

## If you only knew...

Release at Will

### **'Cats and Corduroy**

Solitude, Giving Visitors What They Want

**SOLITUDE, UTAH (January 7, 2006)** With growing demand from visitors for more meticulous corduroy, Solitude Mountain Resort has renewed its commitment to grooming more runs, more often with more attention to detail and quality.

Says John Dumas, "At Solitude, we take a 'quality, not quantity' approach to our grooming and slope maintenance. We slow down the process, thereby yielding greater quality and more consistency to our groomed slopes". It sounds cliché, but Dumas is not paying any lip service. At Solitude since 1986, Dumas is now the Director of Slope Maintenance and one of the foremost authorities on grooming in the Wasatch.

His crew is diligent, and willing to listen to and learn. They take great pride in their work – viewing the mountain much like an artist views a blank canvas. Good grooming is much more than surface-deep, and special care is taken to blade, cultivate and till the snow to provide a fresh and consistent surface that will maintain its integrity even after the throngs of skiers and boarders have enjoyed it.

Dumas' employees stay late nights and work early mornings to perfect their masterpiece. Eight groomers work the early shift from 3:30 pm to 12:00 am. The snowcats then trade hands to the late shift, where 6 groomers will work tirelessly until 10:00am, employing a technique known as "quarter-passing" to keep the seams between each pass to a minimum.

Aside from greater attention to detail, Solitude separates itself from other resorts with its commitment to groom each run daily. That is, once a run has been groomed initially for the season, it is groomed every day from that day forward – no exceptions.

Recently, Solitude has focused on grooming steeper blue and even some black runs, thus allowing skiers and boarders of lower ability access to more advanced terrain. At 38 degrees, Solitude's Challenger run is one of the steepest groomed runs in the state. Grooming runs like this requires the best equipment possible. For the last five years, Solitude has purchased at least

one new FHM (Bombardier) snowcat each year, bringing the fleet total to six grooming cats and three winch cats. The winch cats, used to groom the steepest runs, utilize their winch to creep slowly up and down the slope, thus ensuring both safety for the operator and steep satisfaction for the consumer.

Solitude Mountain Resort, a year-round, family-friendly destination, receives more than 500 inches of the Greatest Snow on Earth™ every year and is located just 40 minutes from the Salt Lake City International Airport.