



## Shock Jock

A durable laptop for a bang-up job BY STEVE CASIMIRO

■ UNBEKNOWNST TO MOST OF US—well, me, until now—there exists a breed of laptop capable of absorbing ungodly abuse. Some come from big names like Dell and Panasonic, but most are crafted by unsung brands like Itronix and Getac—or GammaTech, which makes the **Windows XP Durabook D15RS** (\$1,100; [durabook.com](http://durabook.com)). One of the latest enduro machines to wrestle its way to market, the Durabook is “semi-rugged,” a technical term that means it meets some but not all of the military’s laptop specs and won’t cost a gazillion dollars (the average “rugged” laptop starts at about \$3,000). Emboldened by GammaTech’s claim that the Durabook can survive up to 26 drops onto a hard surface, I knocked its magnesium case around like a gorilla with a Samsonite. The screen didn’t even flicker. I dumped water and coffee on the keyboard. Not a problem. Processing was completely unimpaired and still as fast as a typical XP machine with 160GB of storage and 2GB of RAM. The downside? Just heft: At 6.3 pounds, the Durabook is no featherweight. But few tough guys are.

**THE BUZZ**

Backcountry skiers now have a bible of their own. **Free Skiing: How to Adapt to the Mountain** is packed with tips and how-tos (\$65; [freeskiingthebook.com](http://freeskiingthebook.com)). // Custom insoles are boring, but few gear mods so easily ratchet up performance and comfort. Try the **SOLE Dean Karnazes Signature** footbed (\$50; [yoursole.com](http://yoursole.com)). // Finally, hassle-free prescription sunglasses: **Smith’s Rx in a Box**. Go to [smithoptics.com](http://smithoptics.com), enter your scrip, and order your shades (\$250).



**GEAR GURU**  
Steve Casimiro, West Coast Editor

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