

Sneak Peek 2010

If you just can't wait for the Fall Annual Ski Canada Buyer's Guide, Technical Editor Marty McLennan offers a look at what's coming down the pike.

Going Green

» Evermore interested in cold, stable winters, the ski industry is lacing up for the challenge of employing greener technologies to reduce its (and consequently our) carbon footprint.

Atomic's all-new Renu is being touted as the world's first carbon-negative, planet-positive ski boot. Its cuff and shell are made from a bio plastic taken from castor plants (a renewable resource), called Pebax. Moulded sans pigmentation, this four-buckle, high-performance boot will be sold in both a high-cuffed 110 flex and low-cuffed 90 flex, complete with recycled textiles and foams in the liner. Its one-component, milky-white, semi-translucent shell is surprisingly chic and designed to be recycled. Atomic is also working on a similar product for its Nomad all-mountain ski line that will continue to be tested throughout the 2009-10 season. "It is a very detailed and exciting process," says Georg Bauer, director of R&D at Atomic's Lackengasse, Austria, facility. "We're working hard on it." Those into alpine touring and telemark looking to step into a Pebax shell of their own can check out Scarpa's Tornado AT, and the men's and women's T2s. More than offering a sustainable alternative, this renewable plastic is also stiffer and lighter than the polyurethane found in most boots.

Rossignol has also come to bat for

Salomon's Shogun |

the environment with a new ski offering next season. Part of its well-established Attraxion all-mountain lineup, the Echo (sold with Saphir bindings), has a wood core, recycled base and is packaged with fewer petroleum-based products, lacquers and inks. The result is that you can see through to the ski composition. Sorry, green boys, this one is made with girly graphics and sold exclusively to the women's market.

Not to be outdone, **Salomon** introduced to the ski world at the ski industry show in Vegas, the 101-mm-waist Shogun in its big-mountain line. This rockered freeski board features a light and lively bamboo layer, Edge Armor and a semi-twintip tail. Proceeds of the sale of this "greenish" ski are going toward a fellowship fund for ski areas looking for sustainable alternatives to outdated practices.

Head, for its part, has long been on the environmental trail and is continuing with its Cool Earth project. This 2007 initiative continues to match its carbon emissions with a tenfold reinvestment in Amazon rain forest credits.

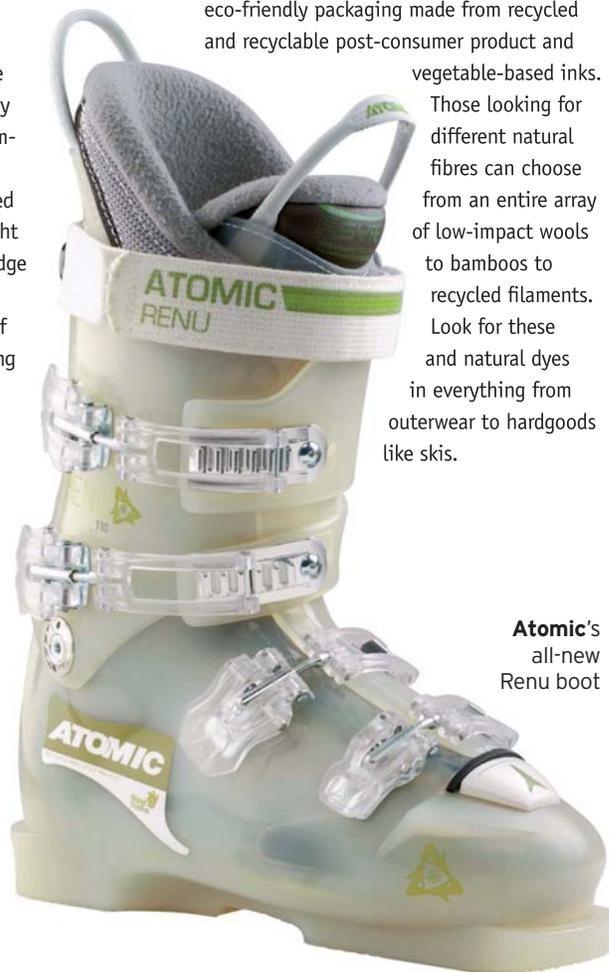
Soft goods are also coming to grips with

the environment. **Swany** claims to be the first company to make a completely renewable glove. The Ec1 is made of recycled Eco storm fabric, and the interior insulation and waterproof/breathable bladder is also 100-percent recyclable. As there is no limit to the times the material can be recycled, guess its reincarnation: your next pair of gloves!

