

FITNESS, HEALTH, AND NUTRITION FOR THE OUTSIDE ATHLETE

BODYWORK

Spring in Your Step

Ski all you want with our 21-day late-winter plan for optimizing shoulder-season fitness

BY EVELYN SPENCE

GET AN EDGE:
Ski hard this month—like Olympic hopeful Kris Freeman—to ride or run strong by Easter.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF LIPSKY

ALSO THIS MONTH ... GET MAD AND THRIVE » CHRIS CARMICHAEL'S POWER RECIPE

THE SKIING IS EPIC this month, and it looks to stay that way right through March. But if you push your schussing as far into spring as possible, can you be physically primed for running and biking once it warms up?

"Definitely," says Steve Higgins, 46, a former pro cyclist who spent the winters of 1990 to 1994 as a coach for the U.S. Ski Team while entering a smattering of bike races during the summer. "I'd spend my winters on skis, then in April I'd join my cycling teammates, who had already logged about 6,000 miles of riding. But it never took me long to catch up to them fitness-wise, since I was already in great shape."

Today, Higgins still sticks to his ski-all-winter, ride-all-summer lifestyle while also running Zone 1 Sports Science, a Seattle-based coaching service for elite

cyclists, runners, and triathletes. Over the past 26 years, he's developed a field-proven model of seasonal cross-training: Because he combines ski-boosting cardio, core, and general-strength workouts with 40-plus days on the snow each season, he's able to make a seamless transition to warm-weather activities.

"Skiing works your quads, hamstrings, calves, and glutes," says Higgins, who adds that these are the same muscles you need to push pedals, run trails, and stomp up mountains.

You, too, can get a jump on snow-free fun—without skipping any powder days—by following the three-week plan Higgins has laid out for us. His regimen involves three phases: muscle preparation, then strength building, followed by explosive power work. Get started now and ski till the mountain closes.

THE PROGRAM: Each day's workout includes five minutes of bicycle crunches and back extensions (a.k.a. Supermans—see opposite for a description of the core and weight-lifting exercises), plus ten minutes of leg and hip stretches. On non-cardio days, start your workout with an easy ten-minute aerobic warm-up of your choice. For the dedicated cardio sessions, use this scale of intensity: **ZONE 1** = easy; **ZONE 2** = moderately hard, able to hold a conversation; and **ZONE 3** = hard, barely able to converse. If you're lucky enough to be able to hit the nearby slopes on the weekend, go out on a Sunday. That way your muscles will have enough time to recover from Friday's weight training.

EVELYN SPENCE was formerly an editor at *Skiing*.

THE PLAN

ON WEIGHT-LIFTING DAYS, USE LIGHT WEIGHTS AND FOCUS ON GOOD FORM—IF YOU'RE SORE THE NEXT DAY, YOU PUSHED TOO HARD.

saturday

CARDIO: Bike 40 min or run or XC-ski 30 min in Zone 1

sunday

CARDIO: Bike 50 min or run or XC-ski 40 min in Zone 2

monday

WEIGHT WORK: 3 sets of 8 reps for each exercise

tuesday

REST: 15 min core work and stretches

wednesday

WEIGHT WORK: Bike 15 min in Zone 1, then 3 sets of 8 reps for each exercise

thursday

CARDIO: Bike 40 min or run or XC-ski 30 min in Zone 1

friday

WEIGHT WORK: Bike 15 min in Zone 2, then 3 sets of 8 reps for each exercise

ON WEIGHT-LIFTING DAYS, PERFORM FEWER, SLOWER REPS WITH HEAVIER WEIGHTS. COMPLETE ALL THE SETS LISTED.

saturday

CARDIO: Bike 50 min or run or XC-ski 40 min in Zone 1

sunday

CARDIO: Bike 60 min or run or XC-ski 45 min in Zone 2

monday

WEIGHT WORK: 5 sets of 6 reps for each exercise

tuesday

REST: 15 min core work and stretches

wednesday

WEIGHT WORK: Bike 20 min in Zone 2, then 5 sets of 6 reps for each exercise

thursday

CARDIO: Bike 50 min or run or XC-ski 40 min in Zone 1

friday

WEIGHT WORK: Bike 30 min in Zone 2, then 5 sets of 6 reps for each exercise

ON WEIGHT-LIFTING DAYS, USE LIGHTER WEIGHTS THAN IN WEEK TWO. LIFT WITH SMOOTH, QUICK MOVEMENTS. COMPLETE ALL THE SETS LISTED.

