



COURTESY OF K2 SKIS

Collins launches into a pillow of powder. Montana holds a special place in the Idaho native's heart: "No matter how much time I spend up here, you're always going to find a new back road into a new place you've never seen before. You can think you've scratched every bit of Montana, and you really haven't scratched the surface." However eager the guys were to get back to Montana's backcountry for this year's film, they played it safe. "These are big zones, big terrain and we've lucked out with having safe conditions. We warmed up slowly, didn't get onto the biggest stuff right away. We made sure we were feeling it, and the snow conditions were right," Collins says.

Q & A



Tyler Ceccanti

Last winter was a transformational one for Pacific Northwest native Tyler Ceccanti, whose engagement to girlfriend Elise helped take away the sting of a season-ending ACL injury.

What was the highlight of last season?
 Highlight last winter is 100 percent proposing to my girlfriend Elise. I did it at my home mountain on Dec. 31. I told her the mountain wanted us to do a photoshoot for some ads. We took the gondola up early before the public, and it just so happened it was a bluebird morning. My good buddy and photographer Ian Coble was along for the "photo shoot" to document. Popped the question with Rainier in the background. She was completely surprised and then we drank champagne and skied the rest of the day. Was a perfect day.

What do you love most about your home resort, Crystal Mountain (Washington), and is it always good to come back and make some turns there after traveling the world?
 I love it because I know every rock, tree, jump there on that mountain. It's also special because my family and extended family all have cabins right at the base. So we all get to ski together and catch up. I feel like Crystal is really underrated when it comes to the terrain. We have so much to cover in all skill levels, and I love exploring home.

You've accomplished a lot in your career; what are you most proud of and what's your next goal?

I am most proud of my continued presence in the Warren Miller movies. After the first I worked hard to prove myself and keep pushing to be in the next film and offer something different for the audience. Now I am in my seventh film and pushing for my eighth. But this year's goal is returning from my knee injury. I blew my ACL filming last year in February; it was a really odd accident. This is my first "season-ending" injury, let alone first knee issue. So I have taken my PT very serious and actually recovered very fast. This knee won't slow me down one bit come winter, and I will be ready. — ERIC SMITH