



WILD SIDE

THE WILDERNESS SHOP NEWSLETTER

Trip Review: Beginners Skiing at Lake Mountain, by Kerry



Kerry; Up, Up and Away
At Lake Mountain

Winter 2007 gave us a decent dump of snow early on, so I decided it was time to give cross country skiing a crack. Until then I had been snow shoeing and snow camping, but had no ski experience at all. I grabbed a pair of our hire skis, boots, poles, and with a few technique tips from the experts at The Wilderness Shop, set off for a day of action at Lake Mountain!

Located 120km from Melbourne via Marysville, a weekend mountain pass (car park) will cost you \$35 and then \$12 for your trail pass. The easy graded *Echo Flat* trail is 6km long, and was where we made our start. Skiing via *Helicopter Flat* to complete a loop allowed us to gain some confidence and practice falling over, before returning to the visitors centre for lunch.

Fuelled up and ready for more, we set off along the *Echo Flat* trail once again but headed further up towards *The Gap*. I found the motion of XC skiing similar to roller skating. Once you get into the rhythm of it, you can build up some serious speed!

My friend that I had dragged along on snow shoes was soon eating my powder! We continued up to *Lookout Rock*, then finished



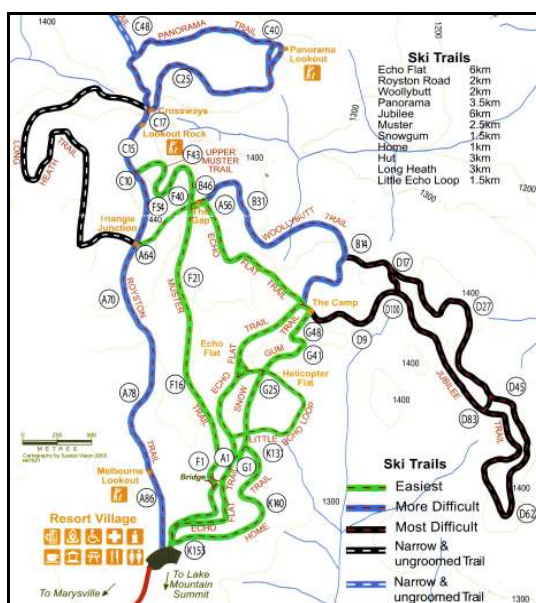
..... And Down!

what had been an awesome day in the sunshine along the *Muster Trail*, 2.5km long, over the bridge and linked back up to the end of *Echo Flat* and back to the car. I had a few stacks on my first attempt, which is to be expected, but no bruises or sore butt, just wet gloves and damp socks!

The right gear for XC skiing is important. I did see a few people getting around in jeans; not a good idea. To stay warm and dry you will need waterproof overpants and jacket, fleece jumper, thermals and gloves. All these are available at The Wilderness Shop, along with our hire ski equipment and snow shoes, not to mention great advice!

I still consider myself a beginner, and I am very keen for another crack this season. I may even consider the more challenging *Panorama Trail*. Lake Mountain offers 37km of groomed trails with varying degrees of difficulty.

Cross country skiing is definitely heaps of fun, a real winter wonderland experience. So don't hesitate, just get out there and enjoy the crisp cool air and beautiful snow gums!



Toasti Toes and Hot Hands !!!

Cold toes and hands are a thing of the past! *Toasti Toes*® are designed to be worn inside boots under your toes. In conjunction with thick socks, they provide 6 hours of 38°C warmth!!! *Hot Hands-2*® are used inside gloves or your pockets. They provide you warmth and freedom to endure the cold for up to 10 hours, at around 55°C. Also available is *Survival Heat*™. This is a larger 23 by 33 cm heat pad, that produces up to 15 hours of 60°C heat that could save your life. A real must for a serious first aid or survival kit, which has the bonus of being resealable and reusable if you do not reach the 15 hour maximum. There are handy cold weather survival tips on the packaging. All these terrific products contain natural ingredients, activated by air.

Toasti Toes® and *Hot Hands-2*®, 2 per pack \$6.95, *Survival Heat*™. \$22.95.



Last issue there was an article all about what the staff at The Wilderness Shop eat when outdoors. This issue is about what we wear to keep dry. With no less than 20 different waterproof jackets here we don't blame you if you can't decide which one is for you. So I've asked four staff members to tell me a few things about the jackets they wear, and why they like them. The jackets are all available at the shop, and a wide variety of jackets have been chosen.

Tim: Mont Tempest RRP \$429

Thigh-length jackets have long been the standard in bushwalking and mine has seen years of use. The fabric is very abrasion resistant and therefore the shoulders and lower back fare well when worn under my heavy pack. I really like the pockets on my *Tempest*, particularly the ones on my hips, they are like the pockets on your shorts and keep your hands protected out of the rain and wind. I have never had a problem with water leaking whilst wearing it. I use my *Tempest* when bushwalking when both the rain and my pack is heavy.

