



LOCAL SURFERS HEAD FOR THE HILLS

What do most of Southern California's hottest surfers do in the wintertime? They surf. But that's not all they do. With local mountains a mere two hours away, these guys and gals take refuge in snowboarding all season long. And the best part is that they can surf and snowboard all in one day.

Snowboarding Has Come a Long Way

Once labeled a rebellious sport, ski resorts regarded snowboarding as a noisome fad, and one they hoped would quietly go away. Adding insult to injury, no instruction was available leaving riders on their own when it came to learning even basic techniques of the sport.



As recent as 1984, June Mountain was the only hill in Southern California that even allowed snowboarding. It wasn't until four years later that Mountain High approved boarding, but only at night. Snow Summit soon followed suit, and