saturday

CARDIO: Bike 60 min or run or XC-ski 45 min in Zone 2

sunday

CARDIO: Bike 75 min or run or XC-ski 55 min in Zone 3

monday

WEIGHT WORK: 6 sets of 12 reps for each exercise

tuesday

REST: 15 min core work and stretches

wednesday

WEIGHT WORK: Bike 35 min in Zone 3, then 6 sets of 12 reps for each exercise

thursday

CARDIO: Bike 60 min or run or XC-ski 45 min in Zone 2

friday

WEIGHT WORK: Bike 40 min in Zone 3, then 6 sets of 12 reps for each exercise

week one

week two

week three

THE MOVES

weight work

1| STEP-UPS WITH SPRINGS

Holding a five-to-ten-pound dumbbell in each hand, arms at your sides, face a 12-to-18-inch-high box, bench, or step. Step up with your right foot, then explode up onto your toes while driving your left knee up in front of you as high as you can. Lower back down to the floor and repeat. Switch legs and repeat to complete one set.

2| EXPLOSIVE LUNGES

With a ten-pound dumbbell in each hand, lunge forward until your front leg reaches a 90-degree angle, keeping your feet pointing forward. Push off hard with the front foot and return to starting position. Repeat, alternating feet with each rep.

3| SQUATS

Hold a barbell on your shoulders. With feet shoulder width apart, squat until your thighs are parallel to the ground, keeping your abs tight, back straight, and knees over your toes. Stand and repeat.

core work

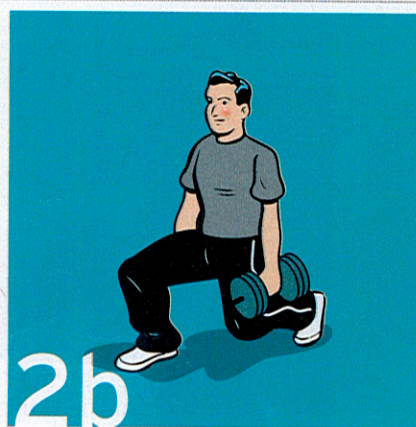
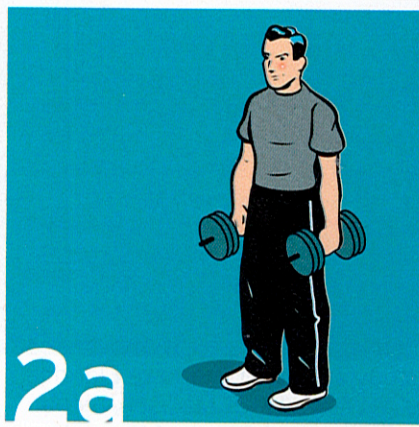
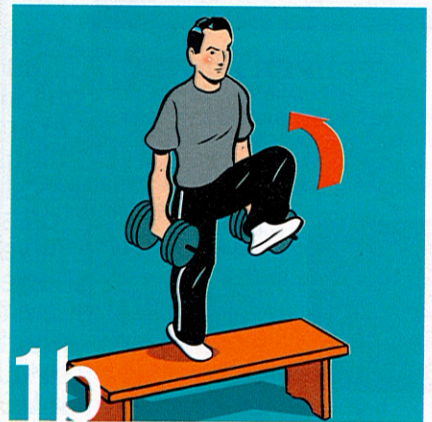
4| BICYCLE CRUNCHES

With your hands laced behind your head, lower back flat on the floor, and legs extended, lift your upper body off the floor while pulling your left knee toward your chest. Twist, touching right elbow to left knee while extending your right leg. Lie back. Alternate sides with every crunch. Do 20 reps, then roll over and do a Superman.

5| SUPERMANS

Lie flat on your stomach with arms extended overhead, legs straight and shoulder width apart. Lift both ends of your body six inches to a foot off the ground. Hold for five seconds, then relax and roll back over for more crunches. (Cycle through the core exercises this way for five minutes.)

(weight work)



(core work)

