

Weekly Summary February 24 - March 2, 2023

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Dates:	February 24 - March 2, 2023
Zones:	Crested Butte, Northwest & Southeast Mountains

Friday 2/24

Thursday night delivered a trace to 2" across the mountains as well as strong SW winds. Scarp Ridge gusted into the upper 40's overnight and CBMR gusted into the 70's in the early morning. Daytime snow accumulations ranged from 2" at CBMR to 4" at the Irwin Guides study plot and up to 8" at Scarp Ridge. Several recent avalanches were reported on Whetstone and Emmons that likely ran in the previous few days within the storm snow. These avalanches were on north through east aspects near and above tree line.

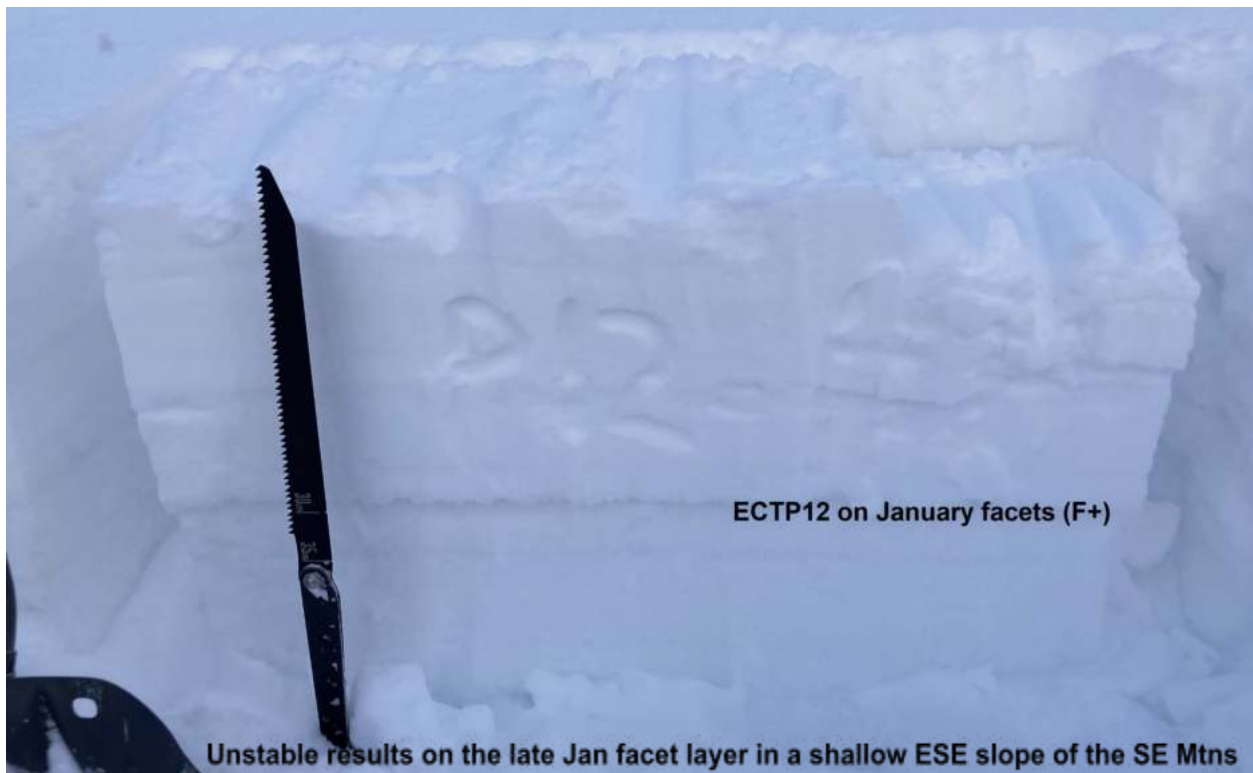
Saturday 2/25

Saturday saw a break in the stormy pattern as the winds dropped to moderate and then light out of the SW. The skies were partly cloudy and the daytime highs warmed above 30F in town, on CBMR, at Irwin, and at Gothic. A small wind slab was observed on an east aspect below tree line in the PBR area of the Northwest Mountains and a partial burial occurred when a skier traveled underneath a small, steep bench and triggered an avalanche above them.



Sunday 2/26

The winds eased off overnight into Sunday and the nighttime low at 11,000' was 20F. The light winds stuck around for Sunday morning but a short-lived, powerful system moved through the valley at midday. Wind speeds increased to moderate levels out of the southwest and intense snowfall deposited 4" at the Irwin Guides study plot and 3" at CBMR in the afternoon. No avalanches were reported on Sunday, but forecasters did find unstable results in snow pit tests conducted in shallow areas on an ESE aspect. The chief instability was observed at the interface between the upper snowpack and the late January facet layer.



Monday 2/27

The short lived storm cleared out during Sunday night and dropped another 2-5" across the mountains. Irwin Guides reported 5" by the morning and CBMR received 3-4" overnight. Daytime accumulations ranged from a trace to 1" over the course of several on and off snow showers. Mostly cloudy skies and moderate SW winds helped keep the daytime highs to the upper teens in most places. Small dry loose avalanches were reported in the Anthracites and wind slabs were observed on Whetstone and Red Lady Bowl.



Tuesday 2/28

The winds on Monday night reached extreme levels from the WSW; Scarp Ridge gusted over 90 mph, CBMR reached the 50's, and Gothic gusted up to 25 mph. Up to 5 inches of snow fell overnight but the strong wind transport made it challenging to determine accurate amounts. An additional 10" fell during the day. The theme of Tuesday was zero visibility, shooting cracks, and reactive to touchy wind slabs. Seventeen avalanches were reported on Tuesday, twelve of these were on NE-SE aspects near and above tree line, four of which were D2 avalanches.



Wednesday 3.1

The snowfall tapered off overnight into Tuesday as did the winds, which dropped to light out of the SW. The break between systems was brief, as Wednesday brought more snow but mercifully only moderate winds. Irwin Guides reported another 5" by the end of the day, bringing their storm total for this week to 20" and CBMR picked up another 2" during the course of the day that brought their 7-day snow total to 22". Sixteen avalanches were reported this day, all on NE-SE aspects near and above tree line. The vast majority of these were naturally triggered however skiers did remotely trigger a D2 persistent slab avalanche near the Friend's Hut on an east aspect near tree line.



Thursday 3.2

The stormy weather cleared over Wednesday night but not before dropping another 5" by Thursday morning at both the Irwin Guides study plot and CBMR. Winds increased from calm to light out of the NW and by the end of the day Scarp Ridge had gusted to 33 mph. Daytime highs warmed enough to produce roller balls on steep south facing slopes and wet the surface on solar aspects. Friday should start off dry with light winds but those will soon increase as we move towards the weekend.