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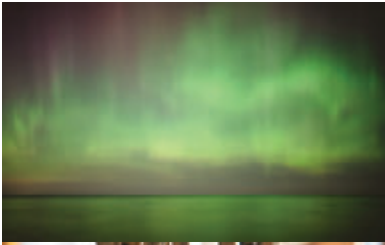
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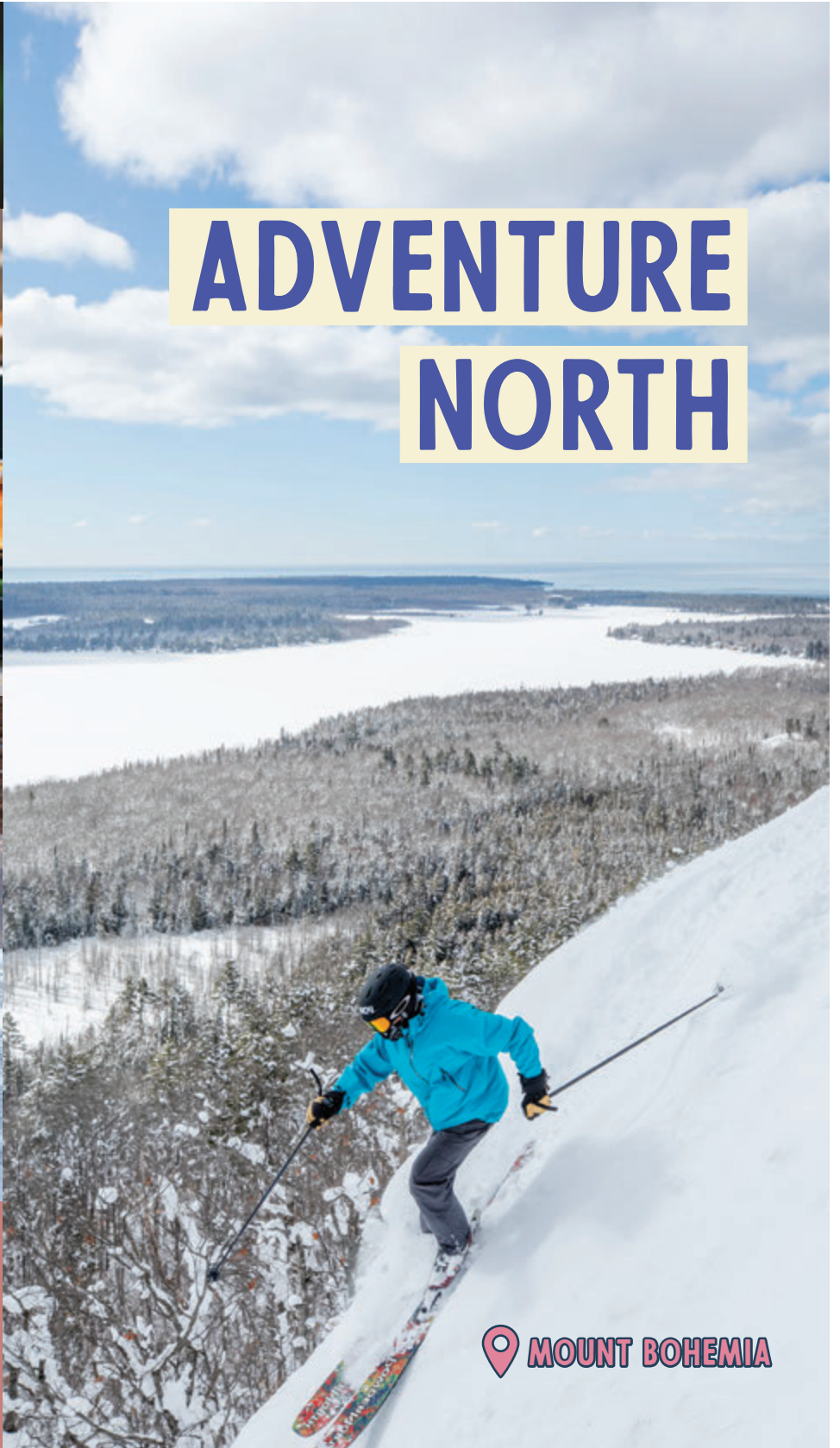
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Beautiful & Unique, Keweenaw Hikes

22



Improving Fall Color Photography

48



COVID Even Now

44



What's New in E-Bikes

42



Susie Chan's Treadmill Tribulation!

14



Learn to Love Trekking Poles

33

Featured in Your October 2024 Issue ...

- 6 **The Front Page: Jon's Bio** Bruce Steinberg
- 8 **Silent Alarm: Behind the Scenes of the Pelican River Project: Out-of-State Group Influencing Wisconsin's Natural Resource Policies** Michael McFadzen
- 10 **Silent Sports Magazine QR Code Connects Race Event Calendar**
- 11 **How the 2024 Winter Olympics in the USA was Won** Luke Bodensteiner
- 14 **Whoa! The 12-Hour World Record Run — on a Treadmill?!** Susie Chan
- 18 **Classic Hikes in the Keweenaw** Austin Gongs
- 22 **Hiking the Wonders Under — Ground** Pamela Christensen

COVER STORIES

- 26 **Before the Snow Flies ... It's not too late to take dryland training into a successful season on snow** David Chamberlain
- 29 **Iffy About Roller Skis? They can help break bad habits, improve efficiency & speed, and reduce soreness. Truth!** Jon Oestreich

About that October Issue Cover

That's **David Chamberlain** with **Jan Guenther** in pursuit and their rollerskiing version of a break from working at Gear West, taking advantage of some flats to work on technique. Photo by Erin Kelly.

Photo Insert: Coach **Dave Slette** leads a group of 12 to 14-year-old boys and girls on Tahkodah Wake Road as part of **CXC Dream Camp 2024**.

These skiers are working on synchronized weight transfer timing as part of classic roller ski training over distance. Photo courtesy of Jon Oestreich.

- 33 **Trekking Poles: From Skepticism to a Silver Bullet** Andrea Larson
- 36 **Cyclocross Training: Using Upper Midwest Events** Corey Coogan Cisek
- 39 **And They Golf Here Too: At the Northwood's Newest Silent Sports Destination** Chris Schotz
- 42 **Understanding E-Bikes: The Power to Keep You Pedaling On!** Scott Cole
- 44 **COVID, Long COVID & Our Community of Athletes: Why it Still Matters** Kierstin Kloeckner
- 48 **Improving Your Fall Color Photos** Dave Foley
- 50 **The Back Page: Lost in the fog, a canoeing misadventure** Dave Foley

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OCTOBER 2024 • VOLUME 41 • NUMBER 4

PUBLISHER

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Founder

Greg Marr (1951 - 2003)

CIRCULATION COORDINATOR

For circulation information, please call the Waupaca office at 715-258-4360

ADVERTISING

Northwestern and Southern Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Eastern and Western United States

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715-305-4345
pbehselich@mmclocal.com

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Ali Garrigan

ADVERTISE

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Silent Sports™ (ISSN 1543-3005) is published monthly by Multi Media Channels, LLC, 970 Furman Drive, Waupaca WI, 54981. Periodicals Postage Paid at Waupaca, WI and additional mail offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Silent Sports, PO Box 408, Waupaca, WI 54981; 715-258-4360 The contents of *Silent Sports™* are copyright 2024 by Multi Media Channels, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of the publisher or editor, is strictly prohibited. Silent Sports™ is a registered trade name.

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The Front Page

Jon's Bio

When contributors submit their first story to the magazine, I ask for a bio from the writer. This becomes the opening Editor's Note, written in third person because I don't want it to appear as though the writer is bragging, especially since this is done at my request. These bios are supposed to be limited to a word count of 50 to 120.

When **Jon Oestreich** emailed his bio, I saw its size, used my Word Count function, and got: Three hundred and seventy-two words! (I wrote that out here instead of using "372" to emphasize how long that is.)

Sighing and huffing, I cut the word count. But every cut made me wince. I emailed Jon to see if he was okay with the 148 words. Even so, I already knew I was not okay with it. That is why the uncut Editor's Note on Jon Oestreich is this issue's Front Page.

Editor's Note: Jon Oestreich skied 7 Birkies and 2 Korties, including 1 year as a Birkie Warrior. Jon is a United States Ski and Snowboard Level 200 Cross Country Ski Coach. He was the 2024 and is the 2025 U16 and U18 CXC Great Lakes Division Canadian Nationals Head Coach. He is President of the Wausau Nordic Ski Club. He volunteers as an instructor during the free adult lessons each year in January and helps coach the Wausau Nordic United ski team. He was a volunteer at Wirth Park when The Loppet hosted the 2024 World Cup. Jon is the Outdoor Adventure Guide



Jon Oestreich

at The Landing where he leads members on outdoor adventures around Wisconsin in all four seasons. In the 20th century, Jon studied political science and history as a foreign exchange student in Norway at Numedal Idretts Folkehøgskole. In Norway, he earned Norwegian Ski Federation ski instructor certification in all ski disciplines: cross-country, downhill, Telemark, and ski jumping. At the 1994 Lillehammer Olympics, he was a Telemark ski team member for the cultural Telemark ski shows at the Hafjell Ski Resort venue. Jon logged over 180 ski days per year when he worked two ski seasons as a full-time Nordic, Telemark, alpine, and snowshoe ski instructor at Beaver Creek Nordic Center in Colorado as a Professional Ski Instructors of America (Rocky Mountain Division) Level 3 in Nordic Downhill/Telemark and PSIA-RM Level 2 in cross-country, alpine, and snowshoe. In 1998 and 2000, he was World Champion on the Synchronized Telemark Ski Team representing Vail/Beaver Creek Ski School. When he lived in Duluth, he was the downhill ski head coach at Duluth Central High School. Jon was born and raised in Wausau, WI, and has been on skis since he could walk. He learned to Nordic ski in the backyard at the American Legion golf course, now Tribute, and at his family's Christmas tree farm. A multi-sport high school student athlete (soccer, basketball, track), Jon skied his first cross-country ski race when in his mid-30s at Cable, WI, with his wife, Beth. The two started in the last row of the last wave of the Kortelopet and never looked back. Jon thanks his parents who introduced him to a healthy, active, outdoor lifestyle.

Holy-Cow-Tony-Wise-Jessie-Diggins-Herman-"Jackrabbit"-Smith-Johannsen! For a story on page 29 titled *Iffy About Roller Skis?* They can help break bad habits, improve efficiency & speed, and reduce soreness. Truth! — what in Jon's bio would you delete?

I'm going with nothing.

Bruce



Left to right: Jon Oestreich, Beth Oestreich, and Mike Cavanaugh as the 2022 Birkie Warriors. Jon said, "I was training my tail off to get into Wave 1, but on June 7, 2021, I had a gravel bike accident, dislocating my shoulder and some small bones, and tore my bicep. The doctor said it would take 6 months to get active again. I decided to go from hard-core Birkie training mode to Birkie Warrior mode. My wife and Mike were interested. We applied and got in. It was so much fun and a totally different and great experience. I'd like to do it again!"

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN BIRKEBEINER SKI FOUNDATION (C).

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Behind the Scenes of the Pelican River Forest Project:

Out-of-State Group Influencing Wisconsin's Natural Resource Policies

The Pelican River Forest Project is a landmark achievement for Wisconsin's conservation efforts. With the dedication of volunteers, support from the Conservation Fund, the Department of Natural Resources, and Governor Evers, nearly 70,000 acres of forest and wetland will be preserved forever. This extensive area offers a range of silent sports such as paddle sports, fishing, and hiking, with plans for mountain biking and cross-country skiing.

Not to overshadow the success of the Pelican River Forest, but the behind-the-scenes story is rather unsettling.

Outsiders on the Inside

The Texas-based **American Stewards of Liberty (ASL)**, reportedly influenced by Wisconsin's U.S. Representative **Tom Tiffany**, worked to challenge the Pelican River Forest project, as detailed in an article by the *Wisconsin Examiner*, a nonpartisan, non-political news outlet. ASL's activities include attempts to *sabotage the Federal Forest Legacy funding* intended for the project.

Working in concert with Tiffany, ASL collaborated with officials from Forest, Langlade, and Oneida counties to obstruct the Pelican River Forest project. Tiffany, who is a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, supports aggressive logging and mineral extraction practices. ASL purports to advocate for "property rights," but conservation groups argue that their interpretation is flawed. ASL is anti-public lands and strives to restrict landowners from entering into conservation easements that protect lands from logging and mining.

The ASL/Tiffany connection is not new. Tiffany was a speaker at the shadowy group's conference opposing the Biden 30x30 plan, which aims to conserve 30%



A paddler enjoys the solitude of the Pelican River Forest. This project preserved 70,000 acres of forest land across Langlade, Forest, and Oneida Counties.

PHOTO BY JAY BRITAIN.

of the country's land and water by 2030. Tiffany also supported ASL's efforts to *block the Securities and Exchange Commission* from creating a rule that would allow **Natural Asset Companies (NACs)** to be established. NACs would operate similarly to carbon credits, allowing landowners to capitalize on the work that nature does every day, providing a method to trade ecosystem services as commodities. ASL falsely claimed that NACs would take away landowner rights.

ASL Infiltrates County Boards/ Oneida Clean Water Action Fights Back

As Forest and Oneida Counties update their **Comprehensive Land Use Plans**, Tiffany and ASL have been engaging with county oversight committees. These plans, which are updated every decade,

outline land use priorities. The 2013 plan emphasized conserving large tracts of woodland and county forests. However, a draft of the new plan includes language suggesting increased development using Managed Forest Law lands to boost the tax base and mineral extraction. This has raised concerns among residents that future development will not emphasize natural resource preservation and recreational development. ASL's recommended land use plans would have a devastating long-term impact on natural resources and recreation.

"I don't think that the plan they're pushing is what the people of northern Wisconsin want," said **Eric Rempala**, an Oneida County Clean Waters Action (OCCWA) member. "Our group is working collaboratively with the Planning and Development Committee but will contest

extraction [mining] language in the Plan.”

One of the recommended changes in the draft Plan is to *Allow for necessary metallic mining through the County's non-metallic mining and metallic mining exploration, bulk sampling, and mining ordinance while balancing the interest of County residents.* OCCWA swung back hard on this and other proposed changes that favor mining. The mining issue in Oneida County was settled in 2018 when residents overwhelmingly voted against it in a referendum.

Oneida County has become a hot spot for environmental issues according to Rempala. “Proposed mining, local PFAS contamination, the Pelican River project, and now ASL are controversial topics,” he said. “ASL is trying to get a foothold in Wisconsin. They work with small towns and counties who may not understand their focus.”

ASL may have jumped into the Pelican River Project due to known minerals in the property. “OCCWA is working to educate county board members to make them aware of what’s happening,” Rempala shared with *Silent Sports*.

Rempala was present at a Forest County Board meeting when Tiffany floated the idea of a pilot program *to cede national forest lands to the county to allow development and logging as a means of growing revenue for the county*, which is known to be struggling financially.

Gathering Waters: ASL is Not Good for Wisconsin

Charles Carlin, Director of Strategic Initiatives for Gathering Waters, a non-profit dedicated to promoting Wisconsin's land trusts and conserving natural areas, believes that recent changes do not reflect the desires of Oneida County residents. “This small group of Oneida County leaders,” Carlin said, “seems to be taking direction from the anti-conservation group, American Stewards of Liberty, which undermines responsible land and water stewardship. Groups like ASL do not understand Wisconsin values. Wisconsin is home to conservation champions who recognize that caring for our land and water boosts economic opportunities while ensuring clean air, water, and wild places for future generations. Beyond their environmental and economic contributions,

these areas are cherished for their natural beauty, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Planning efforts must consider natural resources and incorporate conservation strategies.”

The Pelican River Forest represents the largest conservation project in Wisconsin's history, preserving 70,000 acres of forest land across Langlade, Forest, and Oneida Counties. After extensive negotiations among state, local, and federal officials, a conservation easement was established in January 2024 to protect the land permanently. The Pelican River Forest will eventually be a recreational haven, supporting activities such as hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, paddle sports, fishing, and hunting.

