

# Tree Skiing



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Riding in the trees is a wonderful experience, yes one fraught with danger, but with imminent hazard also lurks pleasure beyond belief. Imagine your smooth banked turns adroitly displacing powder as you write your signature in a mountain slope. Traversing the untracked and ungroomed, this is what skiing and boarding is all about. Why would one take a perfectly nice skiing day and go into the trees?

\*Fresh Snow If you are not a powder rider you are incomplete, this is among the most sublime of all mountain experience.

\*Out where no one has yet tracked.

\* The Challenge. This riding improves your accuracy & consistency with safety as a necessity.

\*Beautiful and backcountry-like

\*Getting away from the crowds.

\*Protection from wind and blustery snow.

\*Shade, there are times in the spring conditions that this snow can remain cooler, therefore better and less smoshy.

\*Less populated.

## PRECAUTIONS

*Do Not go trees*

*If you are incapable of turning or stopping quickly,*

*If you are not able to accurately assess conditions, your abilities and outcomes.*

*If you are weak, and faint at heart.*

*Low skill level.*

*Peer pressure but no real desire.*

*If you are Intoxicated.*

*If you have a history of injuries.*

*If you just plain don't want to.*

## *THEIR BITE IS WORSE THAN THEIR BARK*

*Tree skiing can be dangerous*

Of course the # 1 rule is *DO Not Hit the trees.* They ALWAYS WIN the man versus tree contest. Head injuries account for a majority of the skiing deaths, and collisions with trees is a major cause. Don't be a statistic. Even a helmet will not protect you much over 15 mph. Look out for branches too.

## HAZARDS

*Ice,* Be really, really careful. Your error margin is decreased, be aware of the surface, your skills, and your obstacles.

*Fat powder:* while this is the fun part, it can also be dangerous, be familiar with good technique

*Tree wells:* these are the slightly melted out areas at the base of trees. If you fall into one of these on a board, even the most skilled have a hard time extricating oneself. People have died being stuck in these.

*Crap*; when it has not snowed in a while what once was fresh snow becomes stale and filled with small branches, pinecones, pitch, dirt and assorted other fallout.

#### *Recommendations*

*Be in Control*: by this we mean even more so than usual.

*Speed*: Slow down in the trees.

*Rhythm*, get into a comfortable pattern. Like the advice for racing, 'look 3 gates ahead'. *Look 3 trees ahead*

*Terrain* Assess the density and downward slope of the trees you are traversing. Pick your line, and be constantly aware of ever changing snow conditions. NEVER ski out of control.

*Snow* look for flat spots or deep snow.

Deep snow slows you, as does shallowness of the slope angle. When you are going slower it is easy to get stuck (especially for boarders). No one likes 'cross country snowboarding'. Remember the more fresh snow the more steepness you need to keep moving forward.

*Obstacles* with trees you also have cliffs, rocks, logs, and other features, anticipate and stay healthy.

*Stop*. This sounds easy but if you are tired or need a break, stop in the trees. You need to be fresh and alert. Continue your wonderful journey.

#### *Protection*

Wear a helmet and goggles.

Protect your eyes where there are trees there are branches. Helmets make the best hats. Both of these things are useful even if you don't crash.

*Ski with a buddy*, be aware where you both are. Never get too cocky.

Every resort has some great powder stashes. Ask the lift ops, mountain hosts, or other experienced riders.

Skiing trees is a thrilling experience testing your accuracy and skill.

Let that be good judgment and your riding/skiing will be enhanced.

Remember, safety is everybody's business. Have a great and safe experience.