

Backcountry

THE UNTRACKED EXPERIENCE

2009
**GEAR
GUIDE**
EDITORS CHOICE



**RECORD
AVY DEATHS**

CHOSEN ONES:
MIKE HATTRUP
ERIC HENDERSON



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Wayne Greivy, Crystal Mtn., BC, WA Photo: Jon Coble



VENTURE

\$555

EUPHORIA

SIZES [CM]: 156-173

TESTED: 156CM

www.ventureispowboards.com

Tailored for powder, the Euphoria features a substantial 21mm of taper for effortless floatation, buoyed up front by a soft, wide nose. Offset stance options allow riders to set up closer to the tail for maximum snow suspension. "If only the people from Venture and Viagra could meet—this board is stiff and never softened the 45 minutes I was riding it," said one female tester, who also found it a bit too long for comfort. "Great edge hold; plows through crud. This board is super solid yet supple-feeling in transition," said another, who wished he were riding more open terrain and deeper snow. "It was like hanging with a pathological Pinocchio—the deeper I got into bumpy hard-pack trees, the bigger the nose seemed."



PALMER

\$749

HONEYCOMB 4

SIZES [CM]: 156, 160, 164

TESTED: 164CM

www.palmerproject.com

No earth-shattering changes for the Honeycomb this year, but it received such high marks at the test that we couldn't leave it out. The Normex Honeycomb core is 10 times lighter than wood, strong for its weight, and doesn't corrode like aluminum-and-paper-core materials. For such a light stick, testers found it dominated the entire mountain at all speeds without any chatter. "Like a biscuit in gravy, this board soaks up whatever it encounters," one tester said. "Very stable in the air and stomps landings. Sports car handling, Cadillac ride." "Super fast from edge to edge, she loves to carve," said another.