The rise of ice fishing

Ice fishing is becoming more popular for all generations

By Danielle Hobbie
Talon Staff Writer

It's a Saturday morning in December. Senior Max Krumm and junior Reier Skarning have just picked up their fresh bait, driving onto Eagle Lake's solid ice, they unpack and ready their supplies.

As they drill their hole for the day, they reference a fish finder that shows where the fish are moving underneath the ice. Setting up their temporary tent, they are now ready to sit back, relax, and fish.

As many individuals experiment with ice fishing, since Thanksgiving, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has sold upwards of 56,500 fishing licenses, which is the highest it's been since the 2015 to 2016 season according to MN DNR.

With climate change being the leading cause, the last couple of winters have been on the warmer side – with last year's winter being the warmest on record.

As a result, the ice has been thinner and too dangerous to stand on for long periods of time, and the ice fishing seasons have been significantly shortened.

This year's winter temperatures were colder, allowing many anglers to resume one of their favorite passing times – ice fishing.

Some of Minnesota's most treasured lakes have been decorated with makeshift huts, houses, and tents. Sitting around the drilled holes, anglers of all ages bond over their shared love for this winter weather activity.

"Last year I rarely went because the ice wasn't thick enough," said Krumm, a fishing enthusiast. "Now me and Reier go at least once a week."

Back in action, many existing fishermen or those new to the sport have needed to stock up on supplies, leaving outdoor sporting goods stores with empty shelves and freezers.

Joe's Sporting Goods in St. Paul, a popular Minnesota-based company, has also experienced a sudden increase in ice fishing.

"Some of the live bait has been a little tough to get," said Doug Stahly, the fishing equipment buyer at Joe's.

The demand for live bait is due to the lack of stores that carry it, as it needs to be restocked multiple times a week.

"There's only so many people that provide live bait," said Stahly. "With so many people fishing, we go through it a little quicker."

But due to the predicted conditions of this winter, Joe's stays prepared, continuing to buy extra stock from the manufacturers.

"Manufacturers have a lot, so we've been continuously re-ordering and filling things in," said Stahly.

As ice fishing grows more popular, many individuals wonder what the factors are that cause people to return to the sport year after year, and how people have the patience to sit and wait for a fish that might never come.

Getting to play cards and hang out with friends, Minnehaha film teacher Nicholas Freeman feels it's more about the people you're with that make it enjoyable, not the number of fish you catch.

"It's more of a getaway than anything else," said Freeman. "The experience is fun because for me it's not about fishing and feeding my family."

From a student perspective, first-year Myles Anderson finds the passing time of ice fishing rather tranquil, and fun to spend with family.

"It's actually very peaceful, being in front of nature," said Anderson.

Whether it's the thrill in waiting for a tug on the line, the adventure of trekking out onto the ice and setting up camp, or the camaraderie of the activity altogether, the art of ice fishing has and will continue to be a crowd favorite for the Midwesterners during the long, frigid winter season. Especially when we have a long, frigid winter.



Photo by Max Krumm

Junior Reier Skarning holds a Northern pike he caught while ice fishing with senior Max Krumm at Pike Lake in Plymouth in late January. The two Minnehaha students ice fish together frequently during winters.

Traditions and taekwondo

Building confidence takes effort when it comes to martial arts

By Zion Friberg
Talon Staff Writer

Taekwondo is a sport that originated in Korea thousands of years ago, it is safe to say that there are many things to learn about this dynamic practice. Translating to "the way of the foot and fist", it is a quick-paced, physical sport.

Senior Sophie Baillet has been practicing the sport for seven years, having started taekwondo in 5th grade.

"Originally my brother really wanted to get into martial arts so my mom decided to enroll us together," Baillet said. "I turned out to be really good at it, and I enjoyed it a lot, too, so I have continued it ever since."

Most people think martial arts is only about defense, which is a good reason to start and a great thing to learn, but there is so much more too.

"I was put on the demonstration team when I wasn't even a black belt yet, and usually that doesn't happen so that was a huge honor, but that also came with many challenges," Balliet said. "I had to learn how to do higher level kicking techniques and I also had to figure out how to make friends with people I had never met before."

Shortly after that, she was asked to be on the staff, to teach other students, which has also been a huge learning opportunity for her.

"I had to learn how to be a leader because the kids were depending on me to teach them, but I also had to do it with kindness and grace," Baillet said. "We're not trying to get the to be perfect, we're just trying to help them grow in their own personal confidence."

Baillet has experienced a lot through taekwondo and teaching a lot to kids beginning their journey as well.

"We're not trying to get them to be perfect, we're just trying to help them grow in their own personal confidence. Throughout my whole taekwondo journey, I have had to learn perseverance, leadership, strength (physically and mentally), courage, grace and so much more."

Baillet is not the only one who has learned something through martial arts, Senior Lydia Brown has learned a lot throughout her journey through Taekwondo as well.

She is now an instructor and appreciates the art of this sport even more than when she was little because of how much it has taught her about discipline, strategy, and respect. Lydia is a third-degree black belt and has been practicing the sport for over a decade.

"Taekwondo has been a constant in my life, and even as I get busier with school, I make time for it because it's something I truly love," Brown said.

Brown has learned so much more beyond the physical aspects- speed, power, flexibility, etc.

"I've learned leadership and responsibility. As an instructor, I've had to guide students, encourage them, and help them improve, which has made me a better mentor and role model." Brown said.

Martial arts has shaped Brown to be the person she is today.

"It's given me confidence, discipline, and mental toughness. Training for years and earning my black belts has taught me perseverance, and being an instructor has helped me grow as a leader. Teaching others has made me more patient and has shown me how to communicate effectively."

Martial arts can be a big confidence and discipline builder for people who start taking it, so she will encourage her kids to take a martial arts class if she decides to have them.

"If they find the same passion for it that I did, that would be amazing, but even if they just gain the basic skills and values, I'd consider it a win."

Types of martial arts

- **Jui-jitsu**: Originated in Japan. Jui-jitsu is about using grappling and leverage to take down opponents, with a strong focus of self defense.
- **Karate:** Originated in Japan. Karate is about using striking techniques for self defense and having a disciplined mindset.
- **Judo**: Originated in Japan. Judo is about using balance and power to take down their opponents.
- **Aikido**: Originated in Japan. Aikido is about using technique to control and redirect an opponent's attack, focusing on non-violence.
- **Taekwondo**: Originated in Korea. Taekwondo is about using powerful kicking techniques and maintaining a respectful mindset.
- **Muay Thai**: Originated in Thailand. Muay Thai is a striking martial art that uses punches, kicks and knees making it a powerful and effective sport.
- **Kung fu**: Originated in ancient China. Kung fu emphasizes mental discipline and self control to practice self defense.
- **Capoeira**: Originated in Brazil, Capoeira is a blend of martial arts that combines dancing, music, rhythm, and agility.