Uphill/Downhill Challenge will Raise Funds for US Ski Mountaineering Team

McLean, Va. - On the heels of the SIA Snow Show (Jan 28-31), the snow sports industry will head up to Winter Park Resort for SIA's On-Snow Demo/Free Ride Fest and take part in their version of blowing off steam - a classic uphill/downhill race. SIA's Uphill/Downhill Challenge will be free and open to all demo attendees.

Here's how it will work. On February 1 at 2 p.m., teams will skin 1,700 feet up a marked track at Winter Park Resort to the Sunspot Lodge, quaff a beverage of choice, remove skins from skis or splitboard and descend a marked course down a bump run, through the glades to more bumps, to the base area finish. Piece of cake, right?

"Although it sounds demanding, the Uphill/Downhill Challenge is a super participant-friendly event," said Pete Swenson, Director of the United States Ski Mountaineering Association. "Really, anyone can enter and enjoy a nice skin track up to the Sunspot Lodge and ski back down to the base area. The Challenge is also a 'first-of-its-kind' opportunity for many Americans to see randonee skiing at the highest level as members the US National Ski Mountaineering team will also be racing."

Scarpa CEO Kim Miller added, "The race team concept is a perfect way to encourage camaraderie and collaboration more than competition, but let's face it - some of us love to compete."

Teams are based on a three-person combination, but not required to race together. Individual times are combined to determine the team's overall time. Prizes will be awarded for category winners and the fastest overall individual will win a pair of SCARPA F1 carbon fiber boots. There's even a "Bean Counter Bonus" for teams with a CEO, President or Owner - a five-minute handicap will be taken off their time.

SIA organized the Uphill/Downhill Challenge with support from a number of companies and individuals within the backcountry, randonee, splitboard and telemark communities. The Uphill/Downhill Challenge is a fundraiser for the US Ski Mountaineering team and all funds raised at the Uphill/Downhill Challenge will help fund the team's trip to Andorra for the Ski Mountaineering World Championships on March 1-7, 2010. Contributions will be collected in the USSMA-labeled jar at the SCARPA booth.

Entry into the Uphill/Downhill Challenge is free; however, contributions to USSMA are appreciated and encouraged and include a beer at the awards at West Portal Station. Click here for rules and entry form, or email Pete Swenson of USSMA. Participants also can register the day of the race by noon at the SCARPA On-Snow Demo booth.