

# Apps, hardware keep track of the ski day

By Heather Somerville, San Jose Mercury News

At the end of a long day on the slopes, there's only one reward as sweet as a cold beer and a fireplace to warm your toes – recounting your epic moves through the powder.

“You won't believe the air I caught!”

“Did you see how fast I took that tree run?”



At the end of a ski day, Shirley Hackett goes over her Epic Mix account online.  
Photo/LTN file

But with a growing number of mobile apps, high-tech goggles and other digital devices that can measure with precision all the moves down a mountain, old-fashioned storytelling with friends and family may not cut it anymore. GoPros and iPhones have long helped athletes record their mountain adventures, but more serious skiers are pushing their limits with gadgets – possibly even Google Glass – that offer skiers a wealth of data about their technique on the trail.

The “quantified self” movement, which emerged as smartphones became more ubiquitous and wearable devices such as the Fitbit

grew in popularity, has invaded resorts across the globe, adding competitive aspects and measurable performance gains to the sport. Although many embraced skiing for the chance to be in the mountains, disconnected, alone at the crest of an untracked bowl, even these snow-sport athletes are adopting technology to measure every turn and trick in hopes of quantifying a sport that has for so long been measured by gut feelings.

“You get this emotional feeling, like ‘Wow, that might have been the best powder run I’ve ever done.’ But then you think, ‘A lot of runs feel that way, and they can’t all be the best,’” said David Lokshin, co-founder of AlpineReplay, a Southern California company that makes Trace, an app to track ski performance and a sensor that sticks to a ski or snowboard and can identify and record airborne tricks

The data the Trace app collects can then be examined and shared, offering new potential bragging rights and quantifiable improvement.

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