ASL's Extreme Positions and Bizarre Connections

Aaron Weiss, Deputy Director of the Center for Western Priorities, has researched ASL's activities. He notes that ASL's opposition to conservation easements is part of a broader strategy to restrict landowner options and prevent protective measures for natural areas. ASL's tactics often involve spreading misinformation to persuade rural counties to reject conservation efforts and funding that would protect local landscapes and enhance public land access and recreation.

Henry Redman of the *Wisconsin Examiner* highlights ASL's track record of obstructing conservation efforts nationwide. “In Nebraska,” Redman said, “the group influenced state law changes to allow counties to block private conservation easements.”

ASL also *opposes the expansion of National Monuments, the Endangered Species Act, and President Biden's 30x30 plan*, according to the Center for Western Priorities. They are also a key player in Project 2025, which seeks fundamental right-wing changes in almost all aspects of public policy. Even former **President Trump** has disavowed Project 2025.

ASL's connections extend to controversial figures and groups. Member **Trent Loos**, a conspiracy theorist and participant of the **Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Occupation**, has ties to extremist organizations such as the **Oath Keepers** and **QAnon** which highlight the group's broader political ties. ASL is also

supported by extreme politicians, including Representatives **Lauren Boebert** and **Paul Gosar**.

Led by wife-and-husband team **Margaret and Dan Byfield**, ALS has a 501(c)(3) status, which should *restrict it from engaging in political action as witnessed in Wisconsin.* Its campaign against Biden's 30x30 plan violates federal rules for tax-exempt groups by lobbying elected representatives. **Accountable.US**, a group that performs research on special interest groups, has filed an IRS complaint alleging the organization is involved in lobbying work. According to tax filings, in 2020, ASL spent over 94 percent of its budget on the Byfields' salaries. Charity Navigator gives the organization a “poor” rating based on accountability and finance criteria.

Despite ASL's efforts, polls show that a majority of Americans support public land protection, contrasting sharply with ASL's agenda.

Funding for ASL funding comes from several organizations, including the American Petroleum Institute, the Western Energy Alliance, and Protect the Harvest, the latter founded by oil magnate **Forrest Lucas**. Lucas is known for supporting controversial figures and causes, such as securing a pardon for public land arsonists **Steven and Dwight Hammond** from former President Trump.

This writer contacted the offices of Rep. Tom Tiffany and the ASL regarding this article a week before the submission deadline. The messages requesting a response were not returned.

Get Involved at the Local Level

ASL is not done in Wisconsin. The *anti-conservation group named Wisconsin in its 2024 strategic plan*, stating it wants to stop federal funding of the recently established Pelican River Forest. “In Wisconsin, [the plan] is to stop the federal funding of a conservation easement that will permanently restrict 56,000 acres of forest land from being fully utilized,” according to Redman.

To counteract these efforts, you should engage with local land use committees and stay informed about your county board's activities. Silent sports and natural resource enthusiasts have a role in safeguarding our state lands and recreational spaces. ♡



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KAYAK, SUP & DRAGON



Tom Kelly, on stage far left, moderating a 2034 bid press conference. PHOTO MELISSA MAJCHRZAK.

How the 2034 Winter Olympics in the USA was Won

Luke Bodensteiner

On Feb. 10, 2034, the world's greatest winter sports athletes will convene once again in Utah for the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. In doing so, Utah will join Lake Placid and St. Moritz as the only places to host the Games twice.

The angles around *how* the Games were awarded for a second time to Utah, with the nod coming 22 years after its successful 2002 Games, are many and varied.

Starting Early With Strength

Foremost, a Foundation was born from the profits of the 2002 Games, charged with maintaining its legacy venues for the following 20 years and motivated to repeat the performance of the '02 Games to re-endow those venues in perpetuity. Next, a community formed comprised of highly experienced officials from the '02 Games, and from the three sport national

governing bodies that call Utah home — skiing and snowboarding, speedskating and biathlon — well-schooled in the Olympic bid process, international sports politics, and the business of organizing the world's biggest sporting events. Also, local communities came together that had seen the '02 Games serve as a catalyst that transformed a once-sleepy state into one of the hottest economies in the country, with a staggering 80% public approval for the State's efforts to bring the Games back.

And throw in the bevy of local Olympians and Paralympians past and present, who live throughout Utah's Wasatch Mountains, and who are highly engaged in Utah's sport culture, along with the hundreds of international elite athletes who train in Utah every year.

The draw is irresistible!

Making Financial Sense

More interesting, perhaps, are the reasons

why the Games are coming back to Utah, and the key **Midwest connections** that have played a role in its return.

In 2014, following the staggering financial cost avalanche of Sochi, reportedly north of \$50 billion in expenses, and a forthcoming bid process in which Beijing, with virtually no winter sports facilities or culture, would be its only viable candidate, the International Olympic Committee called for a re-direct. Accordingly, its **Agenda 2020** aspired to be a more sustainable model for the Games, one which would:

- Minimize the need to build new facilities.
- Enhance the transparency of and accountability around the organization of the Games.
- And one that would shape a new bid process, built around consultation, and a continuous dialog with potential host communities, with the goal of finding mutually beneficial ways that possible

hosts and the Olympic movement could collaborate.

Having maintained its facilities from the 2002 Games at an international standard and having hosted hundreds of international events at those facilities since 2002, Utah was emboldened to assemble a plan for a future Games that would require no new permanent venues to be constructed for a future Games. While the budget drafted for a future Games would still be measured in the billions (\$2.83 billion in 2034, to be exact), it would be roughly the same as what was spent in 2002, 32 years earlier. And no new permanent construction would mean far less environmental impact.

Draw of the People

Through its Agenda 2020, the IOC also called for gender equality and a focus on diversity in the Games. Thanks in part to its recent in-migration, Utah has become a rapidly changing state. It is increasingly diverse, with around a 25% minority share of the population and nearly 10% of its residents born outside the USA. Over 140 languages are spoken by children in Utah schools. In winter-sport programs in Utah, nearly 20% of the participants in entry-level programs are minority participants. *And Utah now has the youngest population in the nation with an average age of*

37. This combination of youth and diversity is desirable to the IOC as it seeks new audiences.

Utah's **living legacy** from the 2002 Games was perhaps the most compelling to the IOC. Not only do Utah's winter venues host a regular cadence of international competitions, hosting nearly 250 international events in the past 20 years, but also Utah's youth are participating in winter sports programs in droves, with thousands of kids taking part in programs spanning every single Winter Olympic sport.

And then there are the local connections.

The effort to bring the Games back to Utah has been a sustained, long-term community effort, requiring not only the compilation of a 5,000-page bid file, contracts with 13 venues and 21,000 hotel rooms, and guarantees from the Utah State Legislature. It also required a prevalent winter sports culture and a demonstrated capacity to reliably host top-level international events across the spectrum of winter sports. Venues such as the Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, which has hosted five World Cup and Junior World Championship events in both able-bodied and adaptive cross-country skiing and biathlon over the last eight winters, have given the International Olympic Community assurance that Utah has the



Speedskater and 4-time Olympian Catherine Raney-Norman, July 9, 2024, Salt Lake City, UT, announcing the Paris IOC Presentation Team.

PHOTO BY MELISSA MAJCHRZA.

operational capability to deliver a worthy Games experience.

And much of that effort can be traced back to people with Midwestern ties:

- **Catherine Raney-Norman:** Speedskater from **Elm Grove, WI**. Catherine competed in four Olympics, including in Salt Lake City, 2002. She has served as the Chair of the SLC-UT bid committee and led Utah's bid for three years.
- **Lindsey Vonn:** The Olympic Downhill champion is from **St. Paul, MN**. Lindsey made her Olympic debut in Salt Lake City in 2002 and has served as the Chief of Athlete Experience for the SLC-UT bid committee. She's brought the innovative idea of an "athlete family village" to the forefront, with a special village for athletes' family members planned for the University of Utah, a first-of-its-kind effort.
- **Tom Kelly:** The longtime communications chief for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Team hails from **Madison, WI**. Kelly served as a communication consultant and member of the SLC-UT bid committee.
- **Bill Pierce:** A well-known figure in the Midwest cross-country skiing scene from **Brookfield, WI**, Bill has served in many roles with leading organizations such as CXC Skiing and the Birkie. He is the venue manager at Soldier Hollow



Luke at the SLC-UT 2034 bid press conference. To his left is Emily Fisher, executive director of Park City's Youth Sports Alliance. YSA is a group that provides introductory sport programs to school kids in Park City.

PHOTO BY MELISSA MAJCHRZAK.



Left to right: Bill Pierce, Josh Korn, Johannes Klaebo, and Luke Bodensteiner after rollerskiing above SOHO.

PHOTO BY HAAKON KLAEBØ.



Left to right: Luke Bodensteiner, Jessie Diggins, Gerrit Garberich, and Josh Korn at SOHO after helping Jessie ski her 50K time trial.

PHOTO BY TANYA LJUBARETS.

and the chief of competition for countless skiing events, including NCAA and national championships, and World Cup and World Junior Championship events, all of which have contributed to Utah's excellent reputation.

- **Ben Koenig:** A former cross-country ski racer from **Wausau, WI**, Ben has been the Chief of Course at Soldier Hollow during all of its major events during the past four winters.
- **Josh Korn:** A 17-time Birkie skier from **Thorpe, WI**, Josh serves as Soldier Hollow's event manager, leading the delivery of over 30 events annually at the venue, from ski races to festivals to cycling events, including the recent Pan-American Mountain Bike Championships, won by 2024 Olympic silver medalist Haley Batten.
- **Gerrit Garberich:** The former St Scholastica Nordic team member from **Brainerd, MN**, is now the head of sports programs for Team Soldier Hollow, a program that has grown to include 500 youth from Utah's Heber Valley who ski in programs at least twice a week, which includes national champions and Youth Olympians.

Editor's Note: And humbly omitted by the writer, but added here by this managing editor, is **Luke Bodensteiner**, Chief of Sport Development for Utah Olympic

Legacy. Born in **Iowa City, Iowa**, Luke attended high school in **West Bend, WI**, and was a 1992 and 1994 Team USA cross-country skiing Olympian, who then became a member of the Board of Trustees for the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Organizing Committee, a founder of the Soldier Hollow legacy venue, and a longtime member and most recent Chairman of the Board of the Utah Olympic Legacy Foundation.

I am fortunate to have had extended

conversations with Luke since I first "met" him when he was an adolescent in **Lee Borowski's** iconic *Simple Secrets of Skating* video. I know returning the Winter Games to the USA, in Utah, has been his aspirational dream. Congratulations to you, Luke, your wonderful family, and to all the people and communities involved in achieving such a monumental goal, and the pride the Upper Midwest can take in its contributing athletes! ☺

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Whoa!

The 12-Hour World Record Run

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A full-page background image of a woman, Susie Chan, running on a dirt trail in a desert landscape. She is wearing a yellow hat, a blue and orange running vest, and blue shorts. The background shows dry, scrubby vegetation under a clear blue sky.

Running far, wide, and long, including desert ultra running, set Susie Chan up for her treadmill world record attempt.

PHOTO BY PHIL HILL.

Susie Chan

Editor's Note: Since taking up running at the "late" age of 35, Susie Chan has completed the legendary Marathon des Sables more times than any other British woman and was one of the first women to finish all the World Marathon Majors and became the first European female and the first non-U.S. resident to finish the Badwater Ultra Cup. But she has also had her share of adversities, leaving a dysfunctional marriage, managing as a single mum, and tackling cancer treatment. Through it all, she always finds a reason to lace up her shoes, with her mantra: You never regret a run. As a Peloton tread instructor, Susie shares her love for running to members worldwide. And now — about those 12 hours on a treadmill ...

Treadmills. Sometimes they're called "Treads." I've heard people call them "dreadmills," say they never use them, and find them boring.

I beg to differ and here's why — In the world I work in, treadmills are a place of joy, unity, community and, of course, walking and running.

Trails & Treads

Oh yes, I run through the countryside and am lucky enough to be surrounded by miles of trails. But many know me from coaching running classes on a treadmill. And there are benefits that far outweigh the fact that you're not going anywhere.

The fact you are not going anywhere is a bonus!

- A treadmill is convenient, and there will be many times when convenience matters.
- The mismatching, thrown-on training outfit is suitable for the consistently dry and unimpacted-by-weather-conditions inside my garage. A treadmill run means there is no need to go to the trouble of

trying to predict the somewhat unpredictable weather of wherever you lived, and when weather-predicting apps get it wrong. And if you're not a fan of running in breath-stealing windchills, there's no headwind to deal with on a treadmill.

- There is no need to sidestep pedestrians, wait for red lights to stop the traffic, or to keep an eye out for the person driving while texting.
- There's the pleasant thoughtlessness of not having to think about a run route that suits your mileage goal. You get on, run, and, when you're done, you hop right off, sweating in the privacy of your own home.
- A treadmill is a safe space. This includes those graduating from walking to running, or those coming back from an injury. You can take things at your own pace without having to worry about how far you've gone from your car or home. There is also a beauty in the consistency of it all, including pace; just lock in and go!
- Friends of different paces? That's not a problem with treadmills. I get to share

the joy of high-fiving people running at the same time, picking up the pace to the same playlist together, or taking in the same scenic 5K route on the screen.

Treadmill World Record?

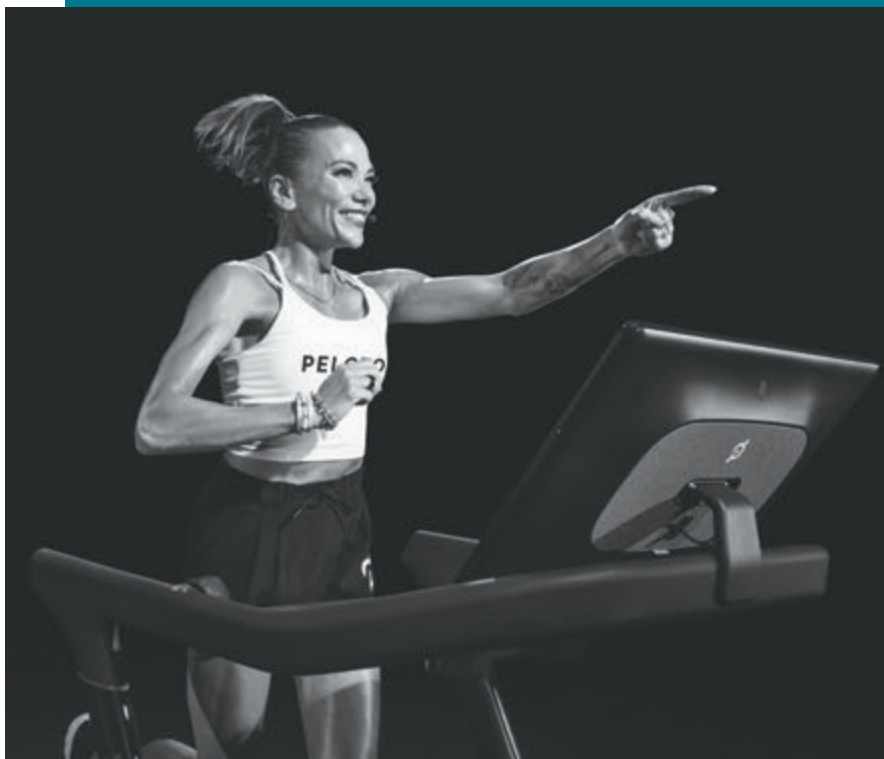
Love or hate treadmills, most runners have used them, most runners have used treadmills, perhaps when there was no other option, as part of training, or as an easy way to get your workout in when time was tight.

I was like that, except when a treadmill turned into an opportunity to break a World Record for running.

When I began running, the farthest distance my brain could fathom as runnable was a half marathon. And 13 miles on a treadmill? Not imaginable! Yet, one day, I would step on one with the singular goal of running the farthest a woman has ever treadmill-run nonstop — for 12 hours!

History & Training

My training history had included preparing for gruelling desert-run ultras, and I would often train at a nearby University's Sports Science facilities; this facility had a "heat chamber," a small climate-controlled



Susie Chan treadmill running, leading a Peloton session. Treadmill or Dreadmill, it's all about what you can do.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PELOTON.



