



2023 Snowbike Shootout

Our Timbersled vs. MTN.TOP vs. CMX Comparison

On The Trail	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
How the Ski Feels	3	5	4
How Bumps Feel	5	5	2
Comfort at Speed	4	5	4
X Factor	3	5	4
SUB-TOTAL	15	20	14
Powder Meadows	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Acceleration & Floatation	3	4	5
Short-Radius Sequence Turns	4	4	5
"Throwdown" Turns	4	4	5
Donuts	4	4	5
X Factor	3	4	5
SUB-TOTAL	18	20	25

Notes:

Test Bikes: Each of the test bikes has the same motor, same transmission, and same modifications.

Track Kits Costs (Kit and Rear Shock, No Tax)

- Timbersled ARO 3S PRO: \$8,700 (CDN)
- MTN.TOP Xfer 129: \$13,150 (CDN)
- CMX 120: \$13,350 (CDN)

Suitability for Beginners (Score Out of 5)

- Timbersled 5/5 - A great all-around kit with no attributes that may be detrimental to beginners.
- MTN.TOP 4/5 - The ski performs better at speed, and beginners may find it less predictable when just getting started. When matched with a 450, you need to be careful about gear selection.
- CMX 4/5 - This kit relies the most on track speed. The gingerly applied throttle of beginners may lead to getting stuck a bit more. With that said, this kit does not get as grumpy and bog down when in too tall of a gear. So, be aggressive, but also more forgiving.

Best Bike for Track Kit

- Timbersled - 500cc Torque Monster
- MTN.TOP - Perhaps the most versatile kit. This would likely be great on either a 450cc High Revving Bike, or a 500cc Torque Bike.
- CMX - A high revving 450 is the only bike for this kit. Perhaps a 300cc 2T or a 350 4T if you are feeling spicy!

Quick Descriptions and "The Car Equivalent"

- Timbersled: An excellent all-round snowbike. An F150 Platinum!
- MTN.TOP: A fun and comfortable high-end sportscar. A Porsche 911.
- CMX: A rowdy all mountain weapon that turns on a dime. A WRX STi Rally Build comes to mind.

Trees, Powder, Hills	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Climbing	5	5	5
Descending (Ski Feel)	5	5	5
Side Hilling	5	5	5
Agility	4	4	5
Braking	5	4	4
X Factor	3	4	5
SUB-TOTAL	27	27	29
Other Misc. Criteria	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Soft Landing Jumps & Drops	5	5	4
Hard Landing Jumps & Drops	5	5	1
Wheelies	3	4	5
Track Vibration / Noise	5	5	4
SUB-TOTAL	18	19	14
Ownership	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Ease of Installation	5	4	4
Routine Maintenance	3	4	5
Worn & Broken Parts	--	--	--
Warranty	5	5	5
Customer Service	5	5	5
SUB-TOTAL	18	18	19
GRAND TOTAL	96	104	101

Our Final Personal Choices (Regardless of Score)

Scott: The most important attributes to me are short radius turns (slow speed, sharp turns), climbing and side hilling (to get to the top of the treed area), and ability to carve down through the trees (like powder skiing or snowboarding). Until this year, that was my list of priorities, but now I have a new one. As it turns out, I love rowdy kits where the ski is frequently in the air, or can be, anytime you want. It is very exciting. For me, the CMX ticks these boxes the best with the MTN.TOP being not far behind.

Andrew: The most important attributes to me are climbing and side hilling, something that sucks up the impact of small jumps, creek crossings, and whooped out terrain, and short radius turns. I like a kit that allows me to transfer the weight to the track for wheelies, without having to focus on keeping the ski down when I need it. It is a narrow win for MTN.TOP over CMX for me.



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On The Trail	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
How the Ski Feels	It's a Timbersled ski on a trail. They are not great here, but they shine bright where it matters.	The ski feels very planted, it's predicable, and less fatiguing than other snowbike skis.	This ski has a bit more feedback than the MTN.TOP, but otherwise it is precise and begs for you to keep going faster.
How Bumps Feel	Smooth!	Plush!	Given the small amount of suspension between the bike and the track the CMX can feel a bit harsh when you come into bumps on the trail.
Comfort at Speed	Pretty solid. The rear suspension helps the Timbersled earn points for comfort at speed.	Fantastic. Great ski + rear suspension.	Great, except when you come cooking into some bumps that you did not see coming.
X Factor	X Factor is about excitement. This kit is predictable, and not so rowdy. It works, but it's not rowdy on the trail, or anywhere else. For some people, even some top riders, this is a good thing.	The track spools up nicely, the ski gets a bit light, and off you go! It's quick, smooth, and confidence inspiring.	The track rockets the bike forward, and the ski gets light with every shift. There is a great feeling of control. The only thing that is not fun is when you hit some bumps going a bit too fast.
Powder Meadows	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Acceleration & Floatation	The Timbersled may be slower to spool up, but it has the most traction in our opinion.	The MTN.TOP spools up fast and gets on top of the snow. Its huge and square-edge lugs grab a pile of snow which likely make it equally well-suited on a 450 cc or 500 cc bike.	The CMX 120 rockets into action. It is a sports car doing burnouts each time it gets going.
Short-Radius Sequence Turns	The Timbersled ski has been great for powder turns for several years now. It is a lot of fun. The only thing holding it back from top marks is that the CMX is considerably better for this specific type of turn.	MTN.TOP has made a great ski. Perhaps even better than the Timbersled ski. The only reservation for sharing top marks in this category is that the CMX is like a scalpel.	The CMX gets tops marks here because there is nothing that compares. We've hammered these turns on our 120 and watched our riding partner Justin do the same on his 129. CMX gets top marks here!
"Throwdown" Turns	The Timbersled can handle a hard 90 degree turn like a champ, but it can't do a throwdown 180 like a CMX 120, or 129 for that matter.	The MTN.TOP loves to have the handlebars thrown into the snow but it can't do a throwdown 180 like a CMX either.	Nothing can turn and burn like a CMX. It's like a trick that people can only do on a CMX.
Donuts	The Timbersled can hold a killer donut path.	The MTN.TOP loves donuts.	The CMX can take donuts to a whole new level.
X Factor	In a word it is "Predictable".	Right in the middle of the competitors?	It is a sportscar. A rowdy one. Hang on!



