



■ **SUPER DAVE FACT:** Check out the Fall Orienteering Event in Richmond this Sunday, 10 a.m. Two fun short courses will be offered and all you need is the will to have some fun. Info: www.orienteeingbc.ca or call 604-771-6729. SOURCE: Metro Vancouver

■ **HOT SITES:** Check out the following ski and snowboard related sites: www.grousemountain.com, www.cypressmountain.com, www.mountseymour.com, www.onthesnow.com. SOURCE: Metro Vancouver

Time for a tune-up

Don't wait for the snow — evaluate equipment now

By DAVE NORONA
for Metro Vancouver

For many, this is the hardest time of the year. Shorter days, wet weather and the ski movies and industry shows have come and gone.

It seems there is nothing else to do but just sit and wait for the snow to appear.

This, however, is the best time of the year to get your equipment tuned up or seek out that perfect ski/snowboard to make your season complete. With so many different options to choose from, I thought I would help take the guesswork out of choosing the right gear for you.

If you don't need anything but lift tickets, then why not invest in prepping your boards for the season. A fresh stone grind and wax job will make your skis/board new again.

Many people think this treatment is for racers only but a beginner to intermediate skier will benefit from a sharper edge and smooth base too.

The Crystal Glide in North Vancouver (Marine Drive at Fell) has invested in the best technological stone grind machine. They prep skis for



Local mountains offer great skiing nearby but B.C. is blessed with a multitude of awesome ski and snowboarding opportunities throughout the province. Dave Norona drops into 40 centimetres of powder at Shames Mountain in Terrace. PHOTO SUBMITTED

race teams from Vancouver to Whistler, and will make yours rip like new again.

If you are hungry for the latest and greatest in ski/board gear, or you are completely new to the sport, then check out Vancouver's vast array of ski and snowboard shops. Work with a store that understands your needs, abilities and goals. If you are honest, then you will end up with equipment that will help you improve quicker and have more fun.

Whether skiing or boarding, start with boots, this is where you should spend the most money. Your foot should feel comfortable and snug so that every movement is transferred to your skis/board.

If snowboarding, you will have the option to choose from many different binding systems. This is where being honest about your riding goals and ability will help the store best match you with the right gear. Lastly,

choose a board that represents your style and expression out on the hill.

A skier's second step will be their ski — most binding companies have linked up with certain ski manufacturers and the binding is integrated into the ski. Today's skis are fatter and turn easier due to their hourglass figure. Again, an enthusiastic store will help you make the right choice.

Now all you have to do is sit and wait!

Gear Guide



Description: Giro G10 is a low profile skate-style helmet that has a removable one-piece liner, 14 on-the-fly control vents, is available in nine colours and can connect to your iPod or other mp3 player.

Price Range: \$160

Where to find it: Swiss Sport Haus, 490 15th Street West Vancouver; SportMart, 735 Thurlow Str., Vancouver.



Description: Salomon Scrambler Hot Ski's monocoque composite construction encases an Isocell wood core making this shaped ski light, maneuverable and smooth for all mountain conditions.

Price range: \$1099.99 with bindings

Where to find it: North Shore Board & Ski, 1625 Lonsdale Ave., North Vancouver; SnowCovers, 1701 West 3rd Ave., Vancouver.



Description: The Ski Key can be used to lock up those precious skis and snowboards at lunchtime or après ski. A quick and affordable solution, it comes in five colours and can be used with ski key racks at popular resorts throughout North America.

Price range: \$24

Where to find it: Grouse Mountain Resort, 6400 Nancy Greene Way; SportMart, #551-555 West Broadway, Vancouver.



Description: The Flow snowboard binding is one of the most comfortable and convenient snowboard bindings on the market. The one-piece 3D power strap eliminates pressure points and provides a smooth flex. A quick flick of the back-lever provides split-second exit or entry.

Price range: \$280

Where to find it: Comor Sports, 3700 East Hastings St., Burnaby; Second Wave Sports, 139 Lonsdale Ave., North Vancouver.



Some backcountry snowboarding locations in B.C. are so sweet that boarders like Elizabeth Kovics are only willing to share a taste of what one of them looks like, but she isn't willing to say much more than it's in the North Columbia Mountains. PHOTO SUBMITTED