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A GoPro, Jake Burton and Me in Paradise

Words + Photos
Jeff Curtis

"How to shoot the boss with a cheap camera at the world's most exclusive heliboarding location, freeride for three days... and get away with it!"



YEAR AFTER YEAR, MY TRIP TO WIEGELE HELI WITH JAKE BURTON STANDS OUT AS ONE OF MY FAVORITES.

Wiegele has it all — good friends, epic snow, incredible food and accommodation plus, three perfect days of riding and shooting pow. It breaks up my season of shooting massive kickers in the sled-land backcountry. It's a chance to get on-slope and take the old school approach of actually riding with camera in hand to capture the day, and that feels good.

You'd never guess that shooting a pow turn could be so difficult. I guess it's trying to come up with something fresh and different from years past to fill the massive opening spread of the Burton catalog that challenges me. It seems like something clicks each season, and I'm able to come away with a banger that shows Jake and his passion for riding in a rich and unique way. It's the kind of thing that keeps me coming back time and time again.

This year, my initial plan came to me while packing for the trip. Gear on the floor in front of me, I simply started eliminating equipment that would slow me down. ProFoto flash, out. Tripods, out. Multiple DSLR bodies, out. My new GoPro lay staring me in the face. I had never shot it before, but I started to feel that there wasn't a better place or time to give it a try.

GoPros were everywhere this season. You can hardly go to a resort without seeing a dozen of them in every lift line... everyone is their own hero, I think that's their tagline anyway. I guess we all love seeing ourselves get some and that makes the workweek pass much quicker for a typical weekend warrior.

After my first couple of free runs "shooting" Jake with my GoPro mounted on his board and set on a three second still intervalometer, I knew I was onto something. I didn't know if I was getting any shots, but damn it felt good to actually ride! The camera didn't seem to slow Jake down at all, besides the random lens wipe and reposition. It was damn slick.

That night, while looking at the download of around 3000 shots, I knew I had something good going. With a few minor tweaks to the setup to correct some beginner errors, day two and three followed like this: Give Jake the camera and simply go shred. Perfect.

With a season's worth of epic shots in the bag, these GoPro shots still stand out as some of my favorites. With a combination of perspective, lo grade JPG (in comparison to a 21MP DSLR) and intimacy, these shots just feel right. It seems I've caught the bug that every photo gear consumer, weekend warrior and powder hunter has known for months. 🌀

