

Tom's Musings — The 2020–2021 Season: Acquiring a Race NC & Founding Tonttuwerks

The Wintersteiger Race NC arrived November 4th. It was during a rare heat wave in the first week of November which made it easy to unbox and slowly but surely get the NC inside. Paul Suomi, equipment manager and head grind tech for this NC (formerly in operation at the Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy), and Brent Johnson, my Wintersteiger tech, arrived a day later for the setup and an operation crash course. Brent was in the middle of his busy season servicing alpine and nordic machines over a very large, multi-state territory. He dropped everything to fit me into his schedule. He wanted to see and work on this thing too. There aren't many of them. Only one in his territory—mine. And Paul wanted to make sure that his baby got put back together properly and to teach me the ropes. Stout's Pub & Grill and Insight Brewing kept us fueled to get through the short week. It was a blur but all went well. Some grind numbers and parameters kind of transferred over to the NC from my Omega grind library, but not really. I suspended work on customer's skis and gave myself a couple of weeks to focus on understanding the machine and recreating my old grinds, as well as exploring new grind ideas, the whole point of this purchase.

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Tonttuwerks, LLC.

Ahvo has turned over the keys of the Finn Sisu stonegrinding business to Nate, Devin and I. A big deal. It's winter in the middle of a pandemic, not a time that most people would say is good to start a business. But buying this machine was a once in a blue moon kind of opportunity. And we're fortunate to be under the Finn Sisu roof. Our customer base is built in. We just continue to do as we've always done: mingle, study, collaborate, create, produce, test, test, test, and spread the word. Make Tonttuwerks visible.

We've created a Tonttuwerks logo. Produced a new grind menu (still working out some bugs). And I have a wall of skis with samples of grind ideas yet to be vetted.

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The winter went quick like an Alberta Clipper. But I hardly noticed—lost in a new toy.

— Tom Novak, Head Stonegrinder at Finn Sisu