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Snowboard Trends Hardgoods – Eco-Friendly Manufacturing, Light Weight, Agile and Relaxed Riding

- Green – Eco-friendly materials and technology
- Easy – Rocker technology forgives errors
- Short – Shorter boards even for tall boys
- Clean and Elegant – Basic colors, clean graphics, haptic surface treatments on boards
- Comfortable – Shock absorption systems and the perfect combination of boots and bindings ensure optimal riding enjoyment
- Childproof – Clever details for small snowboarders

Green

The major focus for the snowboard winter 2010/2011 is on eco-friendly products. The environmental aspect is becoming more important in regards to resources as well as manufacturing. Factories use fast-growing bamboo, wood sourced from local forests or recycling materials such as paper for laminates and steel for edges. The use of resins and other toxic materials is increasingly reduced. Flow already reduces the number of prototypes built to keep to this motto. A really “green” product is one made of eco-friendly materials, and manufactured with production methods that reduce energy use and transportation distances. A good example is Amplid; wood chips created by cutting operations are used for the core, and none of the components is sourced more than 300 kilometers from the factory.

Agile thanks to rocker technology

They forgive errors and are easier to turn than ever. Thanks to negative pretension (rocker) the nose and tail of the boards are bent slightly upwards which creates more lift, makes them easier to turn, and they are very forgiving, no matter whether on groomed runs, terrain, in pipe or park. Thanks to the easy riding characteristics of rockers this technology has become standards in the majority of new boards. There are variations from moderate to extreme. Though some manufacturers are also taking another look at the original camber construction. Burton is not the only brand to fine-tune this original technology for a part of its collection.

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Short and sweet – long and full of soul

For jibbers every missing centimeter of board length is an advantage. Now even tall guys can enjoy shorter boards, which, thanks to the latest technology, do not flutter or shimmy, and offer a great ride. On the other hand, Völkl wants to create the feeling of a powder run even on groomed slopes with its Pin Tail board.

An increasing number of small snowboard companies such as powderequipment or LTB produce high-quality, very elaborate and limited edition boards to satisfy their customer's special requirements. They manufacture first-class boards for piste and park as well as long boards for soulful powder runs, or split boards, split into two for backcountry ascents.

Basic colors and haptic elements

The new boards all feature an attractive look. No matter whether minimalist retro style or prints, graphic elements are reduced to the basics and uncluttered. Basic colors such as red, green, or blue dominated, often with slightly washed out, muted shades. Most colors are applied with the help of digital processes; screen printing is used only if haptic elements are added to the boards. There is a wide spectrum of coarse surfaces, reminiscent of sandpaper, from gold inclusions to soft fabrics and glitter accents on ladies' boards.

Boots and bindings

Perfectly coordinated boots and bindings are said to ensure optimal energy transfer from foot to board. A pioneer of these closed systems is Flow. A new feature in snowboard boots is a shock absorption system using OC-Kush material, which ensures perfect cushioning on one hand, but also provides secure support for heel and ankle. In addition to shock absorption the primary focus is on sophisticated lacing systems, some of which can even be combined. New binding straps by Nitro provide snowboards with the option to fasten the toe strap across the toes or conventionally across the instep.

Kids on board

Kids have long become a staple for board manufacturers and the palette of age-appropriate boards, boots and binding systems is extensive. Now is the time for details. Twin shapes help small boarders determine playfully which leg is in front as they are riding. Bindings are easy to close even with gloves. Nitro, for example, uses thinner shoelaces in its boots, easier to grip and tie for smaller hands.

The latest trends from the snowboard segment will be presented at ispo 10 in halls A1, A2 and A3 (board_ispo) at the New Munich Trade Fair from February 7th to 10th, 2010.

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