ADVENTURE AWAITS



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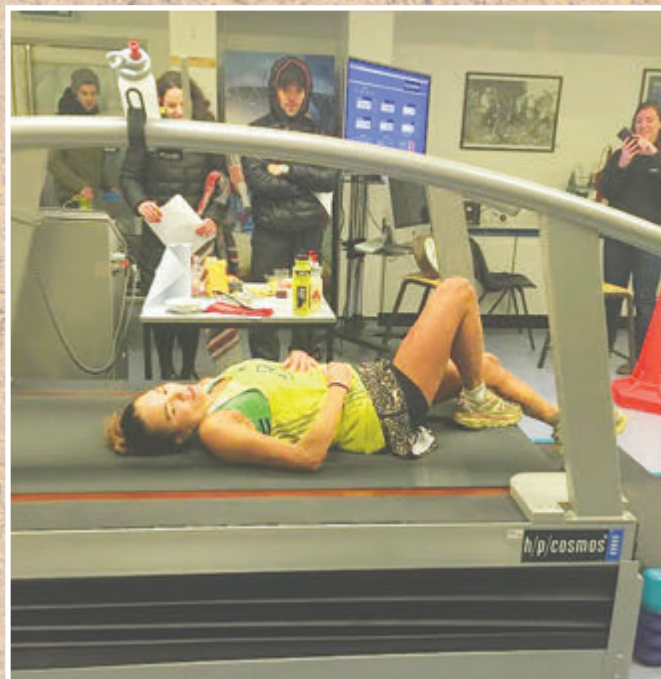
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Excerpted from **Trails and Tribulations: The Running Adventures of Susie Chan,** Bloomsbury Sport Publishing★

The hours passed. I ran miles and miles. My fake it till you make it attitude was working. I had run through more difficult things in the past – difficult terrain, weathers and temperatures – but this was still tough. In different ways. Inevitably this is an event that's tough, both physically and mentally. But there were factors I hadn't considered. When you run outside, even on a track, there will be minor variations and unless you are terribly gifted, your pace will also fluctuate. Here I was locked in to one pace, each step being exactly the same as the last, over and over and over again. You end up using the same muscles in exactly the same way.

Having my close friends next to me as a distraction helped. If you do anything, anything at all – whether that be running, walking, sitting down, standing, gardening, reading, knitting – for 12 hours straight it becomes hard work purely through boredom. We had all sorts of things on the go to alleviate the tedium. I had curated a varied playlist, which was uplifting and loud, and at times people danced around me, making the atmosphere in the room fun. There were times when the space was buzzing and I fed off the energy.

The students were enjoying being part of this and, incredibly, loads of people came in to watch. They ranged from random people off the street, to people who had somehow heard about it and



Well, the inspiration "Because it's there" applies to treadmills as well! Susie Chan after the treadmill world record attempt. Did she or didn't she?

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSIE CHAN.

room containing a treadmill. I used it to condition my body over the course of weeks to be able to withstand running in some of the hottest places on earth, a few exceeding 100 degrees. One year, a Sports Scientist who helped me prepare for my ultra marathons needed volunteers to help him conduct research that would form part of his PhD thesis. Few women had offered to help, so I did.

The help? He needed people to run 50 miles on a treadmill!

By taking blood and saliva samples as we ran, he measured, observed, noted, and monitored how the distance affected us. We also had a chart to capture our mental wellbeing, and he recorded

the more straightforward, measurable things such as distance and calorific intake.

Having just completed an Ironman race, I finished the task feeling good, that running 50 miles on a treadmill was more bearable than I thought it would be. After chronicling the experience, including my 50-mile treadmill time, on social media, I thought the treadmill and I were finished. However, the response on social media told me otherwise:

Apparently, I was tantalisingly close to breaking a World record for Running on a treadmill.

A note of perspective: Not many people try these things! ☺

Endnote

★ Excerpted from *Trails and Tribulations: The Running Adventures of Susie Chan* by Susie Chan, run with permission of the author, courtesy of Bloomsbury Sport, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. © Susie Chan, 2024.

were driven by curiosity. Hannah recalls that more than a hundred people found their way through the campus to the lab that day. A few friends turned up unexpectedly, which was a lovely surprise. I was still struggling, but all these things combined certainly made me feel better at various moments. Having so many people invested helped fuel the part of my brain that can drive me to finish lines out of fear – fear of looking weak and fear of being a failure.

A screen had been set up in front of me to show me the Twitter stream. I was very active on the app back then and we had a hashtag – #SusieWRRun – on the go. Things started off quietly, but as the day went on more and more people were jumping on the hashtag and watching along online. The live feed was a fixed camera without sound, because we were unsure about the legality of broadcasting the music playing in the lab. It wasn't riveting viewing; we had set this up as a way to record the whole effort and had not anticipated anyone actually wanting to tune in. Despite this, the stream audience grew and grew. At one point, thousands were watching.

Our hashtag started trending on Twitter. Messages started pouring in from all sorts of people from all over the place. They were on display on the screen ahead of me, generous and kind messages from people wishing me well and willing me on. Paula Radcliffe was tweeting about me. Paula Radcliffe!

People from all walks of life were coming in and talking to me next to the treadmill. This began as a happy distraction and something which was enjoyable. They had come in to find out what it was all about and offer support. As the day wore on, though, the conversations got harder and harder. It was the same sort of questions over and over: 'Why are you doing this?' The short answer is: Because I can. 'How are you feeling?' Increasingly awful. 'What do you do if you need the loo?' There's a bucket. After about eight hours of this I quietly asked Shaun to act as a buffer, and

physically stand between me and the people coming in, answering their questions and chatting on my behalf. I did not want to be rude or ungrateful, but eight hours of intermittent small talk was adding to the mental exhaustion.

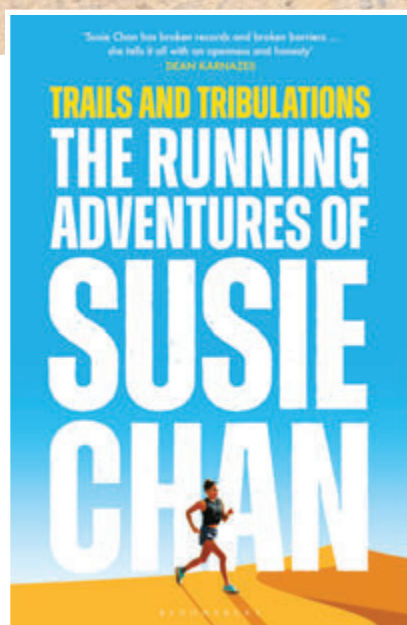
Every so often the music would crank up and Charlotte or Shaun would bob around dancing with no self-consciousness at all to lift my spirits. The ups got shorter and shorter and the bravado started to wane. I had managed eight hours reasonably fine, but then suddenly everything dropped off a cliff. It was hard enough to pretend to the people in the room that everything was fine, but I had got to the stage where I did not want to speak to anyone at all. I was waving and smiling in the lab to everyone around, but as soon as I caught Shaun's eye I did my best to convey silently how hideous it was starting to become.

I started to feel a little queasy. It was a specific queasy feeling too. The same sort of nausea that you get from reading a book in a car. This feeling while running was a new experience for me. What on earth is happening? I've run a lot further than this and been fine. Chris worked it out. About three feet in front of the treadmill – and me – was a blank wall and then, slightly to the left, the screen with all the tweets. And that was all I'd had to look at for the last eight hours. 'Your body is detecting motion, but your eyes are not. You are seasick.'

Great.

This was not something that could be resolved, I would have to tough this out. My pace did not drop and I ploughed on, trying every so often to look to my left and my right and to my feet to mix things up a bit. Looking around gave my vision some depth of field. It was tricky because looking to my left or right made me feel unstable, but it did take the edge off the nausea momentarily.

Then, just when I thought that would be the toughest thing I would have to deal with, things took a bit of a turn...."



Editor's Note: Trails and Tribulations (256 pages, Bloomsbury Sports Publishing) by Susie Chan, available in hardcover, Kindle eBook, and Audible Audiobook (which has a fabulous 5-minute audio free sample) as of the October issue's press time, quickly garnered 120 Amazon ratings soon after its release, with an average of 4.7 stars; Goodreads: 210 ratings with a 4.56-star average reader review. Ultramarathoner and New York Times bestselling author Dean Karnazes wrote: 'Tells it all with an openness and honesty that comes from having endured some of the world's most gruelling tests of endurance.' From the Moroccan desert, the Peruvian jungle and the sweltering Death Valley, to Susie's local South Downs and a running track in Tooting, her adventures take her across the globe. With Susie's down-to-earth personality, refreshing attitude and wicked sense of humor, we learn the countless reasons she finds to push herself further and the life-changing opportunities running has given her. Her passion for the sport is infectious, and her story is a shining example to all in the running community and beyond. While available at the big-name places, please consider ordering through and supporting your local independent bookstore.



Classic Hikes in the Keweenaw

There is nothing like Lake Superior, an inland ocean, leading Keweenaw trail hikers to stunning views, whether sunrise, sunset, or midday!

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHICKEN TRAMPER ULTRALIGHT GEAR.

Austin Gongos

Editor's Note: Austin Gongos is a Michigan native who moved to Hancock, MI, just over 10 years ago. In that time, he has hiked, backpacked, and run hundreds of miles on the trail systems in and around the Keweenaw Peninsula. Austin is also the Co-Founder of **Chicken Trumper Ultralight Gear**, or CTUG, an ultralight backpacking gear manufacturer in Hancock, MI, and Keweenaw Outfitters, a guiding and gear rental company that he and his Co-Founder,

Nathan Ackerman, started in 2024. Austin invites any and all inquiries about their gear, services, and the surrounding area via his email: Austin@chickentrampergear.com. Check out more on Chicken Trumper at chickentrampergear.com.

Whether you've lived in the Keweenaw your whole life or are visiting for the weekend, there are inevitably some hikes you might have missed. While everyone hikes for different reasons and at different levels, this article can be viewed as a rough guide for your Keweenaw adventures. It includes Classic Hikes in the area, a local's opinion on these hikes, and a



Take a hike at, or in, the water's edge to cool off, and enjoy the sight of the historic Copper Harbor Lighthouse, now a museum you can tour during the summer months. Check out more at copperharbor.org/portfolio/noahs-ark-charters.



A hike of epic proportions overlooking the Portage Lake Lift Bridge (officially the Houghton–Hancock Bridge).

general idea of what to expect. This is by no means a complete list of hikes in the area, just some of my favorites.

There are different meanings to the word “hike.” For some, it’s going for a walk outdoors; others take it as a multi-day excursion into the backcountry. For most, it is a day-long excursion. Whichever definition works for you, and you can certainly do all three, in Houghton, MI, the obvious launching point for a trip to the Keweenaw is immediately identifiable by the **Portage Lake Bridge**.

The Lift Bridge is a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark that spans the Portage Canal. And what a beautiful bridge it is! Along each side of the Portage is a miles-long path shouldering the waterway. The north side is a gravel path while the south side is paved and runs for about 4.5 miles. This is a wonderful hike that can be enjoyed by all and is easy to get to. I love walking and running this trail with fellow recreationalists. From views of **Mt. Ripley**, boaters on the water, and historic sites such as **Dee Stadium**, this hike has plenty to offer the beginner hiker.

Hiking Keweenaw Local

Branching out into the woods, you’ll find many options within 10 minutes of town. Hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing are incredibly popular hobbies in our area, leading to the development

of the trail systems. They have tens if not hundreds of trail miles altogether and boast river walks, marshes, and plenty of hills with high viewpoints.

Starting in Houghton at Michigan Tech’s campus, we have the **Tech Trails**. Down the road toward Chassell, you have the **Nara Trails**. Across the Portage in Hancock, you’ll find the **Maasto Hiihto Trail System** (my personal favorite: the **River Trail** on the Maasto). On M-203 toward McClain State Park, you’ll find the **Churning Rapids Trail System**. Finally, just south of Calumet, you’ll find the **Swedetown Recreation Area**. All of these trail systems are marked well and have maps available online (keweenawtrails.com/trails-maps) and at the trailhead. Helpful hint: Take a photo of the trail map with your phone at the trailhead.

While it may be easy to overlook these systems because they lack “spectacular” views or don’t contain “majestic” waterfalls, it’s worth exploring the entire trail system. Here, the quiet serenity of the woods has just as much impact on us as the “epic.”

Whoa! Keweenaw Water!

A little farther from town, waterfalls await your hiking exploration. The “classic” waterfall hike has to be **Hungarian Falls**. The beautiful thing about this hike is that along this two-mile round trip hike you’ll

find *four* different waterfalls to admire. With rocks and roots to contend with and some hills to climb and descend, this is considered a moderate-level hike.

A 15-minute drive from Houghton, the small town of **Hubbell** hosts the trailhead to this hike, and **Tamarack Park** is across the street for your post-hike picnic spot. This was one of my first hikes when I arrived to attend Michigan Tech. I still have fond memories of those times and hike this trail at least every year or two to see how the landscape has changed.

Branching out farther from town is **Black Creek Nature Sanctuary**. This hike is a 4.5-mile trail that hikes along Black Creek to Lake Superior. The wonderful thing about this hike is that there is a prize at the end of the walk — our beautiful freshwater sea!

Lake Superior is one of the most important natural resources to the Keweenaw area. One of my favorite memories of hiking this trail with friends involved packing lunch and some tea for a relaxing picnic at the lake and sunbathing on the sand as we listened to the waves rhythmically hit the shore. You can have these and other Lake Superior experiences as part of your own hike with friends! My other favorite memory of this area involves subfreezing temperatures and braving harsh winds as we walked out onto the frozen lake, taking cover behind giant ice structures that formed over the months of winter.

Hiking the same places in different seasons is truly one of the best parts of living here.

Hiking Keweenaw Topside

It’s not truly a visit to the Keweenaw unless you make it up to the top, right? **Copper Harbor** is the northernmost town in the Keweenaw Peninsula and is known as the “Crown Jewel” of Michigan. With world-class mountain bike trails, wild forests, and scenic views of Lake Superior from the shore to the top of Brockway Mountain (a drivable summit and beautiful view), Copper Harbor truly has something for everyone.

The number of different places to hike here can be overwhelming so I’ll keep it to my top three.

Hunters Point Park is a natural area with 4,800 feet of shoreline and 1.7 miles of trail. The loop trail spanning the Peninsula



What's not to like? Dense woods, rock trails, cliff edges over ravines (careful!), and sounds of nature to share with fellow hikers. Just be prepared and let people know where you are and when you expect to return!

goes through a cedar forest and juts out regularly onto private rocky beaches along the shoreline. The rock formations are intricate and a draw for anyone into geology or natural formations. It's common to hunt for Agates or Yooperlites (Lake Superior rocks with fluorescing qualities) on this beach and the perfect hike for the budding adventurer.

Next up is one of the only old-growth tree stands in Michigan: **Estivant Pines**. Only a few miles from Copper Harbor, the trees on this loop trail will blow your mind. There are 2.5 miles of trail winding through this forest filled with Giant White

Pines as tall as 125 feet and as old as 300 years. This is a relatively easy trail for your average hiker and a must-see if you're in the area.

If you're looking for a challenge, **Mt. Baldy** is my recommendation. A few miles south of Copper Harbor is another small town, **Eagle Harbor**, where you'll find the trailhead for this hike. This 6.3-mile round-trip hike ascends 869 feet to the summit of Mt. Baldy. Here you'll be treated to views of the Keweenaw spanning out to Lake Superior. Don't be fooled by the false summit near the top and be sure to pack some food and water because it can be a

tough climb.

All of these trails and systems can be found using Google or Apple Maps, and trail maps are available online at their websites, AllTrails ([alltrails.com](https://www.alltrails.com)), or most of the time at the trailhead. Service is limited in parts of the UP, so download maps and directions ahead of time! It's always important to know your limits, let people know where you're going and for how long, and the resources you should bring with you. These resources include water and food. And make sure to check the weather before you start.