Cameron: OR Revel RRP \$269

My *OR Revel* was bought mainly as a crag jacket to wear to or from climbing areas when it is wet. This is a superbly light jacket. The stretch fabric means when I move the jacket moves with me, so it feels even lighter and packs up really small when I'm not using it. The storm flap on the main zip works really well, and unlike some, doesn't have too much velcro to keep it shut, which can get annoying to get on and off.

Richard: Mont Latitude RRP \$299

I use my mango coloured *Latitude* for riding to and from work in the winter months, its shorter length not getting in the way whilst cycling. It is a totally waterproof shell, but it is also a super breathable fabric. Combined with the pit-zips, this means it is great for when I'm working up a sweat so I don't get wet inside. I also use it on bushwalks when there is less chance of rain to save weight, as the *Hydronaute Ultra™ 2.5* layer fabric keeps the size and weight to a minimum. It has been great as a day skiing jacket, the hood zips into the neck when not in use, but easily comes out when the snow or rain hits. When I am not using it, it packs up very small into its own stuff sac for storage.

Glenn: OR Mithril RRP \$349

The design and cut of *Outdoor Research* clothing suits my shorter / stocky frame. The *Mithril* jacket is by far the most waterproof softshell on the market, the *Ventia™* fabric having both a waterproof membrane in the fabric and all its seams sealed with seam tape on the outside. The insulation keeps you nice and warm, meaning you can cut down on layers. It is great for keeping warm on the way to work in light showers and great for when I go fly-fishing and stand around in the river all day.

The Wilderness Shop stocks the following brands of rainwear and softshell, including jackets and pants: Lowe Alpine, Mont, Rab, Outdoor Research, Salewa, 3 Peaks.

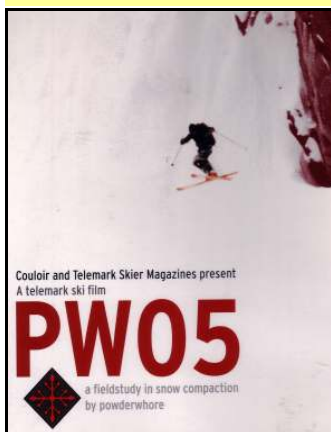
Giveaway : Mont Rainwear Rejuvenation, courtesy of Mont Adventure Equipment

Be the first person to bring in any Mont Hydronaute™ jacket that you have purchased from The Wilderness Shop, and we will send it to Mont for a complimentary rejuvenation treatment.

*All waterproof and softshell jackets need to be kept clean to maximise their performance. This is simple to do yourself, remembering to **check each garment's individual care instructions**. Generally, the following applies: machine or hand wash in warm water using Nikwax Tech Wash® or SoftShell™ Proof; air dry and iron garment, or tumble dry; or for maximum rejuvenation of waterproof jackets, use Granger's XT Spray and then iron or tumble dry.*

DVD Review: Powderwhore 5,

by Tim



Powderwhore 05 is an exhilarating telemark film set in the Wasatch mountains in Utah, US. It features amazing telemarkers tackling backcountry slopes and the occasional resort. Being mostly shot in Little Cottonwood and Big Cottonwood canyons, cliff jumps are common, and the skiers regularly attack very steep slopes.

Utah is reputed to have the world's best powder snow, and this film showcases the best of it. The telemarkers often appear to be neck-deep in loose powder, with a large plume trailing behind.

Skiing the wild terrain shown in this film isn't easy, as evidenced by the extensive falls segment. Some are quite impressive! Also impressively scary is the large avalanche that one of the skiers triggered. Fortunately he wasn't too badly hurt.

Although it is not an instructional video, the skiers' good technique is evident, and

watching closely will provide plenty of ideas for improving your own skiing.

Powderwhore is shot by skiers, and so is able to give some insight into the culture of the backcountry. We meet some of the characters who live, work and ski on remote slopes. There is a segment on a man who has lived for years in a basic shelter he built himself, just a makeshift hut buried under several meters of snow. He works as a ski-patroller at a local resort, commuting on skis and revelling in a simple life of skiing away from the crowds.

The skiers make use of terrain parks in some resorts, pulling off big flips and twists on pre-built jumps and rails. Their free heels are probably the envy of the other skiers trapped on the lifts.

Powderwhore 05 will inspire you to stop watching movies and get out there (just as soon as it snows!)

Powderwhore 05: in stock now, \$54.95.