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Trees, Powder, Hills	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Climbing	Excellent. No discernable difference between the variety of testing conditions.		
Descending			
Side Hilling			
Agility	Very nice.	Works great.	Next level.
Braking	The best. It's always just right there. Perfection.	Good, but slight hesitation.	Very good. Just a smidge behind Timbersled.
X Factor	<p>Predictable and very capable. It will go everywhere with the least amount of physical or mental effort.</p> <p>If you value a planted ski, this is your kit.</p>	<p>The MTN.TOP is a bit more of a lively ride than the Timbersled. It is quicker to spool up and it has a lighter ski when accelerating and climbing.</p> <p>This is a high-end version of the Timbersled. A bit livelier, and a bit quicker.</p>	<p>If you want a rowdy and super wild ride, perhaps at the expense of being more fatigued at the end of the day. This is the kit.</p> <p>This kit may also require more strategy and clever lines in super steep terrain, or really deep snow. It is wider than each of the others, but the overall surface area is likely less.</p> <p>Our assessment suggests that the CMX is the ultimate weapon for tree riders who want to go fast and carve hard.</p>
Other Misc. Criteria	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Soft Landing Jumps & Drops	This is a great bike for our small jumps. We did find, however, that we blow through the suspension pretty easily. It sounds like we have a shock warranty issue, however, given how short the season is, we need to address these things in shoulder seasons.	<p>Everything worked great!</p> <p>Very plush, without ever feeling as though we were pushing through the suspension during testing.</p>	CMX has one drawback here and it pertains to how your footpegs are somewhat interfered with by the close proximity of the belt drive covers.
Hard Landing Jumps & Drops	Yes, the suspension is good! We are only talking about small drops here, but you can usually stay seated.		The more rigid rear end is harsh in these conditions. You learn to avoid drops to hard landings on a CMX, or at least be standing!
Wheelies	You can wheelie with terrain features or a lot of body language.	Wheelies are us! Yet, the front will get light regularly, and it feels good!	Born to wheelie? Instead of positioning your body to wheelie, on a CMX you sometimes position yourself to not wheelie. It is a lot of fun.
Track Vibration / Noise	Great. Way less noise than a Yeti.		The bushings squeak a bit. It's minor, but noteworthy.



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Ownership	TS 129	MTN 129	CMX 120
Ease of Installation	<p>Straightforward for the mechanically inclined.</p> <p>The fit kit contains the highest number of parts, and pieces can be obtained individually if necessary (e.g. Lost)</p>	<p>Straightforward for the mechanically inclined.</p> <p>Very clever design that adapts to a wide variety of bikes.</p> <p>Dealers have a precision jig to help with exact alignment.</p>	<p>Straightforward for the mechanically inclined.</p> <p>The only downside in the need to bleed your brake system.</p>
Routine Maintenance	<p>In addition to the regular checking of nuts & bolts, the Timbersled seemed to require the most attention, with pressure set ups ever evolving for the Trio, TSS, and Skid Suspension.</p> <p>Chain Tension is a very simple adjustment, but it does require the kit to be elevated, making it a bit cumbersome with a traditional bike stand.</p> <p>The belt adjustment requires a special tool, making it a bit more involved than what is required to adjust the CMX Belt.</p> <p>The kit has grease nipples, but the manual does not offer recommendations for grease frequency. It states that it should be inspected frequently, but no mention is made of regular anticipated greasing intervals.</p>	<p>As with the other kits, the MTN.TOP requires regular nut & bolt checks.</p> <p>The MTN.TOP has 2 chains, and no belt. Chain tension can be a bit tricky, as the chains can fall out of alignment if guides are not kept in check. Some minor updates to MTN.TOP's chain tensioning guide would be a welcome addition to an otherwise solid manual.</p> <p>The kit has grease nipples, but the manual does not offer recommendations for grease frequency.</p>	<p>This is the most "install and forget" of the kits.</p> <p>Get your chain tensioned properly, and periodically check the belt and all bolts on the kit.</p> <p>The processes for checking both chain and belt tension are the most straight forward of the three kits we tested.</p>
Worn & Broken Parts	N/A	N/A	N/A
Warranty	1 Year Warranty (4 Years if Snow Check)	1 Year Warranty	1 Year Warranty
Customer Service	<p>We have not attempted to reach out to Timbersled as our local dealer (Innerspace Watersports) is very knowledgeable.</p> <p>Dealer support is well established.</p>	<p>Fantastic. Both the Owner and the General Manager have been extremely helpful when we have had questions.</p>	<p>Stellar support. You call, they answer. Always eager to help.</p>

Brought to you by Scott, Andrew, and Shayne.

