

The Dutchman's Log



WINTERSTICK: A Winter's Tale

You know, as do we, that premium varnish protects wood and looks terrific. Thanks to varnish's magical plasticity, protection is its superpower. It's ductile. Pliable. Pliant. It's bendy. That quality shines when working wood—masts, spars, boat hulls—gets pushed out of shape by wind and water, and the varnish flexes in concert with the wood without cracking.

Oh ya? Not to be sadistic, but let's see just how tough that supple protective coating truly is—on a snowboard! Let's take the air temp down to around zero (F). Then rain ruthless abuse—let the furies do their worst. Forget wind and water. Let's talk snow, ice, rocks, trees, steel rails, picnic tables, frozen "15-stair" concrete stairways, and the nastiest smud (a spring mélange of snow, mud, and sharp pebbles) imaginable.

Not to worry. Whatever their snowboards can take, the crew at Winterstick all tell us that their varnished finishes can take it, too. And we've seen that in action ourselves since Winterstick is just a couple hours up the road from us in Carrabassett Valley, Maine at the foot of Sugarloaf, the second biggest ski area in the East (after the legendary Killington, VT).

"Our boards are built to be flexed," says Winterstick's Marketing and Sales Manager, Drew Ingoldsby. "We have people going into snow parks and halfpipes, doing nose presses, tail presses, flexing the board, and stuff like flat-ground-trick acrobatics where you're hammering a hard lean on that edge to the point where you're twisting your feet to torque the board, applying torsion in opposite directions to rip a turn."

Riders, the hip term for snowboarders, ask a lot of their boards, but Winterstick has over 50 years of experience building super strong but resilient platforms that are ridden worldwide, from Sugarloaf to St. Moritz, Nagano to Aspen, and back.

A snowboard is a compression molded sandwich of layers: a base of super tough, ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene, aka P-TEX. Sharpened steel edges that let the board slice tight, serious g-force turns through the snow. A tapered honeycombed core with stringers of poplar and maple down the centerline (think keelson) followed by layers of triaxle fiberglass or the stiffer triaxle carbon fiber. And last, in Winterstick's case, a natural wood top layer and several layers of varnish.

"We sand the entire top sheet down; clean it so there's absolutely no debris on it, and then we finish it with Epifanes Poly-urethane Varnish," says Drew. "We usually start with a rolled-on coat of Clear, which makes the beauty of the wood grain really pop. Then we follow that up with a thin, rolled-on coat of Matte to give it more of that natural wood look. Instead of a super shiny, furniture-type finish."

The proof, though, is in the pow pow (that's "powder snow" to the uninitiated). And how the board and the finish hold up under pressure. "We have customers who take really good care of their boards who are still riding them after 10 or 15 years." On the other hand, Drew told us about a crash his boss took. "Rob talks about bailing (falling) and over-buttering (folding) the nose of the board so sick (extremely) it touched his knee. He krunked (crashed) hard. He gets up and the board's completely fine. The varnish, everything's completely fine."

Winterstick was making snowboards years before anyone else. They were the pioneers in 1972 and they continue to set world-class standards. And they use Epifanes. So whether you're on the high seas of summer or the steep slopes of winter, you're apt to see Epifanes in action.

Shred the gnar!

Pro rider Tom Burt talks Wintersticks at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKkGjNz6nrk>

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Our PP Extra Varnish – PP as in "Two-Part"

You know, we should probably be featuring our two-part, snowboarder-tested Poly-urethane Varnish. But our PP Extra Varnish is selling like hotcakes in Europe. It's our time-and-depth formula that's making PPX our #2 seller over there. It's all about building a deep finish fast. The first three brushed coats can follow each other with just 2-3 hours in between—with no between-coat sanding. After an overnight cure, a



light 320-grit dry sandpaper “de-nibbing” and a gentle going over with a Scotch-Brite pad sets it up for three more coats rolled on with a Moltopen foam roller. Or you can spray it. You get three coats a day and a flexible finish that’s UV-resistant to boot. We thought you ought to know. And wouldn’t you know it, our friend Dan Lee just launched a new how-to PPX video. Check it out: [Master Time and Depth With PP Extra](#)

THE OLD SALTS SAY

The Yankee Clipper

*(but not
Joltin’ Joe)*



In Maine, we get this surly winter transient called the Alberta Clipper. Every year, the Clipper gets all ginned up in Canada and sails southeast across the Great Lakes, leaving dry cold, frozen fingers, and misery in its wake. Then it dives into the Atlantic, sucks up a mess of moisture, and clobbers the New England coast with snow. Some meteorologist came up with the name back in the 60s. But the coffee crew down at the Port Hole restaurant call it the Yankee Clipper, figuring if it’s going to foul up our winter lobsterin’ that bad, it might as well be a cussed local.



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