

Surprisingly good findings in Beehive

Date

Tue, 11/08/2022 - 12:30

Activity

Skiing

Our group of 3 skinned into beehive basin in search of fresh snow and expecting instability. We expected the bottom old snow to be likely decomposing and facted, as well as an interface between the wind affected snow and new storm snow. We dug a pit on an E facing slope 1/4 mile south of the lake, just past where the creek concavity eases. The slope we used for our pit was 23° and we found 80 cm of snow. See SNOWPILOT data for the complete snowpack. Our pit findings were drastically more positive than what we anticipated. The snowpack showed signs of being right-side up and having low slab formation within the new snow as well as weak layers that weren't very reactive. These findings provided us with more confidence in the early season snow than we had expected. As we moved south from our pit to a less wind sheltered area we found the upper 40 cm of the snowpack to be firmer than what was encountered from our pit. While ascending we used our poles to question this change and discuss how it would affect our planned objective. We still felt confident in our plan, but made note of a wind-skin on the surface to the south of us that we wanted to avoid. We got 4 laps on an East facing 35°-38° slope accompanied by 30 of our closest friends before skinning out with no instability observations on the slope we skied. There were however obvious point releases within and slightly buried under the new snow on adjacent west and southwest slopes further south down the basin. The west side appeared thinner with less coverage and more wind rippling as observed from afar.

Region

Northern Madison

Location (from list)

Beehive Basin

Observer Name

Ethan Jeannette