It's also important to observe the **Seven Leave No Trace Principles** which can be found at [LNT.org](https://www.lnt.org). Remember, LNT is as much about respecting the environment as it is about respecting our fellow hikers. We go out into the woods so that we can escape the tumult of society and feel the joy of being in nature. So, when I hike and see traces of human activity, it takes me out of the moment, even if just for a moment. While wrapper litter is obviously against LNT, understand, too, that apple cores and orange peels also count as litter. Please do not think, *It's okay because it'll decompose*. In reality, it's not great to introduce these foreign materials into the environment.

The easy way to simplify LNT is: *If you hike it in, you must hike it out.*

Building Now to Go Long Tomorrow

If you're like me and have decided that you want to hike at the next level challenge, one that lasts multiple days, the options in the Keweenaw Proper can be limiting.

About Those “Decomposables”

We put apple cores, fruit rinds, and the like in our compost bins, because they decompose, so what's the problem with letting them do so during our hikes?

The first problem is that these items can attract animals and pests, including stinging bees and other biting/stinging insects, toward the trail and create an unhealthy relationship between wildlife and humans. It can desensitize the animals to human contact and even lead them to believe

that we provide food. We should generally never feed wildlife whether it's directly or indirectly.

The next is that yes, it may decompose, but how long will that take? Unlike a properly built and used compost bin or system, in more arid regions, decomposing could take a very long time. In fact, in the desert, we're instructed to carry out our used TP after digging a cat hole.

Finally, a really great rule to test theories of, “Is it okay if I do this?” is to also ask, “What would happen if everyone did this?” Most of us don't throw orange peels on the ground, so the occasional peel might not be bothersome. But if people in general threw orange peels and other such “decomposables” on the ground when out on a hike, it would become noticeable and hardly what we came to the trails to experience. Let LNT mean LNT in full! ☺

There is a great organization named the **Keweenaw Hiking Trail Association (KHTA)**. I am a founding board member of this group and our goal is to *build small connector trails* between the many trail systems in the area. The end goal of the KHTA is to create a **Keweenaw Ridge Trail** that would span the Keweenaw from Houghton all the way to the tip of the Keweenaw.

This organization is in its infancy and already has some connectors we're working on. If you are interested in learning more, volunteering, or donating to this organization, please check out our website: keweenawhikingtrails.org.

Backpacking in the Keweenaw is less common than hiking, but throughout the UP we have **Pictured Rocks Lakeshore, Grand Island, the Porcupine Mountains, and the often underappreciated North Country Trail**. This trail spans 4,600 miles and runs through North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. The UP section of this trail is almost 550 miles long and our "local" section is maintained by the **Peter Wolfe Chapter of the NCTA**.

I recently backpacked 35 miles of this trail for the first time, the **Trap Hills Section**, and it was incredible. I've hiked all of the areas I mentioned above and while each boasts breathtaking views, the Trap Hills has something intangible about it. I hiked this section with my partner and our two dogs, walking up and down steep hills onto the cliff edges. We saw incredibly wild areas that seemed untouched by humans aside from the trail.

One night, we planned to camp on a forest service road that I spotted on my app's map (Farout is the app I use for backpacking, an incredible resource). I didn't realize until a quarter mile past the road that I had completely missed it because nature had reclaimed this road for itself. During the weekend trip, we only ran into one other person and had a brief conversation about the sweeping views we witnessed and how they differed from other areas such as the Porcupine Mountains. I was amazed that on this hike, which is almost as long as Pictured Rocks, we only saw one person, whereas on the Pictured Rocks trail you'd run into tens if not hundreds of other hikers. While I enjoy seeing

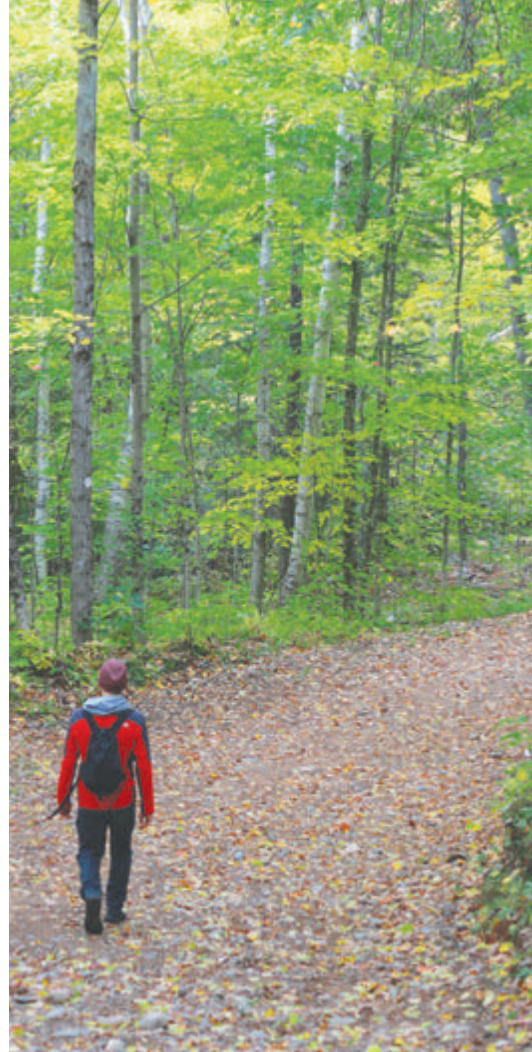
people during my hikes, this showed how underappreciated the Trapp Hills may be, and I'd love it if more people (who follow LNT!) saw this wild area.

Working to Maintain the Wild

Keep the UP Wild is an organization undertaking the tremendous task of trying to designate the Trap Hills area, along with three others, as Wilderness Areas. This designation would not change what we can already do in these places as hikers but would limit the National Forests' abilities to log their forests and alter the landscape.

Pictured Rocks and The Porkies boast the protections of a Wilderness Designation. The protections, as well as the publicity they provide, may improve the communities around these incredible natural areas by bringing in more hiking enthusiasts — like you! More information about Keep the UP Wild can be found at: keeptheupwild.com.

I do hope that the personal nature of this article gave you some insight into our hiking areas. It's a great joy to share my favorite hikes in our area and encourage more visitors to our quaint corner of Michigan. I invite your emails whether they are relevant to my business or not, and am happy to advise you about lodging, hiking, backpacking, and dining in our area. ☺



Whether flat, moderately elevated, or elevated, there's a come-hither feel to Keweenaw and area trails.

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Quincy Mine visitors take advantage of the Quincy Mine Cog Wheel Tram.

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Hiking the Wonders Down Under — *Ground*

Pamela Christensen

Some Back-Ground, Please

From 800 C.E., Michigan's Upper Peninsula was inhabited by a variety of nomadic indigenous tribes who spent summers in the region to fish, hunt, and collect berries. The native people were aware of the copper deposits located in the territory. At least 7,000 years ago, they mined copper in shallow pits and fabricated tools, trade items, and weapons from copper. Relics containing copper originating in the Keweenaw Peninsula have been found throughout the North American continent.

They were also frequent visitors to a

large copper boulder found along the banks of the Ontonagon River. Now called the **Ontonagon Boulder**, this specimen is not the largest piece of native copper ever found, but it is probably the most famous. The boulder is owned by the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, and resides in Washington, D.C. There have been many disputes over the ownership of the boulder, but it remains with the Smithsonian.

In the 1840s, copper and iron deposits were located by European explorers who dreamed of the wealth these resources would bring. By the 1860s, the U.P. provided 90% of all U.S. copper. In the 1870s, the region was the nation's largest supplier of iron ore. The burgeoning country

depended on Michigan's Upper Peninsula to provide the copper and iron that built the nation and helped to fuel expansion.

The Keweenaw Peninsula, located at the northernmost portion of the Upper Peninsula, was Ground Zero for rich copper. Mines sprouted up throughout the area and mining companies did all they could to attract workers. Cornish immigrants with mining experience were some of the first to come to the area, followed by the Irish, German, French Canadian, Swedish, Italians, and Finns. All have left their ethnic identity on the area. By the early 20th Century, 75% of the U.P.'s population were foreign-born.

The gleaming minerals that attracted investors, miners, entrepreneurs, and

laborers to the area fueled dreams of riches and prosperity, and the Copper Country is once again offering people the opportunity to share in this mining heritage. The **Keweenaw National Historical Park (KNHP)** was established in 1992 to commemorate the history of copper mining in the region. A collection of 23 sites work together to tell the story of the people, machines, and mines that created the once-thriving copper industry. Check out: nps.gov/kewe.

Ground-Zero Visting

There are several opportunities to get up close and personal with copper mining history at locations that offer a first-hand glimpse of the life of a miner. The **Adventure Mine** in Greenland, Michigan, offers a variety of mine tour options. The mine was in operation from 1850 to 1920 and includes 100 surface acres and an extensive underground network of shafts and tunnels. While in operation, the mine provided 11 million tons of native copper. Deposits of silver and copper are still present today and can be seen during the mine tours.

Matthew Portfleet has owned the Adventure Mine and all mine facilities since 2014 and is a faculty member at Michigan Technical University (MTU). At MTU, Portfleet teaches drilling, blasting, and mine safety. He also provides training



The Nordberg Steam Hoist is the largest in the world and can be seen at the Quincy Mine in Hancock, MI.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE QUINCY MINE HOIST ASSOCIATION.



During the Miner's Tour, you'll see solid pieces of native copper while exploring the largest rooms in the mine. You'll have to rappel as well and, as shown here, traverse a swinging bridge over a 30-foot chasm. How's THAT for a hike?!

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ADVENTURE MINING COMPANY.

on industrial mine safety for corporations and their employees. Since mines and bats often go together, he also designs and constructs bat-friendly enclosures for abandoned mine openings in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and Michigan DNR.

According to Portfleet, the goal of the Adventure Mine is to provide a history of the mine and copper mining while adding an element of adventure. There are three levels of tours offered at the mine. The **Prospector Tour** lasts approximately 1.5 hours and is the least demanding of the tours. This tour is open to people of all ages. It does require walking over uneven and rough ground. Each visitor is issued a headlamp and helmet for safety. This tour includes some of the largest rooms in the mine and visitors can see shafts traveling to other levels. Closed-toe shoes and a jacket are recommended for all tours. The mine is a constant 48 degrees all year long.

The **Miner's Tour** is 2 to 3 hours long, depending on the interest level of the group. Anyone on the tour must be 12 years or older. This tour includes the Prospector Tour, but once that portion is complete, the adventure begins. All participants are issued a helmet, headlamp, rappelling

equipment, safety harness, and safety training. Rappelling experience is not necessary, but participants should be in good physical health, able to negotiate uneven and steep terrain, and be willing to get wet and muddy.

To reach some of the oldest and most unique areas of the mine, participants must rappel 80 feet to lower areas. This requires using the rappel and crawling through tight areas to access the second part of the tour. Once the rappel is done, visitors have a choice of finishing the tour by traversing a swinging bridge over a 30-foot chasm or sliding down the traditional ten-foot slide. Either method leads you over a steep slope connecting the second level to the third.

The ultimate Adventure Mine Tour is the **Captain's Tour**. This 5 to 6-hour journey takes visitors on a comprehensive tour that reaches the first and second levels of the mine. Many of these areas have recently been dewatered and feature rails, timbers, carts, and other mining artifacts left in place over 100 years ago. To ensure this tour's participant safety, there is a strictly enforced age limit of 13 and over, all those participating must be in good physical shape, and be able to walk for 40



One of the Adventure Mine tour guides leads a group through the mine during a recent tour.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ADVENTURE MINING COMPANY.

minutes or more over two miles on uneven and sloped trails that may have loose rock. Before the tour, all participants must complete training exercises and be approved by staff before the tour leaves. There is some rappelling during this tour, and each participant will be issued safety gear and

be required to carry a backpack weighing ten pounds for the entire tour. There is a maximum of six members per tour and a minimum of two per tour. Two guides accompany each tour. As with all Adventure Mine tours, no mineral or artifact collecting is allowed during the tour.

The Adventure Mine season runs from late May to October. Tours operate seven days a week during the summer season and can be booked in advance via the mine's website. Advanced booking is recommended to assure visitors can participate in the desired tour at the desired date and time. Check out tour scheduling details and more at: adventureminetours.com.

Home-Ground Fun

The **Quincy Mine Hoist Association** owns and operates the Quincy Mine and related properties. The mine's **Number 2 Shaft House** still dominates the Houghton/Hancock skyline. Quincy Mine was called "Old Reliable" for the longevity of the mine, in operation from 1846 to 1945, and the quality of the ore deposits. The complex serves as a museum featuring artifacts, interpretive displays, and an operational model railroad that details the Quincy Mining Company and Stamp Mill facilities.

The organization offers an above-ground tour as well as the full tour, which takes visitors below ground. All tours are guided and fully accessible. The underground tour lasts approximately 2 hours 15 minutes and involves walking 2,000 feet across uneven ground. Visitors will see the number 5 shaft, still containing early mine cars on rails. The large mine opening developed in the 1850s gives visitors a glimpse of water filling the lower levels of the mine and examples of manual and pneumatic drilling equipment. This portion of the tour gives visitors an appreciation of the difficulty of working underground.

The **Nordberg Steam Hoist** at the Quincy Mine is the largest steam-powered hoist engine in the world. Built in 1920, the hoist made expansion of the Number 2 shaft to 92 levels deep. The building housing the hoist is one of the largest reinforced concrete buildings ever built and does not contain any interior supporting columns.

Another unique feature of the Quincy Mine is the **Cog Wheel Tram** still operating on the site. Originally used to transport ore to the Quincy Smelter located on the waterfront in Hancock, the tram was modified in 1997 with a new passenger car that transports visitors. A tram ride also provides a panoramic view of the Portage Canal, Houghton, and the lift bridge spanning the Portage Canal from Houghton to Hancock.



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Planning to go Under-Ground

The Quincy Mine season runs from April to October. (So, it's not too late!) In October, they partner with the **MTU Visual and Performing Arts Department** to offer the **Haunted Mine experience**. The Association also provides limited winter tours and other special events. More information can be obtained at quincymine.com.

If you want to try your hand at prospecting, the **Caledonia Mining Company** near Mass City, MI, is ripe for the picking. They offer visitors the opportunity to explore rock piles for quartz, calcite, feldspar, epidote, datolite, native copper, and silver. Experienced staff are on hand to help miners identify specimens found in the piles. Hand tools such as a fin hoe, hand rake, and bucket are provided as is running water. Visitors are encouraged to bring a metal detector if they have one and a bucket to carry their discoveries home. It is also helpful to have safety goggles, gloves, closed-toe shoes, and appropriate weather gear.

Prospecting takes place rain or shine. Each tour runs from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. There are a variety of pile sizes to collect: the family pile is three cubic yards and will keep a family busy for four hours. The single-person pile can be searched by one or two adults. The Tailings pile is made up of waste rock from the mining process and still may hold treasures. A special datolite pile gives prospectors the opportunity to find the elusive and desirable cauliflower-shaped datolite nodules. Datolite is only found in the U.P. and some parts of northwestern Wisconsin and can come in a variety of colors. The most common colors are red, pink, and white, but exotics such as blue, yellow, and green can also be found.

Piles are available for booking on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday during the season, which runs to mid-October. The mine's website offers booking and also features information on the mine and minerals found in the U.P. Check out caledoniamine.com.

Although copper mining is no longer the industry it once was in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the Adventure Mine, Quincy Mine, and Caledonia Mining Company still offer visitors the chance to capture a bit of mining adventure today, and to take your hiking uniquely underground! ⚡



Who goes there? If it's you during the Captain's Tour, you'll see portions of the mine that have been completely submerged since the early 1900s, still looking as they did 100 years ago. Down-down to the second level, you'll see rails, timbers, carts, and other artifacts not seen anywhere else in the mine. But no worries - who goes there includes two experienced guides.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ADVENTURE MINING COMPANY.

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The summertime is perfect to work on ski-specific movements while rollerskiing. Here, David Chamberlain and Jan Guenther are getting in a quick workout during the workday along Long Lake. PHOTO BY ERIN KELLY.



