



Sunshine and Stoked at the Inaugural Ladies Weekend Out Splitboard Event in Mammoth Lakes, CA



Golden State Guides ran their first Ladies Weekend Out splitboard event in Mammoth Lakes, CA on March 12th and 13th. Six participants, along with myself and GSG guides Tailer Grey and Jessica Olsen, took to the backcountry to dial in splitboard skills and hangout with a group of awesome ladies. I had the pleasure of tagging along for the event and capturing some of the moments over the two-day course, from the high vibes to the parking lot apres beers.



Day one began at the Visitor Center in Mammoth Lakes, where the ladies were introduced to their gear provided by GSG. This included all of their avalanche safety gear: beacon, shovel, probe, as well as touring gear, including bindings, skins and Weston splitboards. Several of the ladies were really excited about the partnership with Weston Splitboards and were looking forward to giving them a try, including participant Carman Cheung. "I was already looking into demoing a Weston board and then my friend sent me the class and was like well you could demo a board, take a class, have a guide and learn to splitboard. And there's beer!", said Cheung. "So it was the whole package. I signed up as soon as I saw it."

After some binding adjustments and demonstrating how to pack all of the new gear into packs, we did a round of introductions. We learned everyone's favorite snack and the fact that every participant had come up from somewhere in southern California for the event, so the comradery was instant. The ladies were stoked to get onto snow, so we headed to the Mammoth Rock trailhead and began our day.

We started off with our first transition, learning how to turn our complete board into touring mode, which can be one of the hardest parts of learning how to splitboard. Tailer walked everyone through her methodical steps on how to take the board apart and keep your gear organized, ensuring that all the ladies felt confident with each step along the way.



After everyone transitioned to split mode, we went over the basic functions of our beacons and how to do a beacon check. Once we were all checked and beeping, we were ready to begin walking. Tailer gave some pointers on how to best walk with skins on and we hit the trail. Some slips and falls happened, always followed by laughter and words of encouragement. It was all of the ladies' first time split boarding, so it was a comfortable and supportive space to learn in. "Being in an all women's group is awesome," said participant Lindsey Walkemeyer. "It takes away so much of the intimidation or trying to prove anything, it was super supportive and the women in this group were down to encourage each other and ask good questions and pick up the slack where we needed it and just work together. I don't know if that would've been exactly the same if it wasn't an all women's group."



We walked to an open knoll and Tailer talked through kick turns and downhill travel with skins on, which we put into practice by skiing down the hill, then climbing back up and working on kick turns. After taking a few cycles through these motions, we began our ascent to Mammoth Rock.



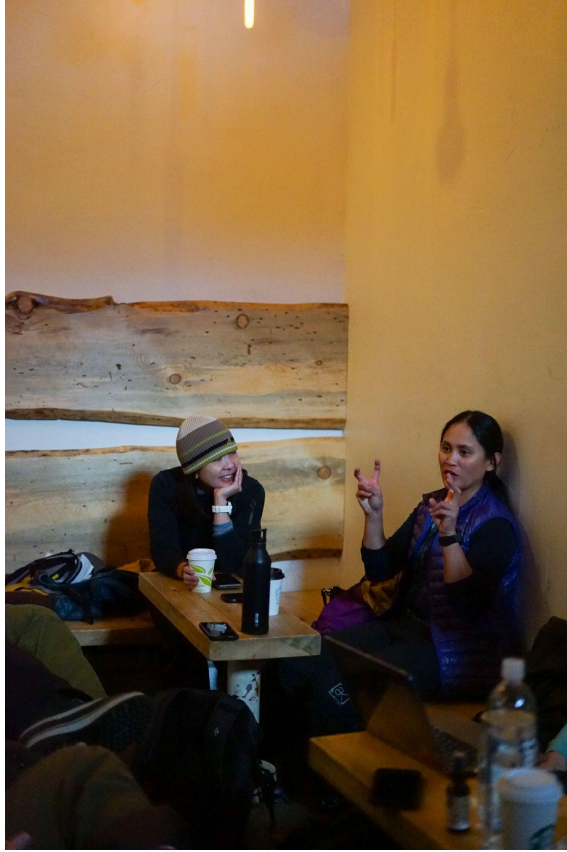
The sun was glistening through the pines, conversations were flowing, and the ladies were beginning to piece together the details of touring. When we arrived at the top of our run, Tailer walked through transitions again then the ladies put it into practice, this time nailing it down even faster than the first time around. Everyone was getting more familiar and comfortable with their gear. We posed for pictures in front of Mammoth Rock, gave high fives, and got stoked for our first downhill riding.



