



SNOWBOARDING

Over the past 5 years in Fredericton, the sport of snowboarding has grown immensely. People once said it was a fad and wouldn't last. Well, here's news for those folks; snowboarders now make up over 30% of the total business at resorts in North America. Those of us who've been snowboarding for the past 4 or 5 years have seen the sport grow despite the very negative attitudes of many skiers. In some cases, this anti-snowboarder trend can be justified because of the actions and attitudes of some immature snowboarders. It is not our intention to rip into one sport or the other. Instead, we will attempt to address the bad attitudes shared by both skiers and snowboarders.

— M.L. & K.R.

So far this year I have read approximately 3 blurbs in major news magazines about snowboarding. Each blurb mentioned the problems that ski hills are having with snowboarders damaging property and being reckless. As a result, some mountains are closing their doors to snowboarders, which is a real shame because snowboarding is a really fun sport. But as with most things, a few people can wreck the fun for everyone else. Now I am not against riding rocks, logs and other objects, in fact I do a lot of that myself, but when major resorts begin to outlaw snowboarding, I do get kind of upset.

Many people have worked extremely hard in order for snowboarding to be accepted and it would be a shame if all of that work was done for nothing. Now I do not think snowboarding should be an Olympic event or anything, but it would be nice to be able to ride at any mountain you want.

It is one thing to *bonk* or jump

on rocks and logs with your board; but when you jump on blue barrels and destroy snowmaking pumps, or jump on safety mats and put rips in them, something should tell you to stop. Some snowboarders have a lack of respect for property, for skiers, and for what the mountain has to offer. For these reasons, skiers often do not want snowboarding on "their" hills.

Fortunately, many ski hills are beginning to provide separate areas for boarders so that they are able to stay out of the skiers' way. The management realizes that snowboarding involves different techniques than are found in traditional snow sports such as skiing. The management also realizes that snowboarding has a large freestyle following as well as a strong race side to it. They are providing snowboard parks and halfpipes so that snowboarders can do their thing without destroying the hill and upsetting skiers.

The general problem between skiers and snowboarders is that they

do not understand each other. Many skiers are not aware that snowboarding requires something different in order to enjoy the sport and allow it to develop. Those who are aware respect snowboarders. Others do not see the point of trying to jump over a barrel or a rock and trying to tap it with their board. They do not comprehend that it is all part of the sport.

The same can be said for snowboarders who do not understand the point of skiing. Consequently, snowboarders do not always get along with skiers and vice versa. But boarders who make the effort to understand skiing learn to respect skiers.

The point is, we have different sports that involve different interests, skills and techniques. The one thing we have in common is that we both think our snow sports are fun; let's start from there. Be nice! Become informed and improve your attitudes towards one another. Oh yeah, and let's drop the new school/old school shit; it is starting to get a little old. People should look beyond what a person wears on the hill and start to worry about how they ride. Who cares if a person wears ultra tight or super huge pants, you should be more concerned with how you treat other people.

The problem lies not only with snowboarder/skier attitudes, but with some snowboarders who spend half of their time criticizing other

snowboarders. I respect a rider who can ride anything and use the terrain. Sure it's cool if you can pull a 540 melon, but if you can't get from one jump to another do you really think you are learning the entire sport?

Finally, a few words to explain what is often seen as the subculture element in the sport. Snowboarding is closely related to skateboarding in some respects, and

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everyone knows that society tends to frown on skaters. Many of the techniques and most of the fashion trends in snowboarding come from the skate subculture. A large percentage of snowboarders adapt their leisure pursuits by skating in the off-season. Most of the strange vocabulary that goes along with the sport also comes from skaters.

Snowboarders and skiers alike have to realise that no one sport is better than another. Some people like to ski, some like to telemark, and others like to snowboard. The best sport is the one that works best for you.

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