Before the Snow Flies ...

It's not too late to take dryland training into a successful season on snow!

David Chamberlain

Editor's Note: David Chamberlain grew up in Western Maine and started skiing when he was five. David spent 4 years competing at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, where he was an All-American at the NCAA Championships in his junior and senior years. After college, he spent 12 years chasing races around the world and skied in 3 FIS World Championships with the U.S. Ski Team. David moved to Minnesota in 2014 with his wife and now lives in Bloomington with his son, Lucas, another one on the way this October (Congratulations!), and cat Lucky. He works at Gear West in Long Lake Minnesota. [Gearwest.com](https://www.gearwest.com).

The adage goes: *Skiers are made in the summer.*

There's a lot of truth to this as the off-season is certainly the best time to build a solid base, build and maintain strength, work on any weaknesses, and even work on ski-specific movements — all without the looming winter race weekend madness. But there is nothing magic about spring, summer, and fall for a skier. It still takes motivation and some know-how to execute your plan with confidence.

There are many specific ways to train for skiing in the offseason, such as roller-skiing, pole bounding, and pole walking. I hope this article can provide some good ideas and inspiration to help make dryland season a successful way to prepare for your winter race season.

Asking Directions

First priority: If you are looking to plan for the dryland season, find some coaching

services. This can be as simple as a few one-off sessions with someone who can give technique instruction for whatever modalities you will be using in the off-season. Or it can be as complex as paying a fee to hire the weekly services of a professional coach to plan out your season.

Many coaches out there provide several levels of service. My advice would be to ask around your local club or ski shop to get some ideas for someone to work with. Coaching serves many different purposes, the first and most important probably being the motivation to get out the door. Technique feedback and instruction, training plans and race preparation, and strength training are all valuable reasons to seek a coach's advice. Every athlete is unique with unique situations and needs, so it's valuable to seek a one-on-one interaction with a coach who can take an outside look at those needs. Even a once-a-month touch point can help make the

difference to provide some direction for the off-season and give more confidence going into the season.

Yes — Rollerski!

The second priority for those looking to make the most out of dryland training is to seriously consider rollerskiing in the off-season. Rollerskiing is the best way to keep training sessions specific to ski movements. Rollerskis are relatively inexpensive in the scope of outfitting yourself for racing in the winter and can provide years of use. Skate and classic rollerski options are available with a variety of shafts, from aluminum to fiberglass to carbon.

Skate rollerski shafts are generally shorter than classic, and skate wheels are narrower with a bigger diameter to allow for edging. Classic shafts can often be longer and the wheels are low and wide for stability and tracking. Regular winter ski bindings can be mounted on all brands of rollerskis, allowing for the use of winter boots. Winter poles can be converted to rollerski poles by simply adding a rollerski ferrule to the tip. Ferrules are stronger and more durable than regular winter baskets.

One of my favorite things to do on rollerskis is to double-pole, *which also happens to be one of the simplest, safest, and most effective workouts to start with when new to rollerskiing*. It doesn't take much technical knowledge and it's a good way to improve upper-body endurance and strength for the winter season. For these types of workouts, it's best to choose slightly rolling terrain and then just double pole for a while — that's it. The trick is to take whatever terrain comes at you and double-pole everything; don't give up! It's amazing how quickly the body will adapt after only a few of these types of workouts.

Even without detailed technique instruction or focus, the body will adapt by using the core more efficiently and moving the body into a more stacked position with the hips and body pushing forward. These are great workouts that will have a positive effect on your winter season.

Another way to make the most of rollerskiing sessions is to ski without poles. A no-pole workout for skate-skiing is a great way to focus on body position and leg-specific strength. Taking the poles away also forces the body to adapt to a stacked position and activates the core to engage for stability. The arms can be used to swing



Specific double-poling workouts are a great way to work on upper body strength as well as ski technique.

PHOTO BY ERIN KELLY.

the body into place in time with weight shift (like a speedskater) or the arms can be used to mimic upper-body rhythm, as if you were holding poles in your hands.

One of my other favorite ways to do no-pole workouts is to *hold the poles in the hands straight out in front of the body parallel to the ground*. The poles can then be used as a barometer for body position, giving feedback on how level the shoulders and hips are.

Classic Caution

Classic rollerskiing is another dryland activity that can have a positive impact on your winter skiing. Since classic rollerskis are equipped with ratchets in the rear or front wheel, they will not allow the wheel to roll backward, which allows for the skis to kick. With an innovation like this comes some pitfalls, namely developing bad habits in technique.

Unlike on-snow skis, rollerskis provide perfect kick every time no matter what a person's technique is doing, which can lead to bad habits that do not translate



Running is a great way to add to your rollerskiing, to stay fit during the off-season and then when the snow falls. Here, David competed in the 2024 Zumbro Trail run held in the spring.

PHOTO BY ANNA WOLETZ.



When not out in the sunshine in the summer, David is usually found on the ski floor at Gear West thinking about skis and skiing.

PHOTO BY ERIN KELLY.

to an effective kick on snow. My advice is to develop a strong mental visualization while doing technique drills and no-pole work. If you can actively visualize *setting the wax* even as you're on rollerskis, then your classic kick will be focused more down into the ski through the ball of the foot and less out the back through the heel of the foot.

Back to coaching: *This is a place where the watchful eye of a coach for a few sessions can help to get some mental cues to use to keep the body in the right position.*

In Addition to Rollerskis ...

Running with poles during the summer and fall is another great way to use off-season training. Ski-bounding and ski-walking workouts can be varied and done at different intensities and different venues. There are plenty of instruction videos out there for how to bound, walk, or do moosehoofs with poles (it's a Norwegian thing you can look up, such as explained and demonstrated by **Zak Ketterson** at [youtube.com/watch?v=F6Dvu61rXWE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6Dvu61rXWE)).

To do these types of workouts, I recommend finding an old pair of poles with winter baskets and cutting them down

to a smidge shorter than normal classic pole length. (After all, with hill-bounding, you're not standing on boots, bindings, and skis!) Alpine ski hills in the off-season are great places to use for bounding. In the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, I often use the Hyland Hills ski area for this.

No matter what you do for a workout, running or walking with poles is a great way to get the upper body more involved in activities that can otherwise sometimes excessively load the legs in the summer.

Putting Fun in the Workout

My last piece of advice is to find some adventure in your summer and fall training sessions. The off-season is the time to build your endurance base, meaning long workouts whatever the activity. The good news is that the majority of these workouts do not necessarily need the specificity of the ideas above. Running, hiking, biking, rollerskiing, paddling — these are all part of an endless list of activities that can provide the right intensity to build the aerobic capacity to take on your winter races.

During the last two summers, I have participated in a few ultra trail running marathons. The training and the event itself provide long hours of base training. The adventure they provide also keeps me motivated. With family and work responsibilities, finding time to train is increasingly challenging. These events and the preparation for them at least keep me moving out the door in the summer. If running is not your thing, the silent sports world and all its offerings, such as swimming, biking, and paddling, provide a multitude of ways to cultivate your own spirit of adventure while building your aerobic and muscular power to help your Nordic on-snow ski season.

So, while the summertime/fall training adage is true, the motivation to train and prepare for the winter can still be a summertime/fall challenge. With all the modern-day things that compete for our attention and focus, it seems that breaking the inertia to simply get out the door is more difficult than it used to be. My hope is that this article provided a few simple thinking points to help you find that motivation that will lead you to a fun dryland-season training mix, and then a joyously successful Nordic ski season. ☺



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Iffy About Roller Skis?

They can help break bad habits, improve efficiency & speed, and reduce soreness. *Truth!*

Jon Oestreich

Editor's Note: Go to this issue's Front Page to check out Jon Oestreich's bio. You will not be disappointed!

The 2024 season provided Nordic skiing enthusiasts opportunities to see World Cup-level athletes at two different events on American snow in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Watching these skiers loop by on a combination of social laps, warm-up laps, race laps, and cool-down laps allowed us to see decades of ski form evolution in classic and skate technique. 2024 YouTube searches of World Cup-level races confirm this continuous evolution of skiing form transition to modern concise efficient body movements.

This raises the ever-important question: *How can World Cup-level ski body movements be replicated with less force to enable middle-aged, less flexible and weaker skiers to avoid inner thigh, hamstring, shoulder, triceps, and back muscle pulls and strains?* After all, I just want to have fun and not be sore after skiing.

Yes! Embrace the Roller Ski!

Roller skiing transitioning into late summer and autumn presents the ideal time to unlearn old habits and safely reinforce modern, efficient, and concise body ski movements. It also presents the ideal time to adjust personal body coordination, timing, and lack-of-force application to gain more **body-soreness-free** ski days. For a safe, easy environment to begin your ski form transition:

- Find a 400-meter blacktopped track. This removes the impact of hills on your technique training. And if you're with a group, the track will help keep people together

enough to stay within contact. Stay off of rubberized tracks with roller skis and poles.

- Use your mobile phone to find a **free on-line metronome**. Carry the mobile phone metronome with you in a waistbelt or phone arm holder. Set the metronome beat to your normal winter classic and skate cadence, and then ski a few laps.
- Next comes the challenge: After a few laps, change the metronome number on your phone so that the metronome beats a bit quicker, but not a lot quicker. Match the classic stride/skate push/pole plant impulse transition to the quicker metronome beat.

Prime Purpose of the Madness!

When I first did this, it felt extremely awkward, uncomfortable, and difficult. Essentially, I was unlearning decades of self-reinforced body coordination and timing ski movements. I also learned that fatigue set in immediately.

However, it quickly dawned on me that the quicker metronome beat did not mean more muscle force. Rather, the quicker metronome beat should be matched with less muscle force. Reduction in muscle force ought to be applied to classic stride and skate stroke, as well as any accompanying pole stroke whether double pole, V2, V1, V2-Alternate, or classic. The challenge now is: *Can my body movement coordination and timing be more concise with less arm and leg limb follow-through? Can I synchronize body movements to the changing metronome beat — a few more laps at this quicker metronome beat?*

Think of force applied in ski movements to bike watts applied in the pedal stroke. On a bike, the pedal stroke radius never changes due to the length of the crank. However, your pedal stroke power,



FIGURE 1: Additional body movement to swing the arms forward (resulting in arms too far back) could be wasted energy.

ALL PHOTOS ARE COURTESY OF JON OESTREICH.

or watts, continuously changes. When reducing your body's ski movements on roller skis, the upright concise leg and arm ski movements should mirror your pedal stroke by not changing. Only your force or watts change.

The rationale for this strategy is twofold. First, working on coordination and timing is really hard and takes effort. Second, in the end, one can always lengthen concise body movement strides on different terrain and skier levels of energy. However, I believe it is nearly impossible to go from always using a long, drawn-out stride and then transitioning into a short concise body movement stride. The subtle

coordination of weight transfer timing with minimal force is difficult.

Making it Work for You

To match the quicker metronome beat with less force, I learned to place my body in a more upright position while still maintaining an athletic body position. To review, an athletic body looks like a tennis player in position to receive a serve. The athletic body position from the ground up has the ankle, knee, and hip joints engaged. The longer and more spread out the arm and leg follow-through, the more body movement to recover back to the athletic body position.

This additional body movement to swing the arms forward could be wasted energy. (See Figure 1.)

In classic skiing, the more one leans forward results in forward downward pressure on the ski midway between the toe and tip of the ski. This translates into extending the kick wax zone, causing a reduction in the glide wax zone. A more upright body position on a classic ski, paired with a slightly softer ski flex, enables more direct downward pressure under the mid-foot to compress the ski directly in the kick zone.

In other words, the length of the classic ski kick wax zone can be reduced and replaced with glide wax.

This means I really need to work on my weight transfer body coordination and timing to compress the ski, meaning a few more laps on the classic roller skis. The metronome is again set a bit quicker.

Addressing Bad Habits

I am learning a few things as the metronome beats quicken. On classic roller skis, the first thing I learned is that I can get complacent and rely solely on the classic roller ski ratchet. In turn, this results in my hips going backward, behind the heels of my feet. To keep my hips forward of my heels directly over the ball of my foot and not fall victim to the roller ski ratchet late kick, a few things became evident while in an athletic position:

- Be more upright, which causes the hands to be between neck and eyeball height at each pole downward impulse transition.
- Reduce the stride length, which causes a reduction in hand/arm/leg follow-through.

With each arm cycle, I try to return my

FIGURE 2: Classic technique double pole upper body impulse movement, left image, equals skate V2 upper body impulse movement, right image. Once you hear the pole tips click the ground, the upper body downward impulse is finished. Immediately begin to return your thumbs to eyeball height. Alternatively, if you continue to push your hands behind the hips, you will experience:

- 1) continued diminishing returns on forward glide regardless of how good your glide wax is, and 2) exert twice the amount of energy to return hands to eyeball level with a stretched out arm. Notice that both classic and skate downward pole impulses click the ground between the front wheel and front of toe binding due to an upright body position that recruits core muscles.



hands (thumbs) to eyeball height before my hands then reach my hips. This modern, efficient concise classic ski body movement now feels shorter and punchier. I am also surprised that my classic roller ski speed increases when reduced upper body downward force is applied paired with the shorter 80 to 100 percent weight transfer stride, albeit the cadence transition increases forward (classic) or to the side (skate).

As I unlearn decades of ski habits and relearn modern, efficient body movement, my coordination and body timing improve while my inner thighs, hamstrings, shoulders, triceps, and back muscles are no longer strained or sore. To keep from getting lazy by relying on the classic roller ski ratchet, it is time to quicken the metronome beat a bit more to challenge myself in body coordination, weight transfer, timing, balance, and less force.

During these final laps, I will do some classic roller skiing with no poles and classic roller skiing with one pole.

Quickening the metronome beat to match the new roller ski stride challenges ski movements. After 30 to 45 minutes, I feel my body start to rely on the ratchet. I recognize that it is now time to declare victory in my roller ski form modification



FIGURE 3: Any body weight on your rear foot (50/50; 60/40; 90/10) causes reliance on your classic roller ski's ratchet wheel. The roller ski rear wheel will be on the ground when behind the hips that reinforces a late kick on classic snow skis. Reinforcement of a late kick is contrary to what we are attempting to accomplish with the use of classic roller skis.

session and, more importantly, to stop the classic roller skiing session right then to prevent reinforcement of bad ski form made possible with a ratchet roller ski late kick. I will continue to practice this new classic technique next week when my body is not fatigued.

Body Movements Detailed

The upright double-pole body position movement from the waist beltline upward through the shoulders is identical for classic as it is for skate. **Breakthrough No. 1:** *Classic technique double pole upper body (See Figure 2, left image) equals skate V2 upper body movement (See Figure 2, right image).*

The difference is that the leg in classic is a short kick forward. Landing on the ball of the forward foot equals 100 percent weight transfer forward. The byproduct of 100 percent of your weight on the lead forward foot is the opposite roller ski rear wheel being in the air. **Breakthrough No.2:** *I am not kicking backward, lifting the rear leg. Rather, the rear wheel of the roller ski is behind me off the ground because 100 percent of my body weight is on the new forward lead ski.*

As I practice weight transfer to the new lead foot, the rear wheel in the air should not slide back on the ground until my feet are at least beside each other. If my balance and weight transfer timing are not good, the rear wheel of the roller ski will make a thud noise as the rear roller ski wheel slams down on the ground before my feet are together. (See Figure 3.) This is a sign of body weight transfer that is more akin to 60 to 40 percent or 50/50 percent.

When my body coordination and timing are good, the rear roller ski wheel will silently connect to the ground when my feet are together or even after the feet have passed each other. This is such a subtle, gentle, and precise body movement that should allow you to ski faster and for longer periods of time with less force. In the 3 frame-by-frame images (See Figure 4) you can see how the byproduct of 100% body weight on the forward foot enables rear-wheel touch-down when feet are together on the arrow.