On the optical side of things, **Smith** claims to be the first eyewear company to use eco-grade renewable and recyclable materials in its newest frames. Likewise you can expect eco-friendly packaging made from recycled and recyclable post-consumer product and

vegetable-based inks.

Those looking for different natural fibres can choose from an entire array of low-impact wools to bamboos to recycled filaments. Look for these and natural dyes in everything from outerwear to hardgoods like skis.



Atomic's
all-new
Renu boot

Bigger is Better

» No doubt the ski world is fattening up. Most of this year's updates are in the form of a wider underfoot with virtually all manufacturers coming up with bigger moulds for their 2009-10 collections. It turns out that the movement isn't only coming from the backcountry powder and park-rat ranks. The Fédération Internationale de Ski (FIS) is also looking for more stable bases and moving up its maximum allowable underfoot sizing. This may go a long way to convince eastern hardpack skiers to think big, or at least bigger. Look for the following size-ups:

Big news at **Atomic** is that its Nomad series just got beefed up with the Savage TI, which is fattening up the line's offering to 93 mm underfoot (last year the biggest was 86 mm). Lightweight and powerful, the Savage TI comes with two layers of titanium and Atomic's Torsion Flex control, which, according to Product Manager Kyle McCarthy, will turn this into a great all-round performer.

Elan has also super-sized. The Boomerang is its biggest, newest plank, coming in a one-size-fits-all, 120 mm at the waist and 190 cm from tip to tail. The Boomerang offers a cambered midsection with tip and tail rockered for deep-pow days.

The **Salomon X Wing** all-mountain line has also been retooled for this season and given an extra-value bells-and-whistles upgrade while holding onto the same price point. A good example is the Tornado TI, which has grown from its traditional 75 mm underfoot to 78, and includes a double titanium laminate. "This year we've added a little beef to it," says Drew Hitchmough, hardgoods manager at Salomon. Its entire lineup is moving toward a wider midpoint, which Hitchmough suggests averages around 80 mm. Salomon's biggest, baddest board remains the Rocker at 127 mm.

Völkl's popular all-mountain Unlimited AC30 has been reinvented. It underwent a 4 mm widening from last year and now sits at a meaty 80 mm underfoot, its sidewalls have been thinned to give it a more forgiving flex and last year's titanium has been replaced with a livelier steel belt. It also comes with the Wide Ride Binding developed for skis with an 80-mm-plus waist. And for those loving the big-board experience, the folks at Völkl say you gotta-get-a-Gotama. The freeskiing board underwent

a bend from traditional cambered to rockered 137/106/122 for better float in the backcountry. Völkl has also added carbon fleece to make the ski more responsive and versatile. It now comes in 178, 186 and 194 lengths.

K2 has come up with its soon-to-be-legendary BackSide series. The 11-ski lineup includes three women-specific boards, including its wide-waisted GotBack. Marketing Co-ordinator Lauren Howard claims the hefty 135/102/121 board will be the undisputed powder queen this year in the backcountry. On the men's side, the aptly named Pontoon remains at an unsinkable 160/130/120. The BackSide series comes with removable tip and tail caps that cover insertion holes used for K2's new, patent-pending, laser-cut touring skins. The holes can also transform the skis into a rescue sled or snow anchor.

Keep in mind, not only are the skis coming out fatter, but also longer. According to **Nordica's** Jayson Pickford, its 2009-10 men's skis are averaging around 170 cm in length. The women's norm tallies in around 160 cm.

Boutique skimakers continue to push the envelope in size and shape. Whistler-based manufacturer **Prior** wants its new Husume in the shop window—and all-mountain freeriders and tele-skiers with a penchant for the backcountry are going to want the Husume. Promising "just enough flotation to get you in the white room but enough width to keep you afloat" sounds good to us. Also from the boutique, **Armada's** ARG comes in at a honking 133 mm underfoot. **4Front's** CRJ comes with a beefed-up midsection centred on a 118 width with tapered tips and tails. And for the big mamas out there, **Line's** Pandora is looking like the widest ski on the female side of the spectrum. Weighing in at 115 mm, it's 5 mm wider than last year. The Pandora is designed with an early rise and early taper, and a symmetric flex ideal for shooting through the fluff.

On the softgoods end, expect to see more as well. Mavis Fitzgerald at **Orage** says park and front-country skiwear is getting longer and looser. On the other hand, more is less at the highest end of performance clothing. For those who like to shave off ounces while gaining performance, look to **Phenix**, which is using seamless laser cutting and high-frequency welding to create lighter and anatomically correct task-based products. ▶



Völkl's Gotama

Welcome Back, Völkl

» *Ski Canada* welcomes back Völkl into the annual Ski Test, which returns to Big White March 2-6. Look for results of the world's top ski manufacturers beginning in the 2010 Buyer's Guide issue (Sept. 2009) and for subscribers at www.skicanadamag.com.



