

ARMY'S TECK TALK # 9

Wow! We have had some of the best race conditions so far this winter! As the temperature has been on the colder side the snow has stayed firm and the good old eastern boiler plate ice has held off. I hope everyone gets out and skis/boards with their family next Monday; we should have great conditions at our hills.

This week we will trouble shoot Frequently Asked Questions.

Q: How to fix rock damage to the core in the base?

- The old way would have been to put in a base patch but this took a lot of time and expertise.
- Start with the ski at room temperature and cut away any loose or extra base that was scratch up.
- Lay the ski base up and mix up a small amount of 5 minute epoxy. Fill the clean hole just enough as not to have excess glue above the base level and let dry (longer the better).
- Once completely dry cut away any glue that may be above the base level (do not scrape it off as this might lift all the glue out). Make your own base/ptex cutter from a short (10 cm) panzer or body file, rapping twice at each end with masking tape. When you place this down on the base it should only cut excess glue or Ptex that is above the base level.
- Now drip Ptex over the glue area and cut and scrape off excess finishing with fibertex. Note: when the glue hardens it will shrink enough to allow for a thin layer of Ptex but don't worry if it doesn't.

Now sharpen and wax your skis as usual. This fix should last for some time. If the damage occurred on an inside edge consider switching skis around to leave it on an outside edge.

Q: The side edge will not get sharp?

- There are two major reasons; or maybe you need a clean new file?
- 1st : You may need to plain down your side wall more as it will hold your file up and away from the whole side edge. Even when you use a file guide it will still cause you to file at the wrong angle or clog up the file. Use your side wall plainer almost every time.
- 2nd : You have case hardening or tempering on the metal side or base edge. This area will appear shiny and will cause you to file to sing (new word for -- just won't cut!!). This is caused by rapid heating done by hitting rocks while skiing or a factory or shop grinder. To cut through the shiny or damaged area use a 100 grit diamond file or a coarse sharpening stone sanding back and forth over the affected area until all the shiniest has gone. If this doesn't work, take your skis to a shop and have all the edges re ground. This condition will damage your files if not treated!

Once complete, sharpen and wax your skis as usual.

Q: Skis won't glide at extreme low snow temperature?

- Tip! Everyone's skis feel sticky at - 15 degree Celsius or colder!!
- 1st : Make sure you use the proper wax and scrape and brush extra hard to insure you leave no wax for the cold sharp snow to stick too. (That crunching noise you hear while walking on the snow is the snow scraping against itself. Also a clue for you to use cold weather wax). When you bring your skis outside to the start, you must brush again to make sure all wax is off the base. (Tip: Polish the base of your skis with good old fashion news paper that has graphite print on it). I suggested a way to apply super hard wax in last week's article.

- 2nd: If the above isn't working you may need to have the grind on your base modified to suit the conditions. (World cup racers have skis for all conditions)
- 3rd: Scrape and brush some more!!!

Q: How often should I wax?

- As often as possible! – You can also mix wax from different companies with no harm to the skis. But, it would be best to learn one brand well other than a bit from all.

Q: How often should I sharpen?

- As much as possible! You will take less edge material off by maintaining your edge than you will if you have to do a major tune once in a while. (sometimes all you will need to do is diamond stone)

Q: Should I leave wax on the edge when traveling or storage?

- NO! Skis will condensate when experiencing temperature changes and wax left on the edge will trap the moisture in and cause rust to form and pit the edge. Also, with the wax off the edge it will make scraping the rest off much easier.

Head in to your local shop for all your questions and concerns. They all have very knowledgeable staff in their service centers that will help.

I hope all your sliding is going downhill fast!

Yours truly,

Dave "ARMY" Armstrong