Skate Skiing's V2 Value

Out of curiosity for a middle-aged skier, this raised the question: *If a classic double-pole is used in marathon-distance*

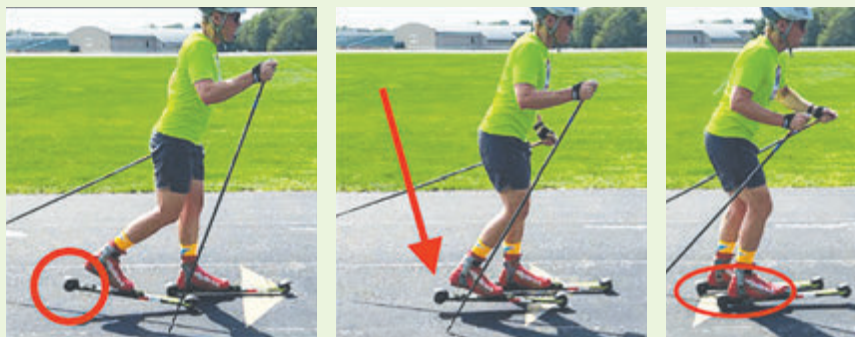


FIGURE 4: Subtle precise weight transfer onto the lead foot as the feet pass enables gentle and silent rear-wheel touchdown. Visually, the arrow on the track calls attention to the subtle yet concise rear-wheel-touchdown body movement coordination and timing. For me, this is a really hard movement and takes a lot of concentration that is totally worth it. You will be able to hear no sound and feel the smoothness when done properly.

FIGURE 5: Upper left quadrant: V2 left foot push onto right foot at 2 o'clock. Upper Right Quadrant: V2 right foot push onto left foot at 11 o'clock. Stay stacked over joints (ankle, knee, and hips) while not allowing your hands to pass beyond the hips on follow-through. Do not extend your arms. Your shoulders, humerus, and radius/ulna remain locked and loaded throughout each motion as you would carry a tray of food in the cafeteria. Leg follow-through ought to occur at 3 o'clock to prevent your hips from rotating. Hips are now aligned with upper and lower body, always pointing directly forward in the direction of travel. Lower Left Quadrant: V2 left foot push onto right foot at 3 o'clock. Lower Right Quadrant: V2 left foot push with right foot follow through at 4:30. The skate push at 3 o'clock leads in a 4:30 or later leg follow through. Consequently, the body kinetic chain breaks to cause unnecessary body twists and rotation. More body movement is now required to return to an aligned neutral athletic body position that results in muscle and tendon soreness and strains.



V2 & Classic Suggestion: Upper body locked-and-loaded impulse downward pole movement derives from core muscles not the triceps. Lower and upper body and the ski are aligned.

skiing when tired, can the skate V2 be used for marathon-distance skate skiing when tired?

After much experimentation and many trials, the answer is yes.

V2 technique is most often associated with skate technique's high-end efforts and sprints. Yet, to the contrary and thinking more thoughtfully, if the application of force in the V2 upper body is greatly reduced while maintaining V2 body coordination and timing, V2 is a more natural, concise, and aligned body movement than the V1.

On skate roller skis and poles, I need to mirror the newly acquired classic ski position for skate roller skiing. Switching to the lower body skate technique, the application of force with each skate side movement is reduced. The reduction of lower and upper body force saves energy over time.

To maintain side-push timing cadence with the quicker metronome beat, I found myself pushing my leg to the side at 2 o'clock versus 3 o'clock. As I pushed to the side at 3 o'clock, my body timing became

late and I could not maintain the quicker metronome beat. Pushing my leg to the side at 2 o'clock and ending at 3 o'clock fixed my body timing to match the quicker metronome beat.

Skiing more upright with body alignment in both classic and skate techniques reduces muscle soreness because the skeletal structure is stacked over bones rather than the body being more spread out, which taxes muscles and tendons. For this aging body, a stacked body position translates into a reduction in muscle soreness after a ski.

Breakthrough No. 3: *The V2 skate technique allows me to ski longer with less forceful effort and, more importantly, without experiencing soreness the next day. The issue now circles back to body coordination, timing, weight transfer, and that metronome once more.*

If you imagine a circle clock around your feet when your feet are together ready for the next skate push, your skate push should start at 2 o'clock rather than 3 o'clock with a 4:30 follow-through. This results in the skate push follow-through

ending at 3:30 rather than 4:30. This equals less lower body twisting and arm movement back to the athletic body position of thumbs to eye level for the next V2 double pole downward impulse paired with the next 11 o'clock skate push on the other foot. (See Figure 5.)

Progressively speed up the metronome beat from the long, graceful drawn-out strides of the 1970s and 1980s by **Ingemar Stenmark** and **Gunde Svan**. As beautiful as the strides of yesteryear look on posters and VHS videotapes, my middle-aged body just cannot gracefully absorb those movements, nor are today's World Cup athletes mimicking those movements. Modern, efficient classic and skate techniques continue to evolve into a stacked body position with short, concise, and punchier movements from the arms and legs.

On the blacktop-covered track, I suggest one or two 30-minute sessions per week at a very low intensity to practice roller skiing. If you are on skate roller skis, pick a lane and *do not let your front wheel cross over the track lane line as you match the progressively quick metronome beat*. Focus on your body coordination, timing, and weight transfer as you vary each lap between V2, V2 with 1-pole (tuck your other pole under your arm), switch poles, free skate, and a (slow) paceline if you are with peers.

A paceline helps all involved to monitor the force applied by the legs to manipulate speed, especially on the lap without poles. If you're on classic roller skis, use that progressively quicker metronome as you work on body position and concise body movements of a single-stick lap, double-pole lap, and one-pole lap, and then switch poles, and paceline if with peers.

Dryland roller skiing *is ideal* for practicing the modern, efficient movement of upright concise stacked body position for cross-country skiing. Reduce the force applied by the legs in the classic and skate weight transfer as well as the upper body to focus on body coordination, timing, and weight transfer. Hopefully, the end result of practicing this evolved classic and skate technique on roller skis is more enjoyment. Ski on! \$

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ICE FISHING
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Trekking Poles:

From Skepticism to a Silver Bullet

Andrea: "I gifted my husband a pair of his own trekking poles after sharing my poles while hiking in Hawaii, where we learned that if we can feel the pole vibrating in the current, we need to be extra careful!" ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANDREA LARSON.

Andrea Larson

I'm an advocate of trekking poles, but it didn't come easy. The stigma of my most dreaded high school and college dryland cross-country ski training sessions, bounding up hills left a distaste for poles anytime I wasn't on skis.

It didn't help that in May 2022, I tried running with poles on a whim. I was completing one of my longest workouts in preparation for a 100-miler the following month with a brick workout: I rollerskied to a trailhead, ditched my rollerski equipment in the woods (my Superman equivalent of a phone booth), and donned my running shoes. During this transition, I came up

with the harebrained idea to keep my rollerski poles for the run.

It was awful.

Although my poles were a tad short for classic rollerskiing, they were still several centimeters too long to use as effective trekking poles. (The proper trekking pole length should be such that your elbow is at a 90-degree angle when planting on flat ground.) It's funny how the weight of these older poles never phased me while rollerskiing; now that I was running with them, they felt like lead weights.

Pushed to Pole

Despite the familiarity of using poles through skiing, I still resisted. The nail in the no-trekking-poles coffin came when

the only racer who did not use poles in the 2022 Barkley Marathon told me that everyone uses poles at Barkley, and Barkley was my sole focus for 2023. It took months before I hit a turning point where poles were no longer a hindrance. Admittedly, it would take many more sessions before I didn't feel like an octopus. By Barkley, the poles became extensions of my arms and it never crossed my mind once to stow my poles.

Over nearly a week on the Superior Hiking Trail, I only collapsed my poles for a handful of the 310 miles so I could spoon my cold-soaked freeze-dried meal out of the bag while on the move. About halfway through, I had an epiphany: *If I didn't have these poles, it would be unlikely I would*

have made it that far lugging all my gear and food for the unsupported effort. Not only did I finish, but because I had used those poles, I was able to recover and don a race bib just 10 days after completing 310 miles on the SHT.

Advantages of Poles

Stability, reducing muscle fatigue by engaging alternative muscles, and reducing the load. These benefits of using poles are accentuated when carrying a heavy pack. Not only does a heavy pack increase the load on our joints and muscles, but it also raises our center of gravity. Trekking poles reduce the load while stabilizing our footing on all sorts of terrain, enabling me to feel more confident during my descents, especially with my history of ankle sprains. During the winter months, trekking poles have saved me from countless slips on snow and ice.

With water crossings, not only do trekking poles increase stability, but they also allow me to test my footing. I can gauge water depth, type of surface (muck vs. slippery rocks), and angle of the footing when I can't visually assess.

Technique and Cadence

Despite the plethora of information on the Internet, I was surprised by the scant instruction on technique. I'm also surprised by the number of people who use poles in a race with little to no training, not heeding the advice to never do anything new on race day.

When single-sticking, one pole should plant as your opposite foot strikes the ground, similar to how our arms swing naturally while walking. However, when going up very steep hills, plant both poles every third time your foot hits the ground for extra power. In either technique, the pole angle should be slightly forward to propel you along the trail on uphill and flats.

If you're new to using poles, you may discover you're a bit sore after early sessions as you recruit your upper body. Unlike skiing, there's no glide phase, so for efficiency, I use the poles to naturally propel me uphill while hiking or running rather than collapsing on my pole.

While descending, I use whatever feels comfortable and most efficient, sometimes using the poles to reduce my speed rather than relying on my quads (in which case the poles should be angled



Trekking poles proved invaluable to chip ice off stepping stones across the frigid Encampment River on a point-to-point run on the Superior Hiking Trail.

backward). Sometimes this means running without using my poles, but often I strategically place my poles to distribute my weight. So, on technical descents, this usually means single-sticking on corners. During jarring descents, I usually plant both poles simultaneously to reduce the stress on my body. During fast descents, I take my hands out of the loops so my arm isn't wrenched and injured if my pole gets snagged, whereas some hikers may prefer to place their palms on the top of the poles. Some hikers also prefer adjustable

poles to lengthen the poles for descents and shorten them for ascents.

Trekking poles help prevent nasty falls and rolls because they provide multiple points of contact. On many occasions, a stumble followed by an abrupt pole plant saved me from ending my day with stitches or a concussion. During summers, overgrown vegetation on singletrack may dictate my poling. Also, steep drop-offs or soft snow may require me to change my pole cadence so I don't have a mis-plant.



Trekking poles have been essential to reduce the load on my body while carrying all my gear on multi-day unsupported efforts, including Fastest Known Times (FKTs) on the Superior Hiking Trail and North Country Trail.

Design Considerations

I initially balked at the dainty-looking trekking pole straps compared to my cross-country ski poles. Aside from Leki, most trekking pole brands use a simple looped strap. However, I discovered that I was able to use the simple pole loop without gloves for days without developing a blister, and the minimalist design also was effective, saved weight, and cooler for my hands in the summer.

Regardless of the pole straps' sophistication, I try not to have a constant grip on

my poles as I learned from skiing. Just as I teach first-time skiers to loop each hand up through the loop before taking hold of the pole shaft, I tighten the strap length to enable releasing the poles between plants to save energy.

Perhaps the best advice I received about trekking poles was to consider aluminum over carbon. Although carbon provided the lightest possible pole, I determined that carrying a broken pole wouldn't help no matter how light it was. I'm anything but graceful, as countless scratches on

me and my Black Diamond Distance Z poles will verify. But my aluminum poles have been bomb-proof. Every time a pole tip jams into a crevice, tangles with a gnarled root, or slides off a slick rock, I'm thankful that I had an aluminum shaft that could withstand 360 degrees of force at unpredictable times. My experience with my carbon ski poles demonstrated that they often snap under those types of forces.

I've been pleasantly surprised by how versatile the carbide tip is on all surfaces: rocks, mud, ice, and crossing rivers. After a thousand miles with my poles, I never switched out from the original carbide tips (unlike my rollerski pole tips, which break at least once a year). There was only one time all winter when the hardpack became a hindrance and the resulting pendulum threw off my gait; the alternative snow basket would have been beneficial. Occasionally, leaves pile on my tips like a shish kabob skewer, but the annoyance is usually short-lived.

Foldable or telescoping poles allow you to stow your poles on flats, non-technical terrain, or instances when you need two hands. My only issue has been some slight corrosion at the joints that made assembly and disassembly difficult. As suggested by the manufacturer, dry silicone spray lubricant improved deployment such that I can now employ/deploy them on the move again.

Advantage You!

In 2010, I scoffed at the use of trekking poles on the 3,000-foot ascent and descent over Hope Pass at the Leadville 100. Going forward, when I return to vie for the top of the podium, I will gladly use trekking poles, which I hope is the silver bullet to save my quads that disastrously shattered my goal to top the podium in 2011.

Even if you are a trekking-pole skeptic as I once was, I encourage you to consider them. And if you're stubborn like me, it may take a while for them to grow on you. But whether you're a backpacker, casual hiker, or trail runner, you'll eventually find them as essential as your footwear. I guarantee you that trekking poles will save you from a digger while reducing the stress on your body so you can continue to enjoy the outdoors all four seasons for many years to come! \$



Superprestige Overijse (Belgium) has a run up/ride down flyover. It's a quick remount at the top!
PHOTO BY DESIREE CARTON.

CYCLOCROSS TRAINING USING UPPER MIDWEST EVENTS

Corey Coogan Cisek

As a coach and athlete, I believe the bulk of fall cyclocross intervals should be off-road.

Get off the road or the trainer and enjoy your efforts in the environment where you will race. It's obviously key to practice one's technical skills, but there are also subtleties to cyclocross that you might not have considered. Dirt, grass, and bumpy ground surfaces require you to distribute your weight and pedal such that you maximize traction. There are tactics to racing cyclocross beyond just "go really hard."

I like to say that cross is a thinking person's discipline. Off-road intervals allow you to practice tactical thinking.

What follows are descriptions of the

workouts and skills sessions I use. To add interest and relevancy, I've designed each session around a popular race in one of our Silent Sports states. Join me on a whirlwind tour of cross events in the Upper Midwest as we train for cross!

Wisconsin

- **Race:** Trek Cup
- **Workout:** Cyclocross Pacing

Our region's marquee event remains the **Trek Cup at the Waterloo, Wisconsin**, headquarters of Trek Bikes (trekbikes.com/us/en_US/trekcxcup). For seven years, Trek welcomed the world to Wisconsin as the event was a stop on the UCI Cyclocross World Cup. Regrettably, in 2024/2025, the World Cup will be contested entirely in Europe. Unfortunately, it's not so much of a "World" Cup anymore.

Trek has rallied and put its money and brand name behind the **Trek USCX Series**. The USCX Series is a 4-weekend series with UCI and amateur racing in Roanoke, Rochester, Baltimore, and Waterloo. With eight events over four consecutive weekends, the hope is that more Europeans will make the journey over to race.

The Trek Cup course is deceptively difficult. One of my favorite parts is the long drag from pit one to the first flyover. The flyover hits you like a wall! The trouble is that one tends to attack the drag, leaving nothing for the flyover. The ideal way to ride this section is to hold back until just before the flyover. Then, attack, hitting the flyover at max speed so that momentum carries you part way up. Give it your all up the flyover, knowing you can recover on the backside.

This brings us to our workout:
Cyclocross pacing.

While it's tempting to pace cyclocross using "full gas" from the gun, that's far from the most efficient way to pace a cyclocross course! For the session, go to your local park and create a loop that's three to four minutes long. As you put together your loop, consider where to attack, maintain speed, or recover. You will do a series of efforts at race pace (the speed you can hold for the entirety of your normal race duration). A routine of two to three sets of ten to twelve minutes with five to six minutes of rest in between is ideal.

Your focus during these efforts is complying with your attack/maintain/recover plan. If after your first set you find your strategy isn't optimal, revise the plan for subsequent sets. Take what you learn from this training session to upcoming races. On race day, use your pre-ride to determine your attack/maintain/recover.

Minnesota

- **Race: Tuesday Night Cross**
- **Workout: 4-Up Hill Repeats**

Since I live in Minnesota, I can attest that Minnesota cyclocross is in a bit of a rebuilding phase at the moment. We have very little in the way of weekend racing, but our Tuesday Night Cross series is thriving! The series is seven weeks long, starting in late August and ending in October.

