

Crazy mountains avalanche and obs

Date

Sat, 03/18/2023 - 16:05

Activity

Skiing

Myself and two partners were skiing in the crazies 3/17-3/18. Dug 2 pits and got similar results, ectn15 18cm down and n28 30cm down with depths of 300-400cm and no deeper pwls on N/NE aspects at 8300ft and 9600ft. No recent avalanche activity other than a few small 6in storm/wind slabs on southern aspects. Snowpack was very right side up everywhere we toured and had skied 3 different NW to E faces. On 3/18 we headed to ski a NE facing couloir at 10000ft, skinned/booted the first ~300ft and found similar snow to everywhere else. About halfway up hit a rocky section with some depth hoar, I noted plate crystals up to 1cm wide at ground. Should've turned around there but thought maybe it was just a short rocky section. I had also just measured the slope angle at 52 degrees which gave me false confidence there would be no developed slab. Wallowed through weaker snow for another ~50ft then finally decided to turn around due to the difficult boot packing, hitting our 3pm turn around time, and the weak snow pack. As I booted to the middle of the line to find better snow the slab broke off 10-20ft above me wall to wall. I was the only one caught and was carried 500ft of vertical. Didn't get buried and no lost gear so extremely lucky all around. The avalanche was estimated D2/R4 with a 18-30in crown and 30ft wide.

Region

Out of Advisory Area

Observer Name

Ben Farrell