

Free-ride: local evaluation of avalanche danger in Valgrisenche-Aosta Valley (I)

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During the months of February and March 2010, in the north-west part of Western Alps in Aosta Valley where the practice of free-ride heliski is regular, were made profiles and stability test (ECTRB) with the collaboration of the local mountain guides. The main purposes were two. The first one, to provide to alpinists guides the supporting data for the assessment of local paths of free-ride, and the second one to analyze the data collected with the activities of free-ride, combining the feel of guides with specific test data. As a the result, we can notice that profiles and stability tests highlight the presence of weak layers and provide a clear picture of snow conditions. These data combined with a daily monitoring of weather conditions are well integrated in the procedure of local evaluation of individual slopes and become useful for those who daily carry as a guide the activity of heliski. However, it highlights a major difficulty in correlating the results of stability tests with the ski activity, especially in order to associate the overhead produced by a skier with the depth of the weak layer.