Product Review: Karhu Solstice and XCD GT, by Richard



The new Karhu Solstice XT will find a home in many a skier's requirements. It perfectly fills the gap between the Karhu Rendezvous (for day trips on groomed trails) and the XCD GT (reviewed here).

The Widetrak™ design is wider underfoot, giving the skier a more stable ski, and easy manoeuvrability due to their shorter overall length. The real trick is the half length metal edge, for extra security on firm or icy snow without the cumbersome nature that some skiers experience on day trips with a full metal edge.



The Solstice XT has a cap construction for durability, and a wood core to maintain flex characteristics in the long run. Stable and easy to ski, it will suit those who want something more than a light day touring ski for groomed trails, but do not do those week long, hardcore backcountry pack-carrying tours!

Solstice XT available in 160, 175, 180cm, RRP \$399

The Karhu XCD was an instant hit when

we reintroduced it to the Victorian ski market in 2006, after a number of years' absence. Redesigned for 2008, it will do the job it is made for even better! A classic blend of nordic and downhill design, it will tour with ease, and turn with ease.

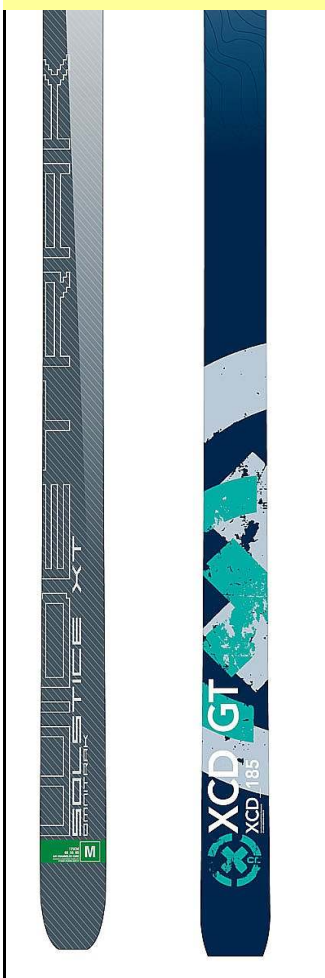
The previous dimensions were 76-62-68mm, the new are 83-62-70mm. By increasing the tip width, you experience easier turn initiation and exit. By leaving the middle and tail dimensions effectively unchanged, the tracking characteristics when touring are enhanced. What

this simply means is, when you want the XCD GT to turn, it will turn. When you want it to tour in a straight line, it will do this too!

Also with the Omnitrak® NoWax® Base for unrivalled grip, a cap construction for durability, an air channel core for weight saving and a full metal edge, I think I'll buy a pair myself!

XCD GT available in 165, 175, 185, 195cm, RRP \$529.

Climbing Tips: Winter Climbing Clothing, by Glenn



Deep in the bowels of my climbing pack live two garments that only see the light of day during the cooler months of the year: a softshell vest and a long sleeve micro-fleece pullover. During spring and summer, they act as little more than a buffer between



Lowe Alpine Wildcat



Mont Micro Jacket

valuable climbing equipment, the base of the climbing pack and the ground. In the winter months, practically every pitch is climbed in them.

In combination with a base layer of merino wool or synthetic wicking material, the long sleeve micro-fleece and softshell vest will protect the wearer caught out on the walls in unpredictable weather changes, or pushing the last pitch as the light fades and the temperature plummets.

As conditions deteriorate, maintaining core temperature becomes the priority. However the physical nature of our pursuits, needing freedom of movement while suitably protected, is of equal importance.



Rab Ghost Jacket

I have chosen a softshell vest over a jacket so that the sleeves do not impede with jamming and thrutching. The sleeves of the micro-fleece can be rolled up over the forearms without cutting off the circulation.

Hard face technology materials provide durability in an abrasive environment, without compromising flexibility and breathability, as all materials stretch to accommodate the most extreme movements, and wick moisture to the outer layer where it evaporates. Various combinations of materials generally provide up to four times the wind resistance of traditional fleeces, and have been treated with a water repellent finish. While not fully waterproof, they provide adequate protection against all bar teaming downpours.

Recommended Pullovers, Vests and Jackets:

- *Lowe Alpine Microgrid Zip Pullover m & w:* Aleution Microfleece, RRP \$119
- *Lowe Alpine Wildcat (m) and Ibex (w):* Stormweave Tech Stretch, RRP \$229
- *Mont Micro Jacket m & w:* T400 Microfleece, RRP \$99
- *Mont Slinx Pullover m & w:* Polartec Power Stretch RRP \$149
- *Mont Duo Jacket or Vest m & w:* Polartec Wind Pro RRP \$199 (jacket)
- *Rab Ghost Jacket:* Polartec Windpro RRP \$249
- *Rab Baltoro Lite Jacket:* Polartec Powershield RRP \$329