

Gear Test Day Five: Wrap Up

Contributed by Monica Prella

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There were a lot of great skis tested and many testers plan on purchasing their favorite, but the week wrapped up with more hugs and high-fives than gear talk. Testers exchanged contact info and talked about meeting-up for spring skiing or summertime mountain biking.

"We never say goodbye, we only say 'see you later,'" said Jaime Krakowiak, a fourth-year tester from Breckenridge, Colorado. "The ski test is not always about the skiing or the skis. It's about the relationships."

There are four attributes that comprise a good ski tester, Jamie explained. The best testers are enjoyable to hang out with and have a great personality; they need to have the ability to party and still have the endurance to ski the next day; they need to help out all week, moving skis, testing as much equipment as possible and recording data. Good testers lend a hand whenever and wherever needed. And a great tester has the ability to ski hard, and the motivation and enthusiasm to do it for five solid days.

"Most people don't usually ski bell-to-bell every day," Adam Howard, editorial director of BCM said on the chairlift. "Even ski bums only ski three to four hours a day. Patrollers maybe, but even they don't ski all day. It's a lot of work, what testers do."

But the work is worth the rewards in the end. If anything, the week allowed testers to escape from daily routines and recharge with good company and non-stop skiing. Whether a ski patroller, a professor or a financial analyst, the week was about forgetting life at home for a short time, and skiing hard, living in the moment and enjoying the company.

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