

# Unfettered Fun: Snowmobiling Canada's Monashee Mountains

By Kris Murray

At first glance, many Americans forget about Canada, our winter recreation wonderland to the north, in lieu of stateside attractions to the east. The fact of the matter is that many American Snowmobilers are missing out on some of the closest, best snowmobiling conditions in North America. Located just some hours north of the border above the Spokane area is the Arrow Lake Reservoir and the Canadian Selkirk Mountains, known to

some as "winter-bliss land." It is in this wondrous land of huge powder drifts and snow-covered bowls that Halcyon Mountain Tours took us for a Wednesday adventure in mid-December.

We left bright and early from the Halcyon Hot Springs Resort Day Lodge, filled with coffee and enough testosterone to fill the boiler room. We had spent the previous day roosting up steep hills covered in a meter plus of untouched powder and

were still quite sore, but that didn't matter as much as the fun we were ready to have. After all, for some of us, snowmobiling is more than just fun; it's a lifestyle/attitude. After meeting our guide, Bill Regner in Nakusp, we traveled across the needles ferry (free of fare) to the Galloping Creek snowmobiling area.

From the staging area we mounted out steeds (brand new Summit 500s) and began our climb to the cabins



The snow got crunchier on top of the hills and provided great traction to break virgin trails

located in the high alpine terrain of the Canadian Monashee Mountains. The trail was simple for the novice rider, even with the fresh powder getting to be a few feet deep by the time we hit the cabins (officially at 6500'). The cabins were very plush, with a sauna and shower available. Wow!

From the cabins, we set out to explore and enjoy some first-class Canadian Snowmobiling; and that we did! Literally one mile from the cabins were powder-covered snow bowls so huge that you usually couldn't see the bottom without being in it. This was a bit intimidating at first, but by sticking close to our guide not a problem was had.

As soon as we throttled it up the first hill we could

see for miles and miles. And for miles and miles in every direction, all that one could see were huge bowls and endless expanses of gullies to be explored. We spent a few hours playing about a few of them and doing some minor exploring, but mostly we were just having unfettered fun in the snow! And there was plenty of that to be had, but after a few hours even the best and the youngest runs out of steam, as was the case this time. We saddled back up our sleds and headed back towards the cabins, where Ken Robins (cabin owner and adventure guide) was awaiting us with summer sausage and a warm cabin.

After a good, solid amount of time spent 'shooting the breeze' we hopped back onto our sleds and headed back down the hill, actually screamed is a better term to describe our velocity. Being in a snowmobiling area where there is going to positively be no one else on the trails, allows for a little more leniency than would if there were other 'bilers out and about. Since there was no snowmobiler to be found within a fifty kilometer radius on this day, we got to have some fun racing down the hill, bursting through small snow banks and just in general having clean fun.

Upon our return it was just a short jaunt back to Nakusp and subsequently Halcyon Hot Springs Resort, where we were stationed for the duration of our brief Canadian tour. If any of this sounds remotely fun to you, call Bill Regner of Halcyon Mountain Tours at 1-888-648-8880 or call Ken Robins at (250) 265-4539. Halcyon Hot Springs Resort can be reached at 1-888-689-4699, ask for Lloyd Martin or visit the web site at [HYPERLINK http://www.halcyon-hotsprings.com](http://www.halcyon-hotsprings.com)



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