

Fresh Gear: Telemark Bindings

Contributed by The Editors

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From the Outdoor Retailer Trade Show
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Last week, the Backcountry Magazine staff headed to Salt Lake City for the Outdoor Retailer trade show. We cruised the Salt Palace, checking in with industry brands large and small and scoping the hottest gear and trends for next winter. After four days of meetings, flashy apparel and technical hard goods, we compiled these highlights.

The pulse of telemark may have become thready over the last few years, but if the number of new tele bindings is any indication, the sport is still kicking hard. Five new or redesigned telemark bindings were debuted at this year's OR show from most of the major binding players.

G3 introduced their free-pivot Enzo and Enzo R bindings (r for resort). G3 says they considered the best qualities of what's available in telemark bindings when designing the two. The Enzo bears resemblance to the Voilé Switchback, 22 Designs Axl and Black Diamond O1, and offers three "flex adjustments" and three cartridge options.

The Black Diamond O1 received a small makeover for 2012/13. While the binding previously featured a four-hole mounting pattern, it now has a six-hole pattern. The additional screws lie behind the existing screws for what Black Diamond is advertising as improved binding retention.

The NTN Freedom is perhaps the most-hyped telemark binding of the year, expanding Rottefella's offering of NTN binders. The Freedom boasts a wider pivot range (60 degrees, advertised) while in tour mode than the original NTN binding (now called the Freeride). It also weighs a full pound less than the Freeride, tipping the scales at just 3lbs. 2oz.

22 Designs introduces the Vice, a non-free-pivoting version of their Axl. Expect the Vice to replace the Hammerhead in the 22 Designs lineup in coming years.

For more on next year's products, pick up the February issue of Backcountry Magazine. Stay tuned to backcountrymagazine.com for our initial impressions these products as we test them in the coming months for the September Gear Guide.

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