

Gear Test Day Four: Standouts

Contributed by Monica Prella

After a few recovery laps on the groomers, everyone was back out looking for leftover stashes and evaluating the remaining skis, boots and bindings. We all came to Powder Mountain to determine the best backcountry gear of next year and as the test week winds down, a few favorites are starting to stand out.

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Last night's party was one to remember. The powder day celebration started with a few casual beers in the jacuzzi. Testers sat shoulder-to-shoulder and recapped powder turns and the best gear of the day. Later, the beermingo arrived and the night took a change for the better—or worse, depending on how you look at things.

A competitive game of cups broke out in the dining room while a tele-grass blues jam band, comprised of three Telemark Skier Magazine guys playing five instruments, harmonized an impromptu rendition of Sir Mix-a-lot's "Baby Got Back." And an innocent game of (homemade) Twister eventually turned into a late-night beer slip.

Needless to say the testers were a little hazy this morning. But after a few recovery laps on the groomers, everyone was back out looking for leftover stashes and evaluating the remaining skis, boots and bindings. We all came to Powder Mountain to determine the best backcountry gear of next year and as the test week winds down, a few favorites are starting to stand out.

"I was looking forward to test skis with fat rocker," said Teo Campbell, a seventh-year tester. "The Nordica Hell and Back was instantly comfortable. I didn't have to learn that ski; it's one that I could definitely see putting money on."

Teo also chose the Lib Tech POW, with its wavy magne-traction edge, as a favorite. "I wonder if the magne-traction is one of the elements that I liked so much in the ski," Teo said. "It's hard to know."

Sarah Carr, a first year tester and ski patroller from Breckenridge, Colorado, was looking forward to testing the Ski Logik boards, and they turned out among her top selections.

"I've heard of the skis because they're a new company from Breckenridge," Sarah explained. "I liked them a lot; they performed well and had a lot of life. They were pretty much exactly what I expected."

The more venturesome headed out on a tour this morning, scoring deep powder laps off the steep, treed west face of James Peak. Later, the whole crew regrouped at the summit shack for a final descent of the day in Powder Country.

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