

Town Hill (Absaroka) Lawn Mower

Date

Sat, 03/04/2023 - 05:20

Activity

Skiing

We toured up to the top of Town Hill (S. Fork Deep Crk.) we approached on the north west shoulder and stayed on the same ridge line to gain the “summit”. We noticed extreme variability as we crossed aspects on our skin track. There were areas that were nearly un-edgeable and slick, and areas that were faceted and hollow all the way to the ground. We observed and spoke to a group who had skied the “Lawn Mower” on our way up and observed several tracks. We dug a pit at the top of the “Lawn Mower” in the burn area (~8900ft) before the slope steepened. We observed a HS of 230cm and had a test result of ECTX. We gave our extended column a pull to try and identify any potential slabs and observed two distinct slabs in the upper two feet, but they didn’t pull out any wider than the width of our shovel. We took this as further indication of low quality and potential for propagation across the snowpack.

We chose to ski one at a time to the toe of the slope. I skied down first along the east side of the lawn mower and waited for the remaining skiers to follow. As my partners descended we realized an avalanche had ripped earlier in the day and we skied down the side of the debris and met the two parties at the tail of the slide debris. The third skier that triggered the avalanche had been caught and partially buried with his head above ground and badly injured. Part of our party stayed to stabilize the victim and provide support while I and two others from the other party left to bring SAR in.

Region

Out of Advisory Area

Location (from list)

Town Hill

Observer Name

Colter Mumford