K2's obSETHed |



K2's Hellbent |



Rossignol's Barraso |



Rossignol's Howell |

Rideable Art

» Bigger boards and the trend toward surfing snow and riding rails rather than precision carving are revolutionizing ski culture. Not surprising that along with the change of attitude, comes an artistic renaissance from the ski world's painters' palettes.

The biggest graphics are coming out on boards north of the 100-mm-underfoot marker. A real feast for the eyes is the sushi-eating fiend (slow-digesting intestines

included) in **Völkl's** unforgettable 128-mm-wide Chopsticks topsheet.

Rossignol continues to work with its seven original artists, including skateboard legends Steve Caballero and Andy Howell. This year Rossi gave them each a sin to work on for their Seven Artistic Sins line. The result is so spectacular it's, well, sinful. While you'll see the work on skis next year, Rossignol has sent out an advance exhibit of the originals. The

world launch took place at Whistler's Blake Jorgenson gallery this past January.

K2, a leader in the creative department, has come up with another dazzling set of topsheets as wonderful to look at as they are to ski. If the names themselves aren't enough, Hellbent, obSETHed (Seth Morrison's signature board) and Kung Fugas offer a window into the beautifully twisted minds of its pro-riders and the creative geniuses behind the artwork, like long-time K2 graphic designer Ryan Schmies.

If you have a penchant for the simple, you can choose beyond cartoons-on-LSD on your boards this coming winter. You can still find classic wood themes like **Völkl's**

Kuro and Fischer's Watea series. And for those who see art in their name, Ogasaka offers the Long Cruise, a 74-mm-underfoot cherry-and-maple, coloured and clear-lacquered, custom-ordered twintip with your name burned onto the wood prior to final lamination. This kind of art also has a practical application in that you'll never have to ask that burning-after-lunch question: Are these my skis?

And yes, ski art has trickled down to just about every paintable surface imaginable. Marker is employing In-Mould Technology to customize design on their bindings. The graphics are drawn on a foil and the foil is

attached to the inside of the binding housing and sealed at 290 degrees Celsius, keeping graphics looking clean on high-impact (and now scratch-resistant) areas.

Park or all-mountain? Can't make up your mind? Maybe you're Schizo. Marker has created an interface that allows you to uniformly move the entire binding forward or backward for a total of 6 cm. Going to the park? Move it on up. Switching out for all-mountain versatility or backcountry pow? Push the binding back with the turn of a key. The Jester Schizo covers from 6-to-16 DIN, while its little bro, the Griffon Schizo, covers the 4-to-12 range.

KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid)...don't plagiarize!

» Perhaps the big news of the ski industry show in Vegas was when Gene Simmons and his entourage walked into the Faction Collective booth and stared face-to-face at a bootleg graphic of his very mug, complete with iconic red tongue sticking out. Neither startled by the image nor amused by his likeness on the small Swiss manufacturer's powder ski, Thirteen, he scolded the startled floor rep and gave him his lawyer's number. Word from the Faction Collective is that they are being good boys and doing their homework. No news as of yet if they will keep the graphic.

Thirteen Rockered big-mountain: 0% 100%

Take no prisoners. The stiffest, straightest high-performance Big Mountain ski on the market. 8/300mm Rocker in the tip. 112mm waist and a massive 46m radius sidecut. Flat camber through the rest of the ski. Amazing float and stability at speed when straightlining is your thing.

Length (cm)	Running length (mm)	Tip/Waist/Tail (mm)	Sidecut radius (m)	Tip/Tail height (mm)	Camber (mm)
194	1405	135/112/132	46	72/7	FLAT/ROCKER



Features:
Sandwich-construction; full-length poplar core with birch stringers; flat-camber underfoot; 8/300mm tip rocker; low-rise tail; stiff-stiff flex; anti-chipping sidewalls; full-wrap one-piece edges; plex-2000 die-cut bases; twin mount points.

Rocker
8mm rise over 300mm

Camber
Flat camber through ski

Royale Rockered Country & freestyle: 10% 90%

Dual 15/300mm Rocker front and rear and normal and switch. Sensible flex lets you control in all conditions - surprisingly damp a normal for an all-mountain powder machine.

Sidecut radius (m)	Tip/Tail height (mm)	Camber (m)
25	87/77	FLAT/ROCK



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