

Kip Garre, 1973-2011

Contributed by The Editors

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Kip’s body was found yesterday, April 28, along with girlfriend Allison Kruetzen by a team of search-and-rescue and friends. Powdermag.com was first to report the tragedy, and confirmed that both were overdue returning from a trip to ski the Split Couloir south of Bishop, California. According to Powder’s interview with Robb Gaffney, a close friend of both Garre and Kruetzen who participated in the rescue, the two were likely hit while climbing the couloir by what Gaffney called, “a pretty powerful avalanche.”

The Split Couloir was, ironically, featured as Couloir of the Year in the December issue of Backcountry.

Kip, who grew up in New Hampshire, moved to Lake Tahoe in 1997. He worked in a ski shop for several years before opening his own painting company. But his true passion lay in skiing and ski mountaineering. In “Under The Radar,” (Backcountry, February 2011), Devon O’Neil tells of Kip’s adventures—most of which went unpublicized—from climbing and skiing the Grand Teton and Liberty Ridge on Mt. Rainier to first descents in Alaska and Nepal.

Andrew McLean told O’Neil that Kip would be the future of the sport. Shane McConkey once called Kip the “best athlete at Squaw.” It truly was character that set Kip apart.

Said O’Neil: “Garre has a polite, soft-spoken demeanor that cloaks his depth. He’s always more interested in asking how your doing—a question that never seems superficial—than detailing his latest feat. He brings gear and clothing to locals in Nepal and India; listens to NPR and thinks the Beatles are “sick”; marvels at the Milky Way; and, during conversations on the trail, defends his nomadic lifestyle against a more traditional existence.”

Kip and Allison, you are in our thoughts. We at Backcountry would like to extend our deepest sympathy to their families and close friends.

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