



Gear

## HIGH TECH VT

Move over flannel, Vermont brands are turning out some pretty high tech gear.

### FUNCTION & FASHION FROM STRATTON

There was a time, back in the 1970s, that speed skier C.B. Vaughn made southern Vermont a hotbed for ski apparel with his C.B. line. Now, Stratton skier and Dartmouth alumna Sara Segall and her husband may put Vermont back on the winter apparel map with their new line of Orsden jackets (\$330). "We wanted to create affordable, functional and stylish skiwear," says Segall, who has worked for such fashion brands as Hermes and Jones New York. We've tried two of her micro-twill jackets and you know what? She's done it. The insulated jackets fit beautifully (the women's has an asymmetrical diagonal zipper which keeps it from bunching up when you lean over), are warm, stretchy and have all the bells and whistles you'd want in a serious piece of skiwear: pit zips, a powder skirt, gusseted zippers, thumbholes in the sleeves, a helmet-compatible hood and a high collar. Best yet, at just \$330 these jackets perform—and they are as well-made as ones we have tried that are twice the price. For now, there are just two models (men's and women's) that come in a variety of muted colors, but watch for more from this Vermont start-up. [www.orsden.com](http://www.orsden.com)



### CARBON-BUILT BY BTV RACERS

Imagine you had a boot that shaves a pound and a half off your average 5-pounder, that has a consistent flex (no matter how warm or cold it is), and provides a snug, custom fit that won't turn your toenails black by spring. Longtime racers and ski industry veterans Dave Dodge and Bill Doble have been making the world's first carbon fiber boot just outside Burlington, Vt., and yes, it does all that. Now, there is a new twist: for this season the pair have

developed an app that creates a 3D model of your foot. That image gets superimposed over your boot shell to help ensure the right shell size and fit and shows where a boot might need to be punched out. We've tried these and love them. They not only give true race-boot performance, the solid fit and wool liner keep your feet from freezing. Of course, all this comes at a price: \$1,295 for a boot with a custom fit. [www.dodgeski-boots.com](http://www.dodgeski-boots.com)

### MADE IN STOWE TO SAVE YOUR KNEES

The KneeBinding, the binding that was designed in Stowe to reduce ACL injuries, has been around since 2008. Somehow, it has always gotten the same reception among hard core skiers: one that's similar to what windsurfers gave to early kiteboards and skiers to snowboards: "Cute idea, but it's a gimmick that won't last." Perhaps that's because some DIN-obsessed skiers equate the binding's unique ability to release laterally, with less control (not true). That hasn't deterred company president John Springer-Miller from continuing to build the only binding that releases laterally when a boot or leg gets significant impact. He's also working with employees at Smuggler's Notch and dozens of other resorts to test the bindings (results so far: good!). Now, Kneebindings comes in a more rigid carbon model (below) and a Hard Core model with a DIN up to 14. It might be time to show this binding a little more respect: your ACL could thank you. [www.kneebinding.com](http://www.kneebinding.com)



### A BETTER BOARD FROM WATERBURY

Since 2001, Rome Snowboards has been listening to its customers. Really listening. Like, they have a whole section of their site that takes "customer feedback" to a whole new level. This feedback group, the Snowboard Design Syndicate (or SDS) is what has allowed the Waterbury, Vt. company to quietly work its way up to being a consistent winner in board tests. For 2016-17, Rome's all-mountain Blur (\$579.99) uses the lightest core with carbon fiber laminates and positive camber, giving it the stiffness to hold on hardpack but making it responsive in the fluffy stuff as well. One of *Transworld Snowboarding's* testers noted: "a sexy smooth ride with quick edge transitions and an even flex throughout." No wonder it earned the magazine's "Good Wood" recognition for 2017. [www.romesnowboards.com](http://www.romesnowboards.com)



### NEW WOOLIES FROM WRJ

There are reasons why wool has endured as one of the best insulating fabrics: it's warm, breathable and doesn't hold odors. But that doesn't mean it can't be improved upon. Based in White River Junction, Ibex has done just that with its new Woolies 2 Mid-Weight base layer. Made with Merino wool from New Zealand, this has an interlock knit and weighs in at 230 g/m<sup>2</sup>. We love the high zip net, the long sleeves and low waist (to keep the pow out) and the fact that this is the perfect mid-weight layer for alpine skiing or riding or to wear to the bar after. \$115. [www.ibex.com](http://www.ibex.com)

### CHARLOTTE BOY MAKES GOOD (SKIS)

Since Renoun burst onto the market last year, Charlotte, Vt., founder Cyrus Schenk, 25, has given up washing windows for a living and devoted himself to getting the word out about his new line of skis. It's worked: Renoun has been written up in everything from the *Wall Street Journal* to *Entrepreneur*. For this year, Renoun launches a carving Z-77-mm and a floatier, 104-mm Endurance. Schenk has been working the trade show circuit where he carries around a ball of what looks like silly putty, wraps it around his fingers and then asks you to hit with a hammer. Hard! The putty immediately stiffens on impact, protecting the fingers. That same material, D3O is the key to Renoun's "Hyper Damping Technology" or HDT and what gives the skis the ability to stay stiff on impact. That translates into a far smoother ride with less chatter. We've skied the Endurance 98s and love them on Eastern hardpack (less so in bumps). They are light, precise and floaty enough to take on crud and corn. What they are not is cheap. But if you want just one pair of skis for the East, the \$1,345 price tag (for the Z-77s) is worth it. [www.renoun.com](http://www.renoun.com)

