

Gear Test Week Update – Day 1

Contributed by Keese Lane

No other day of the Gear Test Week represents the months of preparation the way the first day does. On Tuesday, 500 skis, bindings and boots arrived at Powder Mountain, and 50 testers from California to Vermont rolled into Eden, Utah. And on Wednesday, the crew hit the slopes for the first day of testing. Here's how it went down.

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2012 GEAR TEST

WEDNESDAY – DAY 1 | THURSDAY - DAY 2 | FRIDAY: DAY 3 | SATURDAY: DAY 4 | SUNDAY: DAY 5

No other day of the Gear Test Week represents the months of preparation the way the first day does. Hours of phone calls to manufacturers, countless questions answered (explained and reanswered), and stacks of shipping labels, boot bags and ski boxes materialize in the form of 500 skis, boots and bindings. As gear stacked up in the conference room at Eden, Utah's Red Moose Lodge, testers filtered in from California, Vermont and every mountain state between. With each arrival, the excitement and mayhem grew. But it was early to bed for most as the wind kicked up and snow fell on Powder Mountain.

For four members of the Backcountry team, Gear Test Week began on live television. Salt Lake City's KUTV 2 asked a few members of the crew to wake up at 4:30 a.m. to share their experience at the test with SLC's early birds and insomniacs. Even in the darkness and blowing wind, the four gained fame through the local CBS affiliate. Check out the video here.

Once the coffee kicked in and the other fifty, well-rested testers arrived, the day was off to a white start. Testers formed a bucket brigade in the midst of fog and blowing snow to transport the 400-plus skis to the racks. Their hard work was rewarded by the Ullr with five inches of snow, and by noon, blue skies shone down on the soft-skiing slopes of Powder Mountain. By dinner the team was back at the Red Moose, pink from the sun (and hot tub), passing the beermingo around in its perennial appearance and diligently finishing evaluations from the day. Beginner advice of the day: “Never drink from the ass end of the beermingo.” –Sassy Prentiss

Stay tuned to backcountrymagazine.com all week for updates from the Gear Test Week.

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