We took it in sections, weaving through some low angle trees and gullies, until we arrived back at our trailhead. We then practiced more transitions by cruising up to a small knoll and riding down twice. This was a valuable decision on Tailer's part, because dialing in your transition can be one of the hardest parts to learn, so doing this multiple times on the first day is really helpful for your progression. We finished off the day in the parking lot with some ice cold beers provided by Pure Brewing and shared some highlights and thoughts on what we were looking forward to the next day.



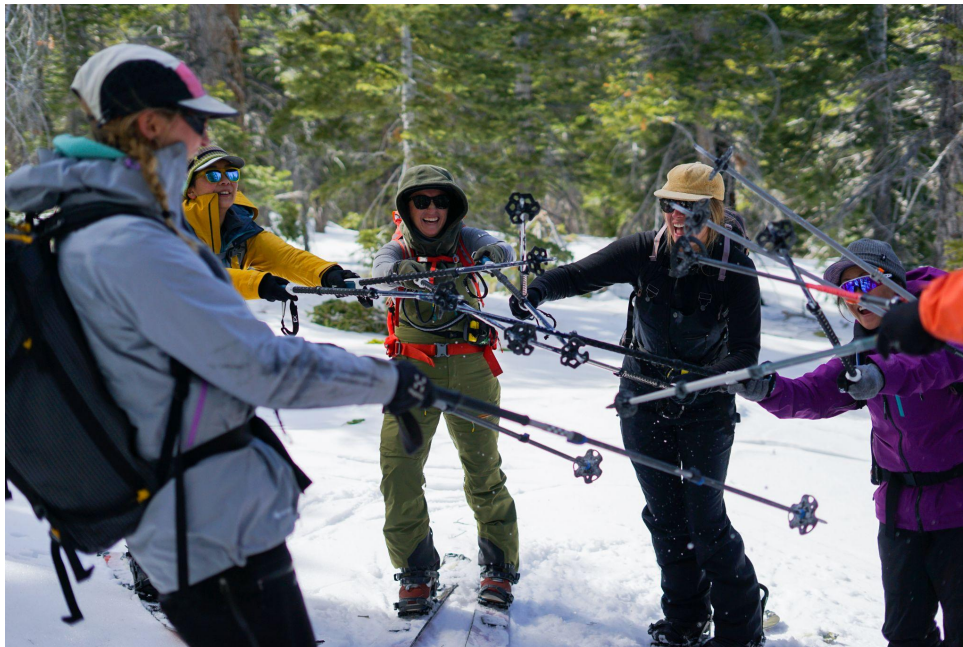
The following morning, we met at the trailhead for the Sherwins and we had an unexpected visitor, Miss Gale force winds. We were nearly blowing over huddled behind our vehicles, as Tailer shouted over the sound of the wind to give the ladies a few options for the day. As a group, we decided to shelter inside and wait out the wind a little bit. There was still a lot of meaningful information that could be taught indoors, so we headed to Black Velvet Coffee and got cozied up with a hot beverage in their upstairs nook.



Tailer went over her online resources she uses when planning a trip to the backcountry, including maps, avalanche information, and weather reports. The ladies got familiar with Gaia and Caltopo on their phones, learning how to plan out their routes and how to look over the avalanche center's online resources. Tailer then exploded her backpack and showed everyone what she typically brings on a tour, along with helpful tips for packing everyone efficiently. The skies had cleared a bit and the wind died down, so we decided to go out for a short tour to put all of our new skills into practice.



Although the wind was still blustering, the ladies were excited to get out for a walk. We found some protection in the trees and walked up the base of the Sherwins, practicing skinning, kicksteps, and even boot packing on the way up. Upon reaching the top of our tour, we transitioned and celebrated with smiles, cheers, and clanking our poles together.



We rode through some trees and gullies, hooting and hollering the whole way down, until we arrived back at our cars. We wrapped up the weekend by sharing some takeaways from the course, and Lindsey commented that, "it's really important to find women who enjoy doing similar things and to partner with them. It's also important to learn how to do things the right way from the beginning and finding the right people to teach you to do that is huge. Having a fantastic attitude and having a good time no matter what circumstances come up, because it's all about being outside in the first place and having a good adventure."

All the ladies left stoked to continue their pursuits as split boarders, complete with confidence in their abilities and a new group of awesome lady friends. We look forward to seeing how all these ladies take their skills and adventure in the future, and we hope to see you at the next Ladies Weekend Out splitboard event!