

**The Nordic Ultratune
Hand Picked Ski Program
for the 2011/2012 Season**

The hand-picked ski program continues for the 2011/12 season. You get the skis you want, picked from the best possible selection.

For the 2011-12 season, the following models are available:

Skate skis:

- Atomic Featherlight Skate - **\$555**
Hardpack Skate - **\$555**
- Madshus Nanosonic Skate - **\$599**
- Rossignol Xium WCS Skate - **\$599**

Classic Skis:

- Atomic WorldCup Classic - **\$555**
- Madshus Nanosonic Classic - **\$599**
- Rossignol Xium C2 Classic - **\$599**

Specialty Classic Skis

- Madshus Nanosonic Zero - **\$599**
- Rossignol Xium C2 Rubber - **\$599**

Other Special Skis

- If it's available from Atomic, Madshus, or Rossignol, I can get it for you. Just ask!



**Precise
tools for
measuring
camber and
flex.**

I work closely with the ski companies, knowledgeable

world cup skiers, coaches, and servicemen to get the best possible information on ski fitting for each brand and model that Ultratune sells.

All skis are selected using the Ultratune Digital Flex Press in our shop. Some will be pre-selected at the ski warehouse, but they'll always be tested and flex verified in our shop.

Whether you choose a ski from Atomic, Madshus, or Rossignol, the performance will depend on fit and finish. A well fitted ski with a fast base finish will result in great performance.

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Send an email to xcgrind@ultratune.net with information:

Your Name

Weight – how much do you weigh with your ski clothes on?

Height – how tall are you?

Ski type – skate ski or classic ski?

Which ski? If you know the model and size that you want, tell me. If you have questions about the skis, ask. I usually reply to emails in less than a day, even in the summer.

A short description of what you're looking for. This can be as simple as "an all-around ski", or as specific as you can describe. Will the skis be your one-and-only pair, are the skis intended to fill in a specific purpose among many pairs of race skis. The more information you provide, the better able I am to choose the right skis for you.

Stone Grinding. If you know the base grind you'd like, then include that. Don't worry - I can help with the choices.

A phone number. At some point, we'll need to talk, so send a number.

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You get a ski that's correctly flex picked for the intended use, with a great Ultratune base grind for the intended conditions. They're saturated with wax in our hotbox and delivered to you.

If you would like a pair of skis, send a request.



Choose Your Ski Selected by Flex Pick Your Grind Hotbox Service Delivered!

When the skis are picked we decide together which grind is best for the skis, which bindings are needed, and any other details.

Payment for the skis is needed before the skis get their grind and hotbox. Typically the skis are shipped a few days later – just long enough to get the skis prepped, packed, and shipped.

Shipping is handled via FedEx Express three day service in the USA. ■



The Mantec Grinder at Nordic Ultratune

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Skis that fit, with a racing grind, and hotbox service. Delivered before the snow flies!

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A Look at the Rossignol WCS Skate Ski

By Mark Waechter

Here's a update of my review from 2010/2011. – The WCS skis were incredibly good during the 2010/11 season. These were the best Rossignol production skis that I've seen. The good news is that they are unchanged for 2011/2012.



The Rossignol WCS skis are trimmed down about 1cm compared with the 2009/10 ski. The new skis are 180, 186, and 192 (instead of 181, 187, 193). Also, the tip is cleaned up --- Rossignol has ditched the "window" in the tip and is instead using a thinner, cleaner looking flat shovel. I think this is a good thing. (Note that a 186cm Rossignol WCS is about the same length as the 190cm skate ski from Madshus for 2011/12).

More subtle, but more important, Rossignol has shaped the profile of the ski, making it wedge-shaped, with the heel a little lower than the toe. This is further accentuated by the NIS bindings (for those who use them) to give a pronounced wedge-shape under the foot. The intent is to help keep the weight back on the foot to improve performance. On the World Cup, skiers have been playing with wedge shaped shims for a couple years, and this is percolating through to consumer products now.



Also, the camber profile is designed with the half-weight camber open just a little further forward than the old Xium WCS. The camber closes about another 10-12cm when progressing to full-weight, and this provides a great all-around front end camber, especially when combined with the somewhat more compliant tip flex than the older versions of the Xium.

And how do they ski? SUPER. All the previous detail would add up to zip if the skis weren't performers. As I've come to expect with Rossignol skate skis, they're very stable. But these skis are also fast, predictable and compliant. The WCS-2 skaters are really nice.

Finish on the skis is very nice as well. The shiny clear top is free of bubbles or cosmetic goobers. The tip graphics on the bottom include a very cool-looking white insert, and it's smooth when you feel it with your fingers; nicely done.

Finally, the bases are nice and flat. I am able to blank these skis with one pass through the Mantec grinder. That requires an almost perfectly flat ski edge-to-edge. This gets a big thumbs up from me!

