

## Tom's Musings — The Top of the Mountain

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Had to be last year March 16-ish 2020. 10 or 11am. Five of us standing around the wax bench in back. No customers in store. Business had been slowly trending quiet. We were talking about the obvious events that had been steadily unfolding . . . Covid. Close to home, a few days earlier, the Theodore Wirth Fastenal Festival and WC Sprint Race had been cancelled. And now the world was facing a complete lockdown. Ahvo said it was time to turn off the lights, the party's over. Shut her down, time to go home. So we did. We'd start back up when we know how. Learned about bubbles, hand sanitizer and grocery store hoarding . . . to name a few new curious human experiences. Eventually we did learn how and we did start back up. But different.

Anyhow, fast forward to July and I get an email. A Paul Suomi from the Vail Ski and Snowboard Academy in Vail Colorado wants to know if Finn Sisu would be interested in acquiring a Wintersteiger Race NC stonegrinder. For me, this thing is the top of the mountain for the small and nerdy stonegrinding world I inhabit. A round wheel compared to a square wheel. Yup, I want that. But I also want world peace, own a Model Y Tesla . . . and I don't own Finnsisu. I can't make that decision, so I tell Paul to email Ahvo, knowing that that's the last time I'll hear from Paul. A week or so later, just for [poops] and giggles, I asked Ahvo if he had gotten an email from a Paul Suomi. He had but ignored it. Never responded. I grunted. Being the stonegrinding nerd that I am, I had allowed myself to keep thinking about this thing and had dug more into the nuts and bolts of it. I thought I can make this work. I came up with a plan and went to Ahvo. Surprisingly he agreed with the plan. I got ahold of Paul again, told him I had a plan and that Ahvo had agreed with it. I went to work on the plan for four months. But come fall the plan had faltered and I told Paul thanks but no thanks and wished him well . . . sigh. Settling into the late-October grind season, coworkers Devin and Nate say, "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Let's us buy it."

So we did.

— Tom Novak, Head Stonegrinder at Finn Sisu