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2013-2014 Backcountry Gear Preview

Featuring: Kode 32 and Interview with Erik Hamerschlag

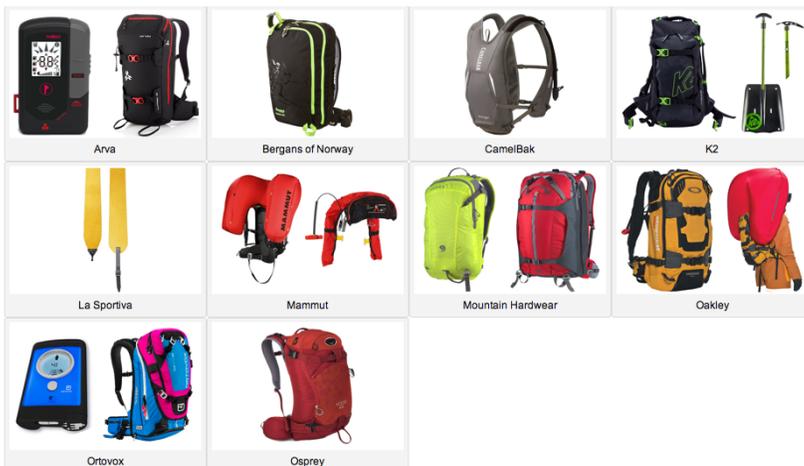
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2013-14 Backcountry Gear Preview

Backcountry gear is one of the bright categories in the ski industry as more people realize the importance of safe backcountry travel and more skiers and riders access backcountry terrain through resort gates.

Next year you'll see even more brands partnering with avalanche airbag companies and catering to skiers and riders who travel in resort-accessed backcountry areas.

Here's a look at what's in the works.





Osprey
Erik Hamerschlag, Osprey product line manager

Unisex Kode 32, \$149

Volume: 32L, including reservoir pocket

Noteworthy features:

- Diagonal and A-frame ski carry as well vertical and horizontal back panel snowboard carry
- Extra large front panel J-zip access to avalanche safety kit pocket with shovel handle & probe sleeves
- Reinforced wear points to protect pack from metal edge abrasion
- Insulated shoulder harness hydration tube sleeve
- Back panel entry into dry pocket

Target market with featured pack:

Backcountry ski touring

Two-sentence description of featured pack:

The redesigned Kode Series incorporates the feedback of backcountry professionals, athletes, and recreationists, as well as Osprey's own experience and evaluation. With the updated Kode, Osprey has improved access and organization to aid in emergency situations with a series of logically organized, durable, extremely functional and comfortable packs designed to help and never hinder all facets of backcountry snow travel.

What are you doing to stay relevant in a segment that seems inundated with options?

Maintain the Osprey reputation for packs that fit and function exceptionally well. It's remarkable how many choices there are out there, but year in and year out, Osprey designs rise to the top by delivering packs that really please the people who use them.

What about in terms of colors/graphics?

The spectrum is huge right now. Everything is possible. We've toned our graphics down a bit, but spread color choices from black to brights.

How are wider skis impacting pack design?

Larger, heavier skis mean packs have to work harder to provide comfort when skis are being carried. Our Kode series have always been very competent on the suspension side, so they are stable and comfortable with skis in A-Frame or diagonal mode. Beyond that, it means making sure ski loops and strap layouts are up to the task.

What are you doing to keep prices low without sacrificing quality?

As with all our packs, we start with the target users and their needs, rather than any cost target. The product costs what it has to in order to meet performance and durability expectations. Thanks to our 30 team members on the ground in Vietnam, Osprey is uniquely positioned to closely manage cost and quality with our partner factories. We develop all our samples in-house so we can optimize patterning, materials and usage to keep costs low and quality high. By handing off completed designs to the factories, we save on the costs they would normally pass on in product price to cover sample development.

