

Photos by Kirby Neumann-Rea

CLOCKWISE from right: Vintage "Snurfer" board, c. 1970s, and skis c. 1960s, displayed at Doug's; technicians Seamus McMorrow, 2nd Wind Sports, giving a board a new wax job and Andrew Boyle of Doug's repairing ski edges; shop manager Sam Benoit of Doug's fits Wolfgang Bayer of Wurzburg, Germany, with a rental helmet before a ski lift backdrop; shop dogs Chewy and Dash greet Doug's customers; Doug's remodeled its shop last spring to increase storage and customer comfort; at 2nd Wind, co-owner Erika Gerald talks with Carrington Barr and his daughter, Sydney, as they shop for new boots; McMorrow in the 2nd Wind shop with a snowboard in the foreground that says it all.



Teacup Classic Feb. 9

Teacup Lake Nordic Club and The Mountain Shop of Portland host races Feb. 9 for all skill levels in the annual Teacup Classic, held on trails around Teacup Lake in the Mt. Hood National Forest.

Bibs and timing chips should be picked up by 10:30 a.m. Kids' races will start at 11 a.m., with a fun 1K for kids up to 9 and a 2K race for kids up to 13.

Carpooling is recommended as parking is limited. No race-day registration; deadline for online sign-ups is midnight on Feb. 7.

Details at teacupnordic.org.

KEEP GEAR GLIDING

Downtown shops are competitors but work together to get riders ready for the mountain



By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**
News editor

The road to the mountain starts in a two-block radius in downtown Hood River.

Two shops — Doug's and 2nd Wind Sports — are competitors yet collaborators in providing for locals' and visitors' snow gear needs. Both sell new gear and rent a wide range of equipment for beginners to advanced racers.

The needs the two shops meet run the gamut: From repair of skis damaged to the core, to a set of new stickers to cover up the old ones on a just-purchased consignment snowboard.

On a given day, you might find technicians Seamus McMorrow at 2nd Wind or Andrew Boyle at Doug's repairing or refurbishing snowboard surfaces, ski treads or edges (skis do have treads, not unlike tires). They could be rewaxing a board or repairing rust on a ski edge or burrs, nicks or other damage, be it cosmetic or severe, or resolving an issue with boots.

"Ski boots are pretty technical, a big part is the integrity of the DIN sole," the square or rectangular part at the toe of the boot, Boyle explained.

Erika Gerald of 2nd Wind said boot upgrades are often required because the liner has worn or become compacted from use.

"You don't want your foot moving around inside the boot," she said.

Both stores have new gear for sale as well as rental services.

New snow has changed conditions and brings changing ski and board needs, according to the gear shop folks.

"Now people are coming in with their skis they didn't want to fix because they were skiing on them," Doug's shop manager Sam Benoit said. "I just got a pair in that were damaged early season, they skied hard on them, and now they want to switch over to bigger mountain powder skis

and these are coming into the shop for a tune."

"With low snowpack in December, we had a lot of core shots, where the (ski's) base material is removed and the core is exposed," Benoit said. "That's a problem because moisture can get in."

"Water is like cancer to skis," Boyle said. "Once it gets in it causes worse damage if left untreated. Like any wound, you need to treat it right away to keep it from getting worse."

With plenty of new snow on the mountain, what keeps 2nd Wind staff busy these days is "Mostly everything," joked Erika, who owns the shop with her husband, Pepe.

"This has definitely been our busiest time," said Pepe.

2nd Wind, at State and Second streets, and Doug's, at First and Oak, both sell a wide range of gear and garments, and 2nd Wind is a long-time purveyor of consignment goods.

"Tuneup work is like taking care of your car," Benoit said. "You slide better when wax is right and your edges are taken care of, especially on hard pack: Proper waxing equals better gliding."

A hot wax treatment takes 24-48 hours, Boyle said. "We're pretty backed up on these, like all the shops."

Benoit and owner John Moleski remodeled the space last year, installing new floors and counters, and space-saving gear racks, Benoit built new benches and re-faced the counters.

"If people came in even in the spring, this was different, a whole different configuration," Benoit said. Doug's installed a self-service check-in computer station, allowing customers to create an account or go to an existing one to place an order for rental equipment. It uses the Easy Rent system by Wintersteiger, creating a digital library with records of each customer's rental history, to be retained at least seven years.

2nd Wind's shop is in the rear of the store, next to new