The Rossignol WCS skate ski is an improvement from the 2009/10 ski, and the specifications are the same as the 2010/11 year's ski. Evolution, rather than revolution. But definitely a step forward. Rossignol has done a really nice job. Everyone will want a couple pairs, right? ■



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The Atomic FeatherLight

By Mark Waechter

Atomic is bringing a new skate ski to the table that should have everyone licking their chops.

Atomic World Cup HT

Atomic calls it the World Cup HT skate ski. "HT" is for Hard Track, and the new ski isn't just a tweaked version of their all-around favorite, but a whole new ski, straight from the pressure-cooker testing lab that is the World Cup.

This new ski is differentiated from the "regular" Atomic World Cup Red Cheetah Featherlight (now designated as the "ST") in the following ways:

- Firmer tip flex - more pressure further forward in the ski.
- Straight edge profile for more edge engagement on hard, icy, tracks.
- Greater torsional rigidity, especially in the fore-body of the ski
- Double groove base, for better tracking

The firmer tip, combined with a more torsionally rigid construction, extends the weight distribution further forward. Add the straight profile, and it adds up to firm contact and edge engagement on a greater length of the running surface on medium to hard track.

Although it is designated as a "hard track" ski, it will certainly be used in medium to hard track conditions, and also will be used as an all-around ski by skiers looking for extra stability.

Atomic uses a bit of extra material in the front end of the ski, dropping their "Beta construction" on the HT in favor of a stout flat-top box section. The ski really is noticeably stiffer torsionally. It is still a cap construction with a distinct hard edge flange that helps with edging and control; this remains a hallmark of the Atomic skate skis, dating back to the early 1990's.

The bindings will need to be positioned with care, and probably a little further back of the ski's balance point in order for it to feel neutral, based

on my experience. My bet would be 1.5-2.0cm behind balance point, but I'll be following up with Atomic Austria to get some guidance on their recommendation.

Two Grooves for Tracking

Double grooves. The double grooves are another shot at making the ski track well in tough conditions. The bottom of the HT skate ski looks like a Rossi skater! Except that the grooves are beefier – a little deeper and wider. I think this is welcome – it makes it easier to work on the ski when the grooves are more pronounced. The all around ski (the "ST") will still keep the single groove.

The base material is the same as the World Cup Red Cheetah, and they're very easy to work on – the bases are flat and stay flat, they hold wax well, and the p-tex is slightly softer than many of the other brands.

On the snow the HT skate ski is solid and stable. I got the opportunity to use these skis in icy, transformed conditions that included short sections of melt/freeze (water ice), and long stretches of consolidated large-grained old snow that hadn't been groomed for a couple of days. Also, I've used the new skis on groomed track that wasn't icy

but simply firm. For me, I really feel a more solid footing. I notice it in the tail of the HT as much as the tip, even though the emphasis from Atomic has been

on the front-end construction. I suspect they firmed up the tail as well, and there is a slight flare of the ski in the final 6 inches of the tail which helps accentuate the gliding platform while on a flat ski (V2, field skate, etc). On a flat ski, the HT doesn't wander or squirm; it feels secure. On steep, icy, climbs, the edges stay engaged and don't wash out.

Usage for the two offerings will have some overlap. It's soft/medium for the ST, and medium/firm for the HT version. But skiers who prefer an extra stable ski may find the HT to their liking as their primary ski.

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The firmer tip flex on the Atomic HT should be considered in context. The HT still has a more supple fore-body than the "regular" ski from a few of the other ski brands! ...it's simply more firm than the Atomic ST version. This is definitely not a board-stiff snow plow.

Picking the appropriate flex is important for performance, as always. The Atomic HT skate skis will be picked on the firmer side compared to the ST version.



If you're a citizen racer, the HT plus the ST make a terrific 2-pair combo. For competitors with a full bag of ski options, a combination of HT and ST choices will allow you to select flexes and grinds to handle the full matrix of possibilities without compromise.

I applaud Atomic for making a true hard track choice in their skate ski offerings. Instead of two very similar skis (cold/warm), they're offering two distinctly different skis that complement each other. One is an excellent, supple, fast, all-around ski for soft and medium track (plus sugar found in mass start races); the other is a firm, stable platform for use in medium to hard-track conditions or for skiers who place a high priority on extra stable skating.

Want some?

If you'd like to order some of the Atomic skate skis, either the new HT or the all-around ST version, just send an email. ■

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Madshus Nanosonic Tested

By Mark Waechter

For the 2010/2011 season, the Nanosonic was all new. It was a huge success on the World Cup, and here in North America as well. For 2011/12, the ski will remain unchanged. If you spent time around skis last winter, you certainly saw that the Madshus ski has a completely new shape - the entire design was changed. Yes, the graphics were updated too, of course, but the whole ski was new. If you missed out last season, or weren't paying close attention, then it is definitely worth discussing.

The Design

Anyone who has seen the Madshus skis in the past ten years is familiar with the top-side shape - the curved hump/spine that runs lengthwise - it's the Madshus shape that has been constant throughout the Hypersonic and Nanosonic lifetime. But that all changed for the 2010/11 season, and it was a big success, and carries over to the 2011/12 season.

