trail Association (CTA), as well as the Rochester Area Sports Trails Alliance (RASTA), the event aims to involve Vermont's growing backcountry community in discussion around Vermont's backcountry future.

A raffle, potluck food, cash bar, live music and multi-media visuals will round out the evening. Proceeds from the event will support the management of new backcountry zones in the Rochester region.

"We've come along way since last year's forum," says VTBC volunteer Brian Mohr. "It's exciting to see the VTBC and CTA evolving to be the voice for Vermont's broader backcountry community."

The forum will feature brief presentations and seek input around current projects, including the results of a spring 2014 VT backcountry survey, the latest draft of the Vermont Backcountry Ethics, and overviews of several new and existing backcountry zones. RASTA is spearheading two of these new backcountry zones, and has a proposal with the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) to develop and maintain new backcountry skiing and riding zones near Brandon Gap. This proposal is moving through an approval process, and RASTA is confident that management of these zones will begin in 2015. RASTA has also reached an agreement with the owner of a large area of conserved land in Braintree, Vt., where work will begin this fall.

"Our hope is that these could be models to help the VTBC and CTA drive similar projects around the state," says Angus McCusker, a volunteer with RASTA and member of the VTBC Working Group. "We'll need lots of volunteer and financial support, however, to see these through."

This summer, RASTA was recognized as a pilot CTA/VTBC chapter, a possible first step toward the CTA becoming chapter-based organizationally – similar to how the Vermont Mountain Bike Association (VMBA) and the Green Mountain Club (GMC) are organized.

VTBC is also working closely with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to help update land management strategies to better accommodate backcountry skiing and snowboarding on Vermont state lands. Anyone interested in getting involved or supporting the VTBC is encouraged to join or donate to the CTA, which will be accepting grants and donations in support of relevant backcountry skiing and riding initiatives in Vermont.



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Ratchet it up a notch! - continued from page 9

to back up in fear, putting us back on our skis or board and out of position. That's why our sport is so much harder than others. We have to learn how to move with all these external forces pulling at us...Try to dribble a basketball leaning backwards, or playing tennis leaning back. It doesn't work. It's simple ergonomics. So, the first lesson to learn is to keep forward and find that point of balance on the slope."

THE PHYSICS OF SKIING:

If Egan weren't a wizard on skis, it's not hard to imagine him being an instructor of physics. When breaking down the fundamentals of the sport, you are effectively in his classroom:

"The thing that's different in skiing is that we have free energy (rather than propelling ourselves); it's just gravity pulling us down the hill. We have to learn how to control that energy to manage speed... The speed at which you travel is dictated by the speed by which you move. The basic principle is to 'move fast, go slow; move slow, go fast.' Think of the difference of a downhill skier and a slalom skier. The downhiller barely moves his or her body and goes 80 mph; the slalom skier is bouncing all over the place to kill speed (to be able to make the turns)... If you want to change your velocity, you have to change your body position; moving eats up the energy created by the forces of gravity and momentum."

Got it?

The trick, of course, is to keep heading straight down steep terrain and be quick enough with your feet to check your speed without getting out of control. That takes practice and training.

Jumping:

One key in jumping is transferring weight from one foot to another, and using the jump to cut your speed and momentum, Egan explains. In running, you lead from one foot to the other and launch jumps in the same way. In skiing open terrain, we should think of it like running down a hill. Egan explained that when launching a jump he will often push off sharply on one foot at lift off to cut energy and speed. Then he uses the air as a turn setting up his legs to quickly extend at the last second with his opposite foot hitting slightly before the other. The leg extension absorbs some of the impact and energy, thus also cutting speed, while the landing is already heading against the grain rather than carrying the speed forward in a straight line.

"You need to think of the air as a turn that took place not on the ground,"

Egan says.

There are exceptions. "I'm not a big fan of two-footed takeoffs or landings, but if you're in a freestyle competition and you're popping backflips off of man-made jumps, then obviously that's different."

"The difficulty (in getting air) is that most people see the beginning and end of the jump," he said, "but they can't visualize what's happening in the middle of the jump. The transfer of weight from one foot to the other still happens in the air, which allows you to get set and stomp the landing to maintain control."

Quick feet and weight transfer

Gravity and momentum never stop, Egan notes, which is why some skiers lose control and then have to react. In the learning phase, Egan advises, just stop. Start fresh, clear your head, and get it back together.

A really good skier can recover because they have quick feet, Egan explains. They can make the necessary weight transfer from foot to foot quickly enough to recover balance, kill speed and regain control.

As for how to move, or teaching specific techniques, Egan is straightforward. "You have to assume that the human body knows how to move. There is nothing new in movement I can teach you. You walk without thinking. You run without thinking. You get milk out of the refrigerator without thinking. If your brain starts trying to control muscle memory, it'll just mess it up. You can't think as fast as muscle memory should react, it just won't happen."

