Crossblades, a snowshoe-ski hybrid

By Erme Catino, Outside

If a snowshoe and a backcountry ski had a baby, you'd get something like the Crossblade, which was released last month at ISPO 2016, Europe's ski trade show.

Like a snowshoe, this thing's principally meant for going uphill. But it eschews metal teeth in favor of a smaller version of a climbing skin that you'd attach to backcountry skis. At the top of the hill, just unclip the rigid platform holding the skin, flip it over, and reattach it to the base of the blade to reveal a smooth surface with metal edges (unlike touring skis where you take the skins off). Adjustable bindings work with either winter hikers or ski boots.

When you're on hard snow, the base and metal edges ski a lot like snowblades (those incredibly dorky, miniature twin-tip skis for rent at your local hill). But when you're in deep snow, the Crossblades sink to their wider, upper platform, turning them into powder boards for a little better float. You'd flounder in waist-deep fluff, but they might be fun in six inches or less of fresh.

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