This updated "3-D shape" is simpler and cleaner. The use of varying depth features extends all the way up into the tip of the ski to reinforce the perimeter of the shovel, allowing a light tip with some engineered control of the tip flex and tip strength. Through the middle fore-body of the ski, the profile is smoothly continuous, and avoids any discontinuities that would create "hinge-points". The effect is visually very clean and simple and elegant. It looks great, and it is a smart design.

The middle section is squared-off and has the standard black NIS plate. This is nothing new - most of the ski world is now using these plates on the skis. Adjustable bindings and NO SCREWS are both a great idea.

I spent a lot of time discussing the top side of the skis because the Madshus design actually uses the shape for structural purposes (not a new thing with skis - Atomic also relies on topside shape in the ski design).

The tips of the skis are trimmed down compared to the past Nanosonics, and the length has been reduced. They're still calling the skis "185, 190, 195cm" because the running surface length hasn't changed, but they measure about 3.5cm (1.5 inches) shorter than older versions. There's also a noticeable up-turn in the tail that makes these skis the easiest skate ski to ski backwards on! Weight

for a single 190cm ski is just a few grams either side of 500 grams on the six skis I weighed. So, weight per pair is about 1000 grams. That's good; lighter than most.



The bottoms are smart. There is no colored graphical insert at all. Just plain black continuous p-tex over the whole length of the ski. I gotta tell you, I really like this. It's just simple and "no baloney". Easy to work on, and simply better engineering. Lets hope that they keep the all-black bottoms. Plus, the new skis seem to stay flat better than in the past. I discussed this with Per Wiik from Madshus/Norway, and he told me that some changes were made to the layup of the ski to improve the flatness.

Madshus designed different versions of the Nanosonic skate ski, and it's best to describe the three different camber versions with respect to the on-snow testing.

On Snow

On snow you'll recognize the smooth neutral feel of the skis. The Madshus camber design concept remains the same on the new ski, so they still have that familiar Madshus glide. Smooth and solid.

I have tested the 3 versions of the Nano skaters. Madshus designates them as the R, the HP, and the SC. They tweaked the camber characteristics for these

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designations (especially the HP and the SC), so it's probably easiest if you toss out your old ideas about what they mean. I think Madshus should have used new names for these skis, but...

- The "Nanosonic R" skate ski has a high and active camber, and it also has some side-cut. I thought this ski felt very lively and quick through the turns.
- The "HP" has a medium-high camber and nearly straight sides. This is the ski that I think is the "all-around best". Personally, I like the way these move on the flats, since they roll inside-edge-to-outside-edge without carving away from me while doing a field skate and get a very long controlled and smooth glide. And in softer conditions they've got a little more platform in the mid foot and track nicely through the length of the ski while climbing. The fore body camber extends a little further forward than past models (this seems to be a trend in the industry; Rossignol is doing this, too), and the contact pressure area in the front of the ski closes progressively while transferring weight onto one ski. It's a good all-around camber in the front, with progressive tip flex that isn't board-stiff and it's not floppy. If these skis are picked at 5-10kg above body weight (closing pressure at -8cm), then they'll have some pop and feel pretty lively. A slightly softer pair, around 100% body weight, will be a bit more compliant in cold and soft conditions. (as a note, Madshus uses what they call the "U+" camber on this ski) If you're filling a quiver you might get a couple different flexes, or similar flexes with different grinds.
- Finally, they're calling the ski with the lowest and stiffest camber the "SC". They intend this ski for wet/soft conditions. (Madshus has referred to this camber as the "U++" in their past world cup models) Personally, I consider this a more specialized ski. The difference between this ski and the HP are subtle. The camber firms considerably just before final closure, and the ski sits lower to the ground at rest. Also, there's more of a "hot spot" in the contact area in the front (good for wet stuff), and a little bit more noticeable tip-splay. This ski will have to be selected at about 120-130% of body weight (pressure to close to 0.05mm at 8cm behind balance point) for a good fit. As a note, this is also a nearly straight-sided ski (same side cut as the HP).

All three models ski well. The ski is a worthy successor to the old Nanosonic. Madshus has retained their overall ski design concept - these skis still feel very much like Madshus skate skis. They glide smoothly, and control is excellent.

I think it will be critical to get these skis fitted appropriately -- it would be a mistake to fit these versions with the same closing pressure. The models are distinctly different, even if those differences are subtle.

Odds and Ends

I brought a pile of these new Madshus skis back from Whistler during the middle of the 2010 Olympics to grind for the prevailing conditions, and I noticed that they were all the HP and SC versions (nearly straight sides). Also, during the 2010/11 season, these two versions were prevalent among the World Cup skiers.



Graphics! The Madshus skis are bright and bold; call it "Lipstick Red". The skis look great, though the graphic details and lettering are a little bit grainy in the print resolution (...talk about nit-picking!). As in the past, the top-sheet is a glossy smooth finish. Madshus does the best job in the industry with finish on the skis, I think, and this new ski continues that trend. Very nice. ■