The task at hand, Egan says, is to relax the mind so the muscles react naturally.

One of the most helpful aids to accomplish that, Egan says, is to watch yourself ski or ride on a video with an instructor offering pointers. Without such aids, Egan said, it's difficult for the average recreational skier to put in enough time skiing or riding to make the leap.

One answer, Egan said, is taking a half-day or day lessons with video instruction from instructors at that upper level of skiing. "I love working with people who are jazzed about getting better at the sport," Egan says, "we end up learning a lot more about skiing than the person ever imagines, and correcting some bad habits, but mostly we build confidence through a better understanding of the forces at work and how to handle them. With less fear, it's a lot more fun."

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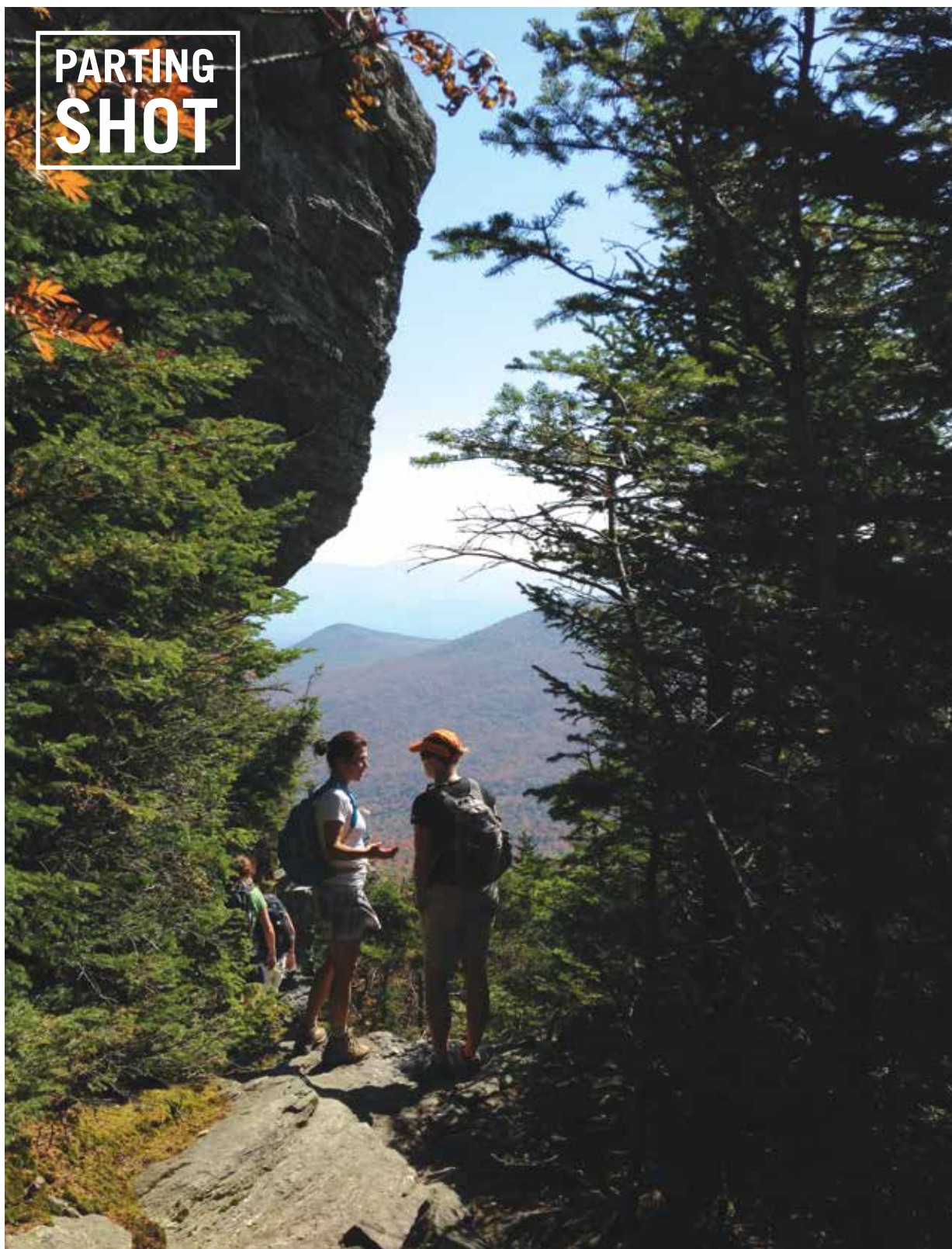
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PARTING SHOT



Chutes and ladders

The Long Trail south from Mount Mansfield to Taylor Lodge, and up from Stowe Mountain Resort on the Cliff Trail, is interspersed with a series of ladders that negotiate cliff bands and narrow chutes. The trail, which can be icy and wet at times depending on the season, offers thrills and great views for those who prefer a little adventure in their hikes.

Photos by Angelo Lynn



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