



316 NEW PRODUCTS TESTED!
SKIS+SNOWBOARDS+STYLE

→**2008 GEAR OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

Outside

Buyer's Guide

STYLE. DESIGN. PERFORMANCE.

The
BEST
Winter
GEAR

EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR COLD-WEATHER FUN AND ADVENTURE

FIND YOUR PICKS FAST:

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Big-Mountain to Backcountry

10 SNOWBOARDS

For Park & Powder

18 KILLER VALUES

From First Chair to Last Call

+
45

TOP RESORTS,
LODGES &
HELI-SKIING
HOT SPOTS



WINTER 2007-2008

DISPLAY UNTIL MARCH 14
\$5.95 US \$6.95 CAN



NEW: Ski & Snowboard Boots, Goggles, Helmets, Packs, Gloves, Jackets, Nordic Skis, Snowshoes, Trail Runners, Après Shoes, Sunglasses, Tech Tools & Getaway Gear

SPECIAL
WOMEN'S
SECTION

(See Back Cover)

03 Snowboards



BOARDING PASS

Evolution is not always gradual. Snowboard designers hit fast-forward in adopting new technology this season, introducing radical innovations in shapes and materials that deliver precision rides with more versatility than ever before. Lib Tech's Skate Banana has a surf- and skateboard-inspired deck that delivers incredible edge hold, for instance, and Burton reinvents the ultrasensitive baseless binding. And this year's Gear of the Year winner, Palmer's Honeycomb, simply does it all with a design that floats easily, rides fast, and turns like it can read your mind.

By Kevin Kennedy



LEARNING CURVE

In the Store: Park? Pipe? All-mountain? Powder? Directional or twin? If you can have only one board, make sure it's right for the way you ride and the terrain you frequent most—not the terrain you see once a season. If you're unsure, try a few different types of boards before buying.

In the Field: Keep a tool kit (like the Dakine Mini Tune, \$25; dakine.com) handy for on-mountain binding adjustments; a quick wax rubdown after lunch, and occasional detuning for park runs. → Check regularly for burrs on the board's edges and use an edge tuner to file any down. Even the new base materials need regular waxing. It's best to apply temperature-appropriate wax, but if in doubt, an all-temperature wax like Hillbilly's Coffin Polish Wax (\$18; hillbillywaxworks.com) will suffice.

At Home: Before storing it for the off-season, wax your board and scrape it while it's still hot. Then apply hot wax again. → Store your board in a cool place out of direct sunlight to prevent the base from drying out.

Palmer Honeycomb 164 \$749 palmersnowboards.com

1. It's long enough to float in powder and generate white-knuckle speed on groomers, but still light enough for easy spins and big airs through the park and off backcountry booters. "This behemoth makes turning thoughtless, spinning simple, and powder a pleasure," said one tester.

2. Palmer debuts its DPD technology, which optimizes action between the lowered nose and tail kick and the sidecut. It helps maintain speed when you initiate a turn because the nose doesn't dig into the snow. It also transfers power more quickly to the effective edge.

3. Thanks to DPD, the Honeycomb felt stable at speeds that cause other boards to get shaky. "Carving feels effortless and faster," said one tester. There's also an increase in stability through the turn. And coming out of the turn, this monster accelerates even more.

4. The board is cored with superlight Nomex Honeycomb from tip to tail, creating one of the lightest production boards available. Accordingly, the Honeycomb floated and turned with ease, while DPD gave it the ability to power through the worst springtime crud.

5. Don't be intimidated by the Honeycomb's length. The weight-saving design makes what appears to be a big boy's board feel rideable for anyone. As one height-challenged tester concluded, "It turns more quickly than one would expect and is definitely manageable for a 164."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK WIENS