Tuesday Night Cross rotates between two locations, **Aquila Park** and **Valley View Park**, each in inner-ring suburbs of the Twin Cities. Both parks are small but have a hill. While the hills are short, the parks' small size means the courses wind up and down them repeatedly. Adding some early-season heat to the mix, I find these races some of the hardest of my season. Check out: endurancepromotions.com/Default.aspx.

This brings us to our workout:
Cyclocross hill repeats.

I've devised a simple (and painful!) workout that prepares me for Tuesday Night Cross. Search out an off-road hill that is 20 to 30 seconds long. After a good warmup, you will do sets of four repeats. Climb the hill, ride down immediately, and repeat right away. Yes, your only rest is the descent, but you only climb four times to complete a set. Aim for three sets with eight to ten minutes of easy spinning rest in between.

I do these over my race pace — think 80% of a full-gas sprint. Adjust your pacing to make these manageable. They should hurt, but not so much that you cannot complete three good sets.

Iowa

- **Race: Jingle Cross (RIP)**
- **Skills Session: Off-Camber Descending Turns**

I hope you will excuse me for using a retired race, but Jingle Cross is one to remember!

Jingle Cross was a trendsetter: the location of the first U.S. World Cup and the first with equal payouts to men and women at a UCI race. The course at Iowa City's Johnson County Fairgrounds was among the most challenging in the world. Just ask the Euros who came over and lauded the course.

The most memorable course feature was the S-turn descents down Mt. Krumpit. I'll never forget a November evening when the grass tore off and the frost shone in the moonlight. Wisconsin native **Kaitie**



For Corey, the 2023 Exact Cross in Essen, Belgium, was endless running. Shouldering the bike was the best choice.

PHOTO BY ROGER VANDEBOSCH.



Corey cresting the top of a sand hill in Lille, Belgium. Push the bike on firm ground to gain speed before remounting.

PHOTO BY ROGER VANDEBOSCH.

Keough won the women's race by shouldering her bike and sprinting downhill.

*This brings us to our workout: **Off-camber descending turns.***

Line choice is key for off-camber descending turns. Most riders err by sticking close to the center turn post. This causes them to dive straight down the fall line, catching maximum speed. The grass tears away under their braking power. Instead, turn slightly uphill before the turn. This slows you down, puts you into the grass for traction, and creates more space to negotiate your turn without hitting the bottom tape. When turning, aim diagonally at the lower tape. This cuts you across the fall line, flattening your descent.

Last, keep your weight back and use your front brake when turning. You will find the front brake helps to bring the turn around.

Michigan

- **Race: Vets Park**
- **Workout: Recovering on a Technical Descent**

For Michigan, we bring you Vets Park CX in Ann Arbor, the fourth stop in the MICX series, held in 2024 on October 27. Vets Park can be summarized in two words: Vertical and Technical. The course's major climb is steep and organizers bring you into it from a tight turn—momentum killer!

What goes up must come down and the descents at Vets Park are relentless turns and off-cambers. The course rewards riders who can recover while descending. Likewise, they need to be able to ride technically well when fatigued. Check out: bikereg.com/vets-park-cx.

*This brings us to our workout: **Recovering on a Technical descent.***

We can bring together some of the above lessons to prepare for Vets Park. The pacing discussed for the Trek Cup is handy. Consider holding back on the descent to prepare for the climb. Likewise, the lines and techniques discussed for Jingle Cross apply here too.

For the workout, set up a course that has a technical descent followed by a very steep climb. Make sure there is a tight turn before the climb so you cannot carry speed in. Aim for sets of five to eight minutes repeated three times with four to five minutes rest in between.



Play around with intensity. How hard can you attack the climb without losing your technical proficiency on the descent?

I'm not going to sugarcoat it: up/down intervals are hard, but they will prepare you for race day!

Illinois

- **Race: Montrose Beach CX**
- **Workout: Sand Riding**

Since we have few sand races in the Midwest, I simply must include **Montrose Beach CX**, the final race of the Chicago CX Series and the Illinois State Championships (halfacrecycling.org/montrose-cx). Montrose Harbor is in the city of Chicago proper and on the shore of Lake Michigan. A section of the course meanders on and off the beach.

*This brings us to our workout: **It's time to practice sand riding!***

Most of us only get to race short stretches of sand: a volleyball court, children's playground, or short beach. In those cases, you would select tire tread and pressure based on the rest of the course (the majority), not the sand. However, at a course like Montrose, with significant sand, you would lower your tire pressure and select a cross tire with minimal tread.

The most important sand skill is knowing when to ride and when to run. The logic is simple: anytime you're slowing such that it's almost faster to run, it's time to get off.

For this session, find yourself a stretch

of sand that's difficult or impossible for you to ride. Play around with how far you can ride. Once you determine your *failure point*, practice dismounting *before* this point. The aim is to get off while you still have speed and can transition that speed to a run.

Should you push or carry your bike?

Rarely does it make sense to push a bike in sand because that means pushing against resistance. Only push if there is a well-developed rut in the sand.

To determine whether to suitcase or shoulder, assess the distance you will run. If it's more than a few meters, it's better to shoulder. It takes more time to get the bike on the shoulder, but once it's there, you carry it on your bone structure. This is less fatiguing than suitcasing the bike, which is a muscular move.

It's fitting to wrap up this article with Montrose Beach since it's in the first week in December, nearly the bitter end of Midwest cross. The only race after Montrose Beach is the **U.S. Nationals**, December 9–15 in Louisville. Per USA Cycling's geographic rotation policy, Nationals isn't likely to be held in the Midwest again for several years. Accordingly, it might be worth making the trip!

Wherever you CX, take these workouts to heart, give them a try, make them suit you and enjoy them, and then — discover the positives they will bring to your CX racing experience! ♡



And They Golf Here Too

At the Northwood's Newest Silent Sports Destination



The NICA team perfects their rock skills on optional lines over Heal Creek's abundant boulders.

ALL PHOTOS BY CHRIS SCHOTZ.

Chris Schotz

A dream 20 years from conception has been born out of the hardwoods surrounding the Northwoods Golf Course just a few minutes from the city of Rhinelander and two miles from an airport with daily jet service. As a sporadic golfer myself, I can still appreciate the beauty of Northwoods, which has 18 holes carved out of hills once owned by timber companies, now owned by the City of Rhinelander. Along the forested fairways, we see deer every day as well as the woodchuck that lives at the end of the driving range. Turtles love the rocky water hazards and country club life seems to suit them fine.

This course is not a pasture with rows of shrubs. This is wilderness golf. I've heard

that Northwoods is a challenge and I can attest that some trails appear a veritable Easter egg hunt of lost Titleists and Top Flites.

XC in the Making

The silent sports potential of the property goes back 25 years to the discovery of the area by Nordic skiers, including **Lee and Judy Swank** who owned hundreds of acres of adjacent land and welcomed ski trails from the golf course parking lot. Northwoods Nordic volunteers and the city golf course committee have a long-standing partnership with a history of great grooming, signage, and events, including last year's **Ski for Light**, a national event with 300 guides for the visually impaired packed into a warm clubhouse and moderately difficulty trails.

Northwoods has hosted the state **Nordic ski championship** and three years of the **Heal Creek Dog Dash**, where spectators can sit in the clubhouse and watch the half-way turn of a weekend of sled-dog racing. Rhinelander Brewing embraced the event with a special Mushers Brew, and trails are open for skijoring on Sundays and Wednesdays. These trails are a joy for dog mushers because they're groomed solid so paws don't punch through the surface. A tethered bike-jour has already been pioneered on the new mountain bike trails that are the buzz this year.

Trail advocate and shop owner **Al Jozwiak** had been talking with the Swanks for decades and group rides had even been held on roughed-out deer paths ages ago. But the project remained stalled



Oh, Yes - a dream ride of adventure! Test pilots on the final downhill with four options from green to double black diamond.

by too many moving pieces waiting for the dam to break and inundate the area with tremendous potential.

Lee and Judy Swank have been called the most generous people in the Northwoods. Lee has long been a patron of Rhinelander athletics with generous contributions, including funds that got the **Hodag Dome** off the ground, and he'd considered donating the Heal Creek acres for a long time, even before Judy's cancer diagnosis. It was a question of when and where to seal the deal.

City personnel finally gave him the confidence that the land would be managed with his silent sports vision and the land donation was finalized.



Making use of what's available from the golf course - up, over, and through on the 5th fairway.

Skiing Forward

Rather than the golf course committee, the property will be managed by the city parks department under the direction of **Jeremy Biolo**. His understanding of the outdoors gave Swank enough assurance to finalize the transfer and get the Heal Creek concept moving toward a system of multiple users and multiple trailheads. According to Biolo, it capitalizes on "existing infrastructure and proven trail organizations for a year-round, multi-sport, and nature-based outdoor activity" destination, as **Joel Knutson's** original proposal began. "No other public recreation area in the Northwoods, let alone one situated so close to a city, would have such broad offerings and capacity," Biolo said.

Biolo made it happen because somebody said he couldn't.

Arduous grant writing and legwork proceeded. **IMBA Trail Solutions** laid out a general map and a mile of concept trail was built around the parking lot and 10th fairway. I became part of the story last fall when **Double Schotz Trailcraft** was hired to move the dirt with me on the excavator and my wife, Candy, making me look good with the finishing touches, including root cutting, raking, and rock arrangement. The terrain and support of the city have made it a pleasure to work at the golf course. We never took advantage of the beverage cart in the initial stages before the project moved away from the golf course into the more remote terrain intersecting ski trails.

Rarely logged hardwood forests reveal



Candy Schotz and John Kilgust love cedar and stone taking them through trails and trees.

stunning terrain, and quality mineral soils and frequent boulder deposits give plenty of opportunity for playful trail building. The parks department has made sure this is a one-of-a-kind trail experience with winding cedar boardwalks across cozy wetlands and features such as the decommissioned golf cart along the 5th fairway with a ramp up, over, and through.

Welcome!

As summer ended, the six-mile green "everybody" loop was finally opened to eager NICA riders, who gave the flow and optional advanced features high marks. A young rider declared, "Those tabletops are mint!" which I later learned means they are "sick" or "very nice." Local Uberlegger **Chis Koeppel** has been out of middle school for a short while and called the trails "spectacular," which also means "sick." He loved how they "integrate perfectly with nature." That means that it doesn't look like a bomb went off in the forest.

Lines have the curves of a creek and the finish of a country club. To be honest, it's Candy who made the trail look beautiful by raking out a pristine tread and trimming the fringes so that no random roots are protruding like corpses. The Heal Creek hills have abundant rocks so she's taught me which to pile for effect, which are there to armor dirt features, and which giant stones are a feature in their own right. We're mindful of sight lines to let the rider flow and reveal the scenery to spectators.

By the close of fall, another stacked loop will take riders past more stony hills and

a working beaver pond that will draw the birds to nest. Next year, more advanced loops will bring the mileage to around 15 miles with varied lines including rocky technicality and gravity options for all abilities. A skills area near the trailhead will use skinnies and rocks to keep the kids from doing wheelies in the parking lot while golfers unload their clubs. The coexistence of golf and silent sports will have to be managed, but it's been done successfully before in several locations. Riders will be reminded to respect the golfers' experiences by staying on trail and keeping their hooting to a minimum.

Après Kicking Back

I'm looking forward to unwinding in the clubhouse after a ride. There's no dress code, but I felt more comfortable at the bar in a button shirt last time. There was a nice amber and IPA on tap, and the menu was solid. Several flatbread pizzas get no complaints and the Friday fish fry starts at 11 a.m. The Heal Creek property is on its way to becoming the multi-use haven of the Northwoods, with so many options including Heal Creek itself, a Class II trout stream.

Come to Rhinelander for a ski or Dog Dash in winter or hop across Highway 8 to ski or ride the Washburn Lake trails with a warmup in the Judy Swank shelter on the shore of Perch Lake. Washburn Trails host the annual **RASTA Rally** and **Rock N Root** mountain bike races, and they will have additional groomed fat biking this winter. RASTA (Rhinelander Area Silent Sports Association) also hosts a Snowshoe Hare race and a Global Fat Bike Day.

Rhinelander has a half dozen groomed Nordic trails, including the certified venue at CAVOC which hosts NCAA and USCSA races. RASTA grooms three fat bike trails, including the uniquely remote Enterprise system that will open a new loop this winter. The Mud Lake trails at **Camp Tesomas** will see racing return this fall with Rhinelander's first NICA race, giving the home team a chance to shine. I got a chance to see those big kids shine on a test piloting run at Heal Creek. Some of those kids went way bigger than I imagined. Boulders I imagined as slow rollovers became launch pads to the vertically inclined. It was a joy to see the feature giving everybody a fun time.


It's going to be a busy place. ☘



Jet Biolo keeps the team flowing on wide berms on the way to more nice surprises.



Some roll where others fly. Jet Biolo makes a playground of the table tops on a frisky downhill.

A man and a woman are riding e-bikes on a trail. The man is on a blue e-bike and the woman is on a green e-bike. They are both wearing helmets and casual clothing. The background is a dense forest with autumn-colored foliage.

Giant Talon E+ 29 e-bike and Liv Rove E+ Laurel e-bike. These pedal-assisted e-bikes will allow you to explore new places, roads, and trails without worrying about whether you can go the distance and enjoy the scenery.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF
HOSTEL SHOPPE.

UNDERSTANDING E-BIKES

THE POWER TO KEEP YOU PEDALING ON!

Scott Cole

Who would have thought 15 to 20 years ago that we would be selling so many electric-assist bicycles and electric-assist recumbent trikes to our customers? E-bikes are bicycles that assist you with power when pedaling. We see customers from all different backgrounds, including those who might have once been a competitive cyclist or a daily bike commuter, weekend cycling enthusiast, or someone who hasn't ridden a bicycle in many years.

The bicycle industry has many different types of e-bikes to choose from that can help people enjoy cycling again. Most people looking at e-bikes want something that will make it easier for them to get out and not have to deal with the normal struggles that come with riding a traditional bicycle.

A Way to Keep Going

I'm starting to see a trend in my circle of friends and customers. Many aren't able to ride the way they once did and are having

problems keeping up with their friends or partners, but they still want to get out and bike for recreation, fitness, and fun. This is what brings them through our doors at the Hostel Shoppe.

Every week, we have people coming in to look for an e-bike or an e-recumbent trike for themselves or their partners because they are struggling to enjoy cycling, their partner cannot keep up on a ride, or they hate cycling their favorite routes with hills or in windy weather conditions that make their ride not very enjoyable. We also see the distances they used to ride decline. Once we find the right type of e-bike, we can get them back to riding their favorite routes and having fun.

A great example is when my sales manager at the Hostel Shoppe recently purchased an e-assist mountain bike. On his first ride at our hilly mountain bike park, he rode longer and farther than he had in some time, adding that it was the most mountain-biking fun he'd experienced in a long time.

Choosing the Right E-Bike for You

In the bike world, there are kids bikes, comfort bikes, fitness bikes, cargo bikes, road bikes, gravel bikes, fat bikes, and mountain bikes, as well as the recumbent trikes we specialize in here at the Hostel Shoppe. You can easily find the type of e-bike that fits your needs and the type of cyclist you are.

Without getting too technical, there are three different classes of e-bikes. **Class 1** is where the motor provides assistance when you pedal and will assist you up to 20 mph; at that speed, the motor-assist stops. **Class 2** has a motor assist up to 20 mph when you pedal, but it also is equipped with a throttle that doesn't require you to pedal while getting that assist up to 20 mph. **Class 3** is only pedal assist, like Class 1, but the pedal assist will take you up to 28 mph before the motor assist stops.

I recommend Class 1 assist for new customers getting into e-bikes, but that is solely a decision of the customer and we try to guide them to the right class of

e-bike when initially talking with them. Depending on your location, some classes, especially Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes, may not be allowed on certain bike paths or trail systems in your area according to state or local regulations. We recommend checking into the access rules for e-bikes in your area or where you are planning on riding before making a purchase.

Motor Stuff to Know

There are two different types of motor systems for bikes and trikes. First, there is the mid-drive motor, which is mounted in the frame where the crank arms are attached. Second, the rear-wheel-hub drive motor. Both systems can sometimes be adapted to your current bicycle that you own, depending on compatibility.

Both types of assist systems can add up to 25 pounds to the weight of a traditional or recumbent trike. The average weight of most e-bikes seems to be right around the 50 to 60-pound range. The mid-drive motor gives a more normal-pedaling feel, similar to your traditional bicycle. It also keeps the weight of the system lower and if for any reason the e-assist failed to work, you could still ride your bike like a traditional bike to get to your destination.

A rear-wheel hub drive motor can make the assist feel like you're being pushed from behind when pedaling. This system can be slightly more complicated if you were to have a flat tire or a system failure, as it can be more difficult to remove the rear wheel from the bike or trike. Also, if the assist fails to work, it can be harder to pedal to the end of your ride.



Breanna VandeHey, Hostel Shoppe owner, and Scott Cole, Hostel Shoppe General Manager, enjoying an e-recumbent test ride where there are no worries about not being able to ride together with the pedal assist power that make cyclists more comfortable and compatible on rides.

**Hase Kettwiesel
Evo Shimano STEPS
E-Recumbent trike has a delta configuration – one wheel in front and two in back – that offers ease of getting on and off that is not only comfortable but also offers an exceptionally sporty performance with the Shimano STEPS pedal assisted e-assist motor that will make cycling fun again.**



An oft-asked question is how long the battery lasts on a charge. Most e-bikes or e-trikes will have a range of from 30 to 60 miles, depending on what level of assist you use. Motor and battery size will also determine the mileage range, so make sure and ask about these two important components when shopping for your first e-bike or e-trike.

Also, e-bike systems will have multiple assist levels for you to choose from. If you ride on the highest assist level, your mileage range will be lower; if you ride on the lowest assist level, your range in miles will be higher. Other factors can be where you ride. A hilly route can shorten your assist range, and how you shift during your ride can help make the range either longer or shorter. Battery recharging usually takes anywhere from 3 to 6 hours depending on the system and can have anywhere from

500 to 1,000 charge cycles.

Before Deciding ...

My final word of advice: *Take the time to test ride whatever type of e-bike or e-recumbent trike you are interested in power device.*

My wife initially needed to adjust to the heavier weight of her new e-bike and, after a few rides, she was not only fine with it but also dropping me on our rides! Also, make sure that the e-assist system is supported by the manufacturer in case you have questions, system updates, or technical problems with your e-bike or e-recumbent trike.

Never again say you can't ride a bicycle when you have all these great options that are available out in the world now to keep you active. They will help you keep pedaling onward! 💰

A promotional advertisement for Hostel Shoppe. It features a man riding a mountain bike on a trail next to a lake. In the background, there are trees and a sign that says "HOSTEL SHOPPE BICYCLES". The text "Bike Sale - Select Models up to 45% Off" is overlaid on the image. At the bottom, the address "3201 John Joanis Dr., Stevens Point" and phone number "800-233-4340" are listed, along with the website "www.hostelshoppe.com".

Bike Sale - Select Models up to 45% Off

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COVID, LONG COVID & OUR COMMUNITY OF ATHLETES

WHY IT STILL MATTERS

Aaron Teasdale cycling pre-COVID.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AARON TEASDALE.



Kierstin Kloeckner

Writing an article about something most are exhausted talking or hearing about isn't easy, but sometimes it needs to be done.

Over the past 4.5 years, I have been working with and caring for athletes and clients who have experienced COVID—most multiple times. Because our entire lives were changed and shaped by the first

1 to 2 years of the pandemic, many got to the point of not wanting to deal with it any longer and brush COVID aside as if it were on the same playing field as a basic cold or flu. Over the years, however, I've encountered more and more people, many otherwise healthy with no known underlying health issues, who are suffering from something much bigger than a cold or flu.

Long COVID, or Long Haul COVID, is something rarely talked about in the sports world, and that's pretty terrifying

when you hear about how it affects people.

I write this not to fearmonger or preach. I write this to shed light on what many are going through and why we shouldn't sweep the conversations under a rug and pretend COVID today and going forward is nothing serious. After all, when a recent study in *BMC [BioMed Central] Infectious Diseases* states that across eighteen universities, 4 percent of their athletes who tested positive for COVID between the spring of 2020 and spring of 2021 suffered

AARON TEASDALE'S LONG COVID ORDEAL

I was essentially in bed for the next year, wrecked in ways I never imagined were possible. It felt as if every atom in my body was weighted by a lead blanket too heavy for me to move. It's a level of cellular fatigue that is impossible to understand, I think, unless you feel it. As someone who craved adventure and thrived on physically pushing myself in the mountains—on snow, singletrack, the river, and the wildest places I could find—the inability to even walk to the end of my driveway without my heart rate skyrocketing was devastating. But it was the cognitive breakdown that was even scarier. I literally couldn't think. I'm a writer and I couldn't think of words from my basic vocabulary. Writing a page in my journal could leave me exhausted and unable to function for the rest of the day.

After trying every imaginable medication to heal, with the help of a doctor, at a Long COVID clinic, I started to see slight improvement after one year when I started a daily breathwork practice to reset my autonomic nervous system, which had been completely scrambled. A few months later,



Willing to share the personal and the difficult because it still matters: an athlete long-term sidelined by Long COVID, a year in bed.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AARON TEASDALE.

I'd carefully built myself up—by gradually re-wiring my injured nervous system—to gentle skiing again, which caused me literal tears of joy.

The year-plus since then has been a gradual recovery marked by long plateaus and occasional setbacks. I believe this illness to be what's known as an acquired brain injury that throttles our central nervous system. It's been shown that COVID infiltrates our brain and nervous system, as anyone who has lost their taste or smell can attest. Recovery then requires healing our nervous system and our brain, which can take time and unremitting, gentle-yet-persistent effort, and an intentional neurological re-wiring, similar to what someone recovering from a stroke may deal with. Unfortunately, doctors don't understand how to do this, so we're left to fend for ourselves in a kind of Recovery Wild West teeming with desperate patients, hucksters, and poisonous pessimists.

Despite what some people will tell you, recovery is possible—I'm proof. Based on the much higher amounts of serious illness and death it produces, COVID is not a cold and not the flu, and anyone who says it is truly doesn't know what they are talking about. ☞

from long COVID, we need to be aware of what this may mean.

Another study published by **The Physician and Sportsmedicine** (journal) in 2024 links a greater risk for athletes participating in sports that have a higher cardiovascular demand (versus other athletes with a lower cardiovascular demand) with a higher risk of Long COVID. This is often the opposite of what we often think and have been told in the past.

For the Sake of Ourselves

As athletes, we frequently have the "tough as nails" approach about ourselves: We think we're healthier and stronger, physically and mentally, than most, and that we have a rock-solid immune system. For some, that's the case...until it isn't.

Aaron Teasdale, a friend who has always been strong in backcountry wilderness travel (skiing, hiking, cycling, and more) was infected with COVID while taking Amtrak across the country on New Year's Eve 2021 by the Amtrak staff. Teasdale, an adventurer, well-known writer, and someone I look up to, explained his experience



"Out with my sons again!" Teasdale in this selfie is finally getting to be active with his sons once again on his road to recovery.

with Long COVID as shown in this article's sidebar.

Teasdale has been working with scientists and physicians around the country on not only who is more susceptible to Long COVID, but also how it affects those who contract it long-term and what is available for treatment. As to athletes who turn their heads away from the warnings, he said, "It has long been recognized by clinicians that Long COVID often strikes athletes the hardest. I was the last person you would have expected to be laid low by COVID."

Beware the Mild Cases

While it's true that COVID appears to be mild for many people, we don't yet fully understand what's happening "under the hood." COVID has significant effects on our cardiovascular system. A very fit friend of mine who I've climbed and skied mountains with now has a pacemaker and can't ski at all after his infection. Cardiologists studying COVID's effects are concerned about what they're seeing and future repercussions, which could include increased heart attacks and unnecessarily shortened lifespans.

Neurologists share this concern. Studies have shown that COVID infections, even when asymptomatic, reduce the brain's gray matter by up to 2 to 4 percent¹. Many people feel challenges with executive function and the dreaded brain fog, which is much worse than the name implies, for months after otherwise recovering from their infections. Neurologists studying this are worried about increasing rates of early-onset dementia and rising stroke rates. They're trying to raise the alarm, but few seem to be listening.

COVID may be mild for some people, but not for everyone. A sane society would be taking greater measures to control spread, starting with investments in indoor air ventilation and filtration—in schools, workplaces, and our homes. That this isn't happening across America is the most potentially self-destructive and myopic thing this side of climate change. It's also quite easy to be mindful of tight, crowded indoor spaces and mask from time to time when appropriate, and certainly whenever on airplanes or public transportation, which can reduce your risk considerably. You can also eat outside when the weather allows.

When cases go up, as they did during this last summer, I adapt my behavior to reduce my odds of getting infected again. It's not hard and not much of a sacrifice. Being sick for two years—*that's* a sacrifice.

I also have multiple friends who have flown to or from Europe in the past year while testing positive for COVID. That's very disappointing to me. You never know how many people you may transmit the virus to and how much they might suffer. What if they get sick like I did? What if they get dementia or have a stroke or heart attack in two years? People are still dying from this.

Sadly, Teasdale is not the only athletic friend I know who has suffered from Long COVID. Two other cycling friends of mine, who chose to stay anonymous, had very similar experiences over the past couple of years. Their heart rates would skyrocket with even an easy spin on the bike and both were taken out of group rides, events, and races for over a year. This may seem like a pittance to some, but to have an athlete stay stationary for over a year takes a huge toll on their mental health as well as their physical health.

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Professional and Personal Responses

Because I work with those who are immunosuppressed, it's become my new normal to socialize more outside, wear masks, and not place myself in crowded indoor spaces when the rates are high. I do so because I would feel terrible if I spread something to my clients, but also because my bout with COVID a couple of years ago was a huge wake-up call.

What seemed would be a fast recovery (I tested negative after my five-day dose of Paxlovid), I pushed myself in training too soon. All of the symptoms not only came roaring back, but also with a much greater intensity. They also left me feeling like a waste of a human for weeks.

But I got off lucky.

I was almost 100 percent after a month. But witnessing what friends with Long COVID are going through makes me never want to experience it again. And it has been proven that each time you get COVID, your chances of Long COVID increase.²

With so much still unknown to us, and athletes hating to be sidelined, I think it's time we examine what we need to do to keep ourselves and others healthy since there is still no cure, and rates are yet again increasing. \$

ENDNOTES

1 Have your doubts? Please read *Scientific American* March 13th, 2024 by Ziyad Al-Aly; September 21, 2021, article by Beth Daley, *The Conversation*, and updated versions, which include brain scan studies and sources; See also *National Library of Medicine*, *National Center for Biotechnology Information* at ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10063523; and the BBC's: *Scans reveal how COVID may change the brain* at bbc.com/news/health-60591487.

2 *Scientific American*, February 15, 2023, *Do Repeat COVID Infections Increase the Risk of Severe Disease or Long COVID?*



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Improving Your Fall Color Photos

Dave Foley

During the first two weeks in October, when the fall color season is at its peak in the northern parts of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan, I look for any excuse to head outside with my camera. When I was in college, I thought my career path was leading me toward photography. So, when the leaves started turning, I set out to capture the magnificence of autumn's red, yellow, and orange fall foliage on film. From articles in camera magazines and by studying the work of photo artists, I learned much about how to capture the splendor of this vibrant autumn color show.

Through my photos and their captions that follow, I offer some techniques I've used that have helped me do a better job recording digital images of turning leaves. Especially with advances in smartphone camera technology, when you are out for your run, hike, paddle, or bike and discover that must-photograph moment, I hope this guidance will enhance the images you preserve forever. ☞



A photo that says much more than the proverbial thousand words! Some of the best photo opportunities await those who hike along rivers with high banks.



A complete autumn palate! Photographing color at the edge of lakes creates reflections that doubles the amount of visible color. In this photo, white birch with a backdrop of fall color, a reflecting lake, and a canoer to add interest make for an arresting autumn photo.



Don't forget to go for the closeup photo! They reveal nature's wonders beyond amazing colors, such as in the complex and patterned texture in the structure of the leaves.



In autumn, the early morning and late afternoon sunlight tints nature in a golden quality and creates contrasts, which is ideal for capturing fall color.



Take a photo of your home when the color is at its peak, also noting that using the sky as a backdrop makes your groupings of leaves stand out.



To add interest, position a kayak or a person in with the fall color, remembering that while river trips will reveal some amazing fall color, be sure you have a waterproof case for your camera. Also, that good photo opportunities are found among leaves sitting on the ground or upon the water.

If you're going backpacking in the fall, keep the camera handy. Note, too, the contrasting colors of the bright green/yellow leaves arching over the darker mystery of what awaits, enhancing both the image and memories of your adventure!



Don't discount the simple, single, or small. One leaf floating in the lake is all that's needed to produce a stunning image.



It's not just bright blue sky or golden sunsets that can enhance the colors and interest of your photos. Positioning backlit leaves with a shadow in the background provides a contrast that also enhances the striking color.

Lost in the fog, a canoeing misadventure

When I was a teacher, rather than drive the 5.8-mile commute from my home on Lake Mitchell to Cadillac Junior High, I left the car at home, preferring to run to work instead. In 1984, I purchased a solo canoe and realized that I could do my commute through Lake Mitchell and Lake Cadillac by water. And that became my preferred route to the junior high during the spring and fall.

Usually on the water by 6:30, I often watched the rising sun burn away wisps of mist hanging over the water like a feathery veil as my paddle strokes pushed the canoe across the lake. Rarely did I encounter another watercraft. Screeching seagulls flying overhead and flocks of geese or ducks on their seasonal migrations were my companions on my paddle journey.

Most days the lake was calm. Occasionally a wind would come up and I'd have to make an earnest effort to plow through the waves. But the most worrisome weather was fog. That weather circumstance led to my most unsettling paddle trip.

It was the first day of school; a staff workday. When I slid the canoe into the water, the sun was rising into a cloudless blue sky. I paddled into the lake, pointed my bow toward the state park, and began the 2.5-mile crossing. The fog came fast. One minute I was looking across the lake toward the state park sand beach and the opening for the canal, and suddenly the landscape disappeared, swallowed by a gray curtain.

That wouldn't usually be a problem. I'd set my compass for 125 degrees, lay it on the canoe's floor, and follow that bearing into the fog, knowing that even though I couldn't see my destination, I would likely be close to the canal when I reached Lake Mitchell's far shore. This was before GPS existed so the compass was my only option. But this being the first day of school and my first paddling commute, I had forgotten the compass.

Enveloped in dense fog, I was somewhere in the middle of Lake Mitchell with no idea which direction to go. To just continue paddling meant I'd probably end up going in a circle. And it wasn't like I could wait for the fog to lift. There was a district-wide teachers' meeting starting at 8 a.m. I had to rely on what I could hear that I couldn't see.

I knew Highway M55 ran along the south shore of the lake. By keeping the traffic noise to my right, I made progress toward the east side of the lake. The shore's dim outline finally came into view. As I drew closer, cottages appeared and I knew I was within a couple hundred yards from the mouth of the canal.



On foggy days, you really feel like you are paddling into a gray nothingness.

PHOTO BY CYNDY FOLEY.

At the end of the canal as I entered Lake Cadillac, the fog lifted and the sun appeared. Having lost time trying to paddle through the murk, I increased my stroke rate. About twenty minutes later, I landed at a cottage where I kept my canoe during the day. Carrying my paddles, I jogged across Chestnut Street to the junior high.

The parking lot filled with cars and I was about 5 minutes late. I approached the building, hoping I could sneak in and not be noticed. But as I reached the door, it opened and Superintendent Fred Carroll greeted me.

Startled to see him there, I blurted out, "Dr. Carroll, I'm sorry I'm late, I got lost in the fog paddling across the lake."

Carroll laughed and said, "That's the best excuse I've ever heard for being late."

I continued paddling a canoe or kayak to school until I retired in 2003, but never left home without a compass and was never late again. ☺

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