

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <https://www.djreprints.com>.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/his-top-fitness-challenge-dodge-the-charging-moose-11549108944>

HEALTH | WHAT'S YOUR WORKOUT?

His Top Fitness Challenge: Dodge the Charging Moose

A Seattle professor takes his cross-country skiing up a notch by avoiding the groomed trails everyone else uses



Jonathan Karpoff, a professor of finance at the University of Washington in Seattle, wakes at dawn to ski the wild terrain at Fish Lake Sno-Park. PHOTO: DANIEL SILVERBERG FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

By Jen Murphy

Feb. 2, 2019 7:02 a.m. ET

Some people use music or a workout buddy to push them faster. Jonathan Karpoff gets his extra boost from avoiding wild animals.

An avid skate skier, Mr. Karpoff frequently goes off the Nordic course and into wilderness areas where he encounters those creatures, plus the occasional coyote. “When you see a young bull moose crashing through some bushes a few yards ahead, it definitely nudges you to ski a little faster,” he says.

A finance professor at the University of Washington in Seattle, Mr. Karpoff, 61, discovered skate skiing 25 years ago. “I saw two guys come off the ski trail on skate skis gushing to one another, ‘I’ve never enjoyed a new sport so much,’” he recalls. The next week, the longtime cross-country skier bought shorter, stiffer skate skis and signed up for a lesson.

In classic cross-country skiing, the skis are parallel and each arm works with the opposite leg. Skate-ski technique involves a lateral movement and both arms work with each leg in a technique known as double polling. “With classic, you just shuffle along,” he says. “Skate forces you to be more dynamic and athletic and for me, the appeal is going faster.”

Mr. Karpoff started skiing on groomed trail systems around Seattle. He quickly started to suffer from what he calls goldfish syndrome—boredom from skiing multiple loops of the same short trail. Craving longer, more challenging terrain, he began to venture onto logging roads, meadows and groomed snowmobile areas.

The state of Washington has roughly 80 Sno-Park areas designated for snowmobiling. “Snowmobilers, it turns out, hit the trails later in the morning,” he says. “If I go early, I have a winter wonderland to myself.” It took him about three years to build up the endurance to ski 20 or more miles. “There’s a lot more climbing involved,” he says. “But you get an extra thrill from the remoteness.” Mr. Karpoff dubbed his new activity adventure skate skiing and even created a website dedicated to sharing skate ski-friendly wilderness areas around Seattle.

His winter training, he says, prepares him for an annual epic adventure where he skate skis 44 miles in a single day.

The Workout

Mr. Karpoff tries to be active four days a week. He skate skis with friends one morning a week for two hours on groomed trails. On weekends, he goes alone to a wilderness area outside of Seattle and will skate ski for two to three hours. “It’s hard to find people willing to wake up early and put in a hard workout on the weekend,” he says.

He runs outdoors for 40 minutes at least once a week and follows a route with hills. On weekends he’ll run or, if weather permits, mountain bike, for two hours. Mr. Karpoff used to lift weights, but he says he regularly pulled or strained muscles.

Just over a year ago he switched to resistance bands after reading that New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady uses them. Mr. Karpoff does a strength routine with the bands twice a week in a gym area he set up in his garage. Depending on how much time he has, he’ll spend 15 to 45 minutes doing exercises, including chest presses, rows and squats.

The Diet



Mr. Karpoff grew bored skiing circles at Nordic ski centers, so he seeks out groomed snowmobile trails for a more remote wilderness experience. PHOTO: DANIEL SILVERBERG FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Mr. Karpoff tries to keep his sugar intake low and avoids fried foods. Breakfast is oatmeal, fruit and nuts. Lunch is usually a turkey sandwich on whole-grain bread or, if he dines out, he’ll get pad thai or saag paneer, an Indian dish of cheese and spinach. Mr. Karpoff has two grown daughters and twin 9-year-old girls. He and his wife try to sit down for dinner most nights with the twins. “My wife makes wonderful soups,” he says. Broiled salmon with sautéed vegetables and rice is another favorite dinner. Chocolate chip cookies are his indulgence. When he skis, he relies on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for fuel.

The Gear & Cost

Mr. Karpoff owns Madshus Redline carbon skate cold skis (\$750), Salomon SNS Pilot Carbon RS

bindings (\$110), Salomon S/Race Skate Pilot boots (\$400), and Swix carbon poles (\$140). “My gear is upper-end, although not top of the line,” he says. “Lower-end packages for a new set of skis, bindings, boots and poles can be as low as \$350.”

He skis in running tights from REI, a Mizuno Men’s Alpha half zip shirt, Mountain Hardwear Dome Perignon hat and Swix split mittens or gloves. For longer skate ski outings, he carries an Osprey Manta 20 running pack stuffed with extra layers and food. He pays \$84 for a pass that allows him to park at area trailheads. A Nordic ski day pass costs around \$27.



Skate-ski technique involves a lateral movement, which allows the skier to move more quickly than classic cross-country skiing. PHOTO: DANIEL SILVERBERG FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The Playlist

“I’ve never even thought about putting in earbuds,” he says. “Being 12 miles from cars you can enjoy the sounds of winter. It’s never perfectly quiet. You can hear the shush-shush rhythm of the skis and a babbling brook beneath ice.”



Mr. Karpoff works out with resistance bands in a gym in the garage of his Seattle home. PHOTO: DANIEL SILVERBERG FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Jump on the Band Wagon

Don’t underestimate the simple resistance band.

While it’s not heavy or large like a weight machine or dumbbell, it can still challenge your muscles, says Ben Lauder-Dykes, a personal trainer at Flitting Room, a high-intensity interval training studio in NYC.

“Resistance bands create constant tension through a given movement,” he says. “The amount of tension increases as the band stretches. Keeping a muscle working under constant tension increases the amount of work performed, energy used and requires us to work other muscles around the joints that are moving to create stability.”

Mr. Lauder-Dykes says resistance bands require more control and stability, which is why people often use them to rehab injuries. “They help relieve some stress on the joints while still allowing you to challenge and fatigue your muscles,” he says. Tubes are just as effective as bands, he says. “The tubing can be more practical for upper-body movements, especially

pulling and pressing, but bands can be more versatile, allowing you to have greater control on the amount of resistance and range of motion.”

Bands can also be used to help improve or vary exercises or movements performed with free weights or machines. For example, he says, you could put a band around the legs when performing squats. No matter your choice of equipment, proper form is always important, he says.

What’s your workout? Tell us at workout@wsj.com

MORE FROM WHAT’S YOUR WORKOUT

- [A Climber Still Seeking New Peaks Later in Life](#) January 26, 2019
- [A Tennis Purist Who Became a Pickleball Pro](#) January 19, 2019
- [Staying Fit With the Help of a Horse Named Boogie Woogie](#) January 12, 2019
- [The Butterfly Effect That Powers a Masters Swimmer](#) January 5, 2019
- [She’s Powerlifting at 76, So You’re Officially Out of Excuses](#) December 29, 2018

Copyright © 2019 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <https://www.djreprints.com>.