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Press Release

Alpine Ski – Never Before Seen Innovative Details

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- **PISTE REMAINS IN TREND**
- **TWO IN ONE THANKS TO ROCKER TECHNOLOGY**
- **FREERIDE-TOURING SKIS AS A NEW CATEGORY**
- **TREND WIDE, LIGHT AND LONG**

The sport of skiing steadily changes and continues to undergo development. This means the ski industry needs to focus on continuing innovation and improvement. For the upcoming 2015/16 season all manufacturers present their latest activities and innovations in terms of providing the best possible ski equipment for everyone. No matter, where and how these skiers enjoy their passion – on or off piste, uphill or downhill.

In winter 2015/16 alpine innovations will revolve around fine-tuning and specialization of skis, ski bindings and ski boots. We can look forward to interesting advances that will considerably improve the enjoyment and fun of skiing and provide more safety and energy conservation. The further development of ski technologies is not limited to the premium segment: the lower price to mid-range segment will also offer sets that will satisfy everyone and provide enormous enjoyment thanks to their capabilities. It could result in a decline for the yet consistently growing rental ski business. There is a certain convenience to having quick access to affordable, quality skis you purchase and store in your basement. Comfort, ambiance and fast transactions? Most rental customers have to deal with long lines and waiting times instead.

Almost all new developments have in common a reduction in weight in terms of materials and construction, yet performance is not compromised – rather it increases. Many manufacturers have dedicated their production to rocker technology; even slalom carvers are not exempt.

Another topic experiencing considerable development is length. Thanks to hi-tech materials longer lengths are possible without increasing weight. While shorts and

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extremely side-cut skis often require a lot of energy, increased length can also result in a quieter running and safer ski. Not only the “golden generation” like this. Longer skis also mean new shapes and more ways to use these skis, offering easier performance on groomed runs and in powder snow.

By the way, if, in the future, you lose a ski in deep snow you no longer have to desperately search for it all over the hill. SkiTracer, a small attachment mounted onto the skis, allows you to track your lost ski with the help of a special smartphone app.

Backcountry attracts more and more skiers, but the majority still skis on groomed runs – and they are always on a quest to find equipment that provides even more enjoyment, agility and performance on groomed terrain. Athletic skiers as well as beginners will particularly benefit from the 2015/16 state-of-the-art rocker technology, which basically combines two types of skis in one.

All brands are offering an extremely wide selection, thus breathing new life into the business. Use of this rocker technology in the tip and sometimes also in the tail of the ski result in even more lively, easier and more efficient performance. Initiating and completing a turn is very easy thanks to the pronounced arcing (early rise) of the ski resulting in less edge contact and reduced snow contact. Quick edge changes, variations, reaction and direction changes, on packed as well as soft snow are just as easy to complete. Even drifting is easier, thanks to the reduced length of the edge, which makes it easier to release. Though when purposely edging, the entire length of the edge all the way to the tip grips the snow. Norbert Haslach, Head of the Frey Haslach Ski School, Chairman of the German Ski Instructors Association and trainer for professional ski instructors says: “The beauty of it is that with these versatile skis you can once again enjoy skiing with all your senses, because they require less concentration, simplify the effort and require less energy. The spotlight is once again more on experiencing physical activity and enjoying nature in winter.” The industry has remedied the initial problems of rockers, such as too much vibration in the tip, not enough smoothness or control with special carbon, titanal or wood core reinforcements stretching into the tip. They also added anti-vibration layers or embedded 360° vibration insulators to absorb vibrations and minimize annoying oscillations within the ski.



Fischer, for example, launches one of the lightest piste skis for next winter. Thanks to elaborately offset milling the wood core is 25% lighter, and titanal inserts as well as flattened sidewalls further decrease the weight. Even high-speed racers benefit from lighter materials, such as graphene. This exceptional material, used in tennis rackets, is considered the world's lightest and thinnest, yet strongest element, and is used in Head's Monster collection, for example. Rossignol's piste collection, on the other hand, benefits from race technologies, and features skis with "Prop Tech". The reinforcement titanal layer on the top of the ski features a cut long its length from the tip backwards. This allows flex energy to be released transversally across the metal layer integrated into the ski.

In addition, there will be more options for those skiers who like to ski hard on groomed runs but also want to enjoy powder – possibly with the same ski. The new models with all-rounder qualities will be lighter, more stable and athletic. In addition, they will be suitable for more types of terrain and snow conditions. A new feature, for example, is the stable 'Carbon Tank Mesh', stiffening yet at the same time reducing the weight of Atomic skis, making them easier to control even in softer snow. Head's Graphene also plays a role in this development and helps provide the right type of ski for everyone from leisure skiers, classic all-rounders to athletic skiers.

K2 concentrates the weight on the sidewalls to make skis easier to control and decrease weight. Energy is transmitted more efficiently, and the ski remains stable from the edge up. The center, tip and tail of the ski receive less load. This results in easier handling, more control and considerably reduced turning weight.

Salomon believes in rocker construction, a full wood core, reduced weight in the tip and a lightweight honeycomb instead of wood laminate for its new all-mountain skis. The result is great buoyancy (float) in powder, performance in the bumps and sporty carving on groomers. For the 2015/16 season Elan counts on a four-dimensional technology: rocker on the exterior edge for easier turns, camber on the interior edge for edge grip; convex titanium inserts to initiate turns, concave titanium inserts to complete turns integrated behind the binding.

This construction increases torsional stability, improves vibration absorption by 30% and reduces the carving ski's weight by about ten percent.



Fischer's AMF (Adaptive Motion Fluid), a self-adjusting stiffening material integrated in the center of the ski, ensures that the ski automatically adjusts to the energy applied by the skier. The ski is in 'cruise mode' during low energy skiing, turns easily and runs smoothly and without vibrations. Once the skier puts more pressure on the ski the material in the core begins to harden and provides the ski with stiffer flex. The ski becomes more athletic and aggressive in 'sport mode'.

Skis cannot be too heavy to allow access to untouched powder via short climbs. This segment focused on developing agile lightweights, without compromising on performance or versatility. Almost all manufacturers offer new or improved skis requiring less effort during uphill climbs, yet featuring high performance for downhill runs as well as extreme stability in all situations – even in difficult snow conditions. The changes were applied to the ski's geometry: independent from the rocker, the widest point of tip and tail were moved a few centimeters towards the center of the ski, resulting in tapering tips. There is more: the weight of tips and often also the core was reduced, and they now look flatter and thinner. In addition, stable and lightweight materials were used in many instances.

Some of the former classic garage brands have grown up as well. The proof is in their wide skis with redesigned tip and tail design for less friction in powder. These small manufacturers offer a plethora of featherweight skis with the highest degree of float, agility and dependable all-round qualities.

In 2015/16 a multitude of robust lightweight touring skis will be available, suitable for off-piste terrain fun, and agile in ascent and descent. Touring fans are split into two groups, those who focus on the ascent as an endurance and fitness exercise, and those who put a priority on the downhill part of their tour. Both parties will be satisfied: in addition to the absolute lightweights, some of them weighing less than a kilogram per ski, featuring mini bindings for speedy ascents, there are also a lot of new models offering dependable torsional stiffness, edge grip and vibration absorption despite their light weight. In most cases, the skis features the versatile rocker construction. These more dynamic skis float through powder, neither tip nor tail dig too deeply into the snow.

In addition to Balsa and Paulownia wood cores the low weight of the touring skis is a result of extremely stable titanal and hi-tech carbon blends, used in aeronautics



and space technology. Some skis forgo edges on tip and tail. Fischer reduces material on the sidewalls and concentrates the mass and center of gravity of the ski in the center along the longitudinal axis. The ski's streamlined surface also reduces snow resistance both during ascent and descent, snow does not stick to the ski and less effort is required.

K2 uses Balsa wood cores with integrated flax fiber threads as part of its ECOre technology, resulting in minimal weight and high stability, making ski touring even easier. Balsa is certified by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and, like flax, a renewable, fast growing and recyclable resource.

Skyforce by Hagan is the brand's first youth set for ten-year-olds. The matching skins and junior bindings are the perfect excuse to instigate a family sports outing into nature.

Salomon's Backside combines the best of downhill performance and uphill comfort. The 'MTN-Lab' set consisting of skis and boots features a 184-cm-long ski with a center width of 115 mm, weighing in at only 1,800 grams per ski. This is the result of a lightweight wood core reinforced with a composite carbon fiber to enhance its torsional stiffness. In addition, honeycomb construction replaces the wood core in the tip.

Next winter, an absolute highlight for touring enthusiasts will be the new, very easy to use Kingpin binding by Marker. The world's first PinTech binding is TÜV certified according to DIN ISO 13992:2007. The extremely light and frameless PinTech, weighing 730 grams each including brake, is extremely versatile: it is suitable for everything from classic ski touring, free touring to high alpine touring.

Freeriding and touring are steadily growing closer, and fans now have their own designated equipment, mostly in the upper price segment, at their disposal. It includes everything from touring-ready skis with wide freeride shapes, rocker skins to the matching touring boots suitable for a variety of binding standards. The trend is moving towards improved natural range of motion, thanks to the new free/lock mechanisms. The cuff often moves independent of the boot shell and provides a high degree of freedom of movement. Pivot bearings move with less friction to reduce effort during ascents. Finally, tongues can be removed for the duration of the ascent, and reattached for the downhill fun. There are also quick-change sole



systems or sole elements to allow use in alpine ski bindings. Thanks to adjustable mechanisms many of these can now be used with a variety of boot types. Dynastar's free touring ski "Mytic" weighs as little as 2,800 grams per pair. This is the first time ski touring technologies have been applied to the freeriding geometry with tip and tail rockers and a 133-97-113 mm sidecut. The ski comes with wood and carbon interior, an adjustable Look binding and an extremely lightweight skin. Blizzard's ultra-light new "Zero G" free touring ski with lightweight carbon construction even on the sidewalls combine easy ascents and stable downhill running characteristics. The narrowest ski with a center width of 85 mm weighs as little as 945 grams at a length of 157 centimeters. The brand also offers the same ski in 85 and 108 mm widths, weighing as little as 1,750 grams at a length of 185 centimeters, to satisfy every touring fan. This set also includes the matching skins and Kingpin touring bindings.

Scott's Cascade line closes the gap between long touring and powder. The lightweight, progressive backcountry ski with twin tip rocker, composite Paulownia wood core, 3-D sidecut, wood core from tip to tail also comes with specialized skins.

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