

A TALE OF TWO BUSES

After a balmy, rainy week, filled with dread and cancellations, a diehard, optimistic group of skiers and boarders staggered into the parking lot at Ramblewood. We ate, drank, and got psyched for hitting the rocks, ice, and snow guns that would blast us with tiny pellets of frozen white stuff.

Two busses, one filled with younger more energetic folks, armed with Jell-O shots and gummy bears, the other with pillows, iPads, the queen, and drinks that required ice and fancy umbrellas, waited patiently for people who never showed up. Fifteen minutes later, after some bus adjustments, subtract one Lyndsay, move a Rachel, and add a Terry and Ed. We were all set and ready to go! Hey, with 88 people you're bound to screw things up a little. All right, who snuck in the Powder Pig?

We finally got to Stowe around 1:00AM after an exciting ride down a narrow dirt road with twists, turns, and an occasional branch slapping the window. We then entered Northern Lights Lodge, where the owners were overjoyed to see us. Whoops, I just had a flashback, Al is no longer there. We all made it to our rooms, most had shower curtains, some with only half, but aside from that, the rooms seemed to be adequate. No heater complaints. We occupied all but one room in the place.

Morning was just around the corner and breakfast was hearty and good. The buses were ready, one at 8:00 and one at 8:30. The shuttle was available at 9:00 for the folks who had a few too many Jell-O shots.

We were pleasantly surprised by the amount of snow on the mountain. I saw many smiles on our group all day long. We did have one casualty on the first run requiring the ski patrol and a sled ride down the mountain. Karl managed to break his boot. Luckily, a hospital visit was not needed. Two others suffered from new boot syndrome but other than that, all was well.

Stowe is famous for the front four, The ski club provided the mountain with the Female Four, Gwen, Laura, Tammy, and Jackie who closed the mountain as the sun set at 4:15. Luckily, the second bus stayed until 4:30 so we could chug a beer before we got on the bus, along with about a dozen die hard skiers and boarders.

The hot tub was hermetically sealed with duck tape and plastic so the pool was hotter than usual. This made it a nice big wet gathering place. You could hear John saying, yo, Dude, you're getting water in my beer. Dinner followed the pool shenanigans. An assortment of desserts were offered and John, showing his culinary creativity, decided to try pouring chocolate sauce on his cheesecake only to find out it was a dark brown turkey gravy. After that, many took off for the Mahogany Run at the Matterhorn, Jason, Mandy, Dave, and Chris went back to the pool, Jess went to sleep, and the rest hung out in the bar area. Diane decided to break some unwritten rule and was reprimanded for going behind the bar.

Sunday brought us fewer people on the mountain but more of the icy hard stuff. After snowboarding all day, one of the trip leaders had a gigantic butt bruise to prove it. We returned to the lodge, after a drink or two, to the icy stares from the lodge owners, similar to the conditions of the mountain. Brrrr, Al where are you?

We loaded the bus, gathered our lunch bags, and were off. Who said there are no free lunches? Movies were shown on each bus. One bus was filled with laughter, while

the folks watched Old School. The folks on the other bus fell asleep to Wallace and Grommet. Everyone on the sleepy bus thought Jess sabotaged the film choices.

We arrived at Ramblewood sometime around 1:00 AM. Everyone went home except the trip leaders who had to figure out how to squeeze 2 boot bags into a car that was filled to the brim. Luckily, Karl was still there. He had plenty of room in his car, as you recall, his boots met their tragic death on the first run on Saturday. Sometimes things happen for the best.

Well, that's it for another year at Stowe. Who would have thought that this trip would end so well? It looked like everyone had a blast.

Start planning for next year,

John and Jackie (Sno Goddess who will have to dance a little harder next year)

