

Jackson Hole Goes Exclusive with Tracker2 Avalanche Beacons

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The Jackson Hole Ski Patrol has been using Tracker beacons since 2000, three years after BCA came out with the groundbreaking Tracker DTS, the world's first digital transceiver. That same year, Jackson opened up its boundaries to backcountry skiing, igniting a trend among other US resorts toward increasing their backcountry access and developing challenging in-bounds terrain. Jackson Hole has since developed an extensive in-house guiding program, Jackson Hole Alpine Guides, with a staff of more than 15 experienced ski guides and an accompanying safety equipment rental program.

When patrol director Jake Elkins decided to replace his aging fleet of Tracker DTS beacons last season, he did not take the evaluation process lightly. He assigned ten different patrollers to perform repeated tests with all of the digital, three-antenna beacons currently on the market. They performed tests searching for one, two, three, and four buried transmitters.

"We went through a pretty thorough analysis and it seemed all too obvious the Tracker2 was the tool of choice," Elkins said. While all of the beacons they tested worked fairly well for one and two transmitters, he said the Tracker2 performed faster and more reliably than others in scenarios involving more than two. "It was the simplest and most consistent throughout," he said, adding that the Tracker2's straightforward interface also makes it preferable for maintaining and managing a large fleet.

"We want the easiest beacons for our clients to use," said Jackson Hole Alpine Guides manager Scott McGee. "And we want them using the same units as our guides. For these reasons, Tracker2 was the best option."

The Tracker2 builds on the core strengths of the original Tracker DTS: speed and ease-of-use. It offers faster processing, simplified user interface, an extremely intuitive search/transmit switch, increased receive range, reliable multiple-burial signal separation, and a third antenna for more precise fine searching.

"Jackson Hole is at the cutting edge of the North American freeride movement," said BCA vice president Bruce Edgerly. "We're ecstatic that they've chosen Tracker2, especially considering their rigorous testing program. Jackson is highly respected in our industry, so their decisions can be precedent-setting."

Backcountry Access is a leading manufacturer of avalanche rescue equipment, including Tracker beacons, shovels, probes, and Float airbags. For more information, please visit backcountryaccess.com or call (303)417-1345.

For a complete review of the BCA Tracker2 and other new beacons, pick up the January issue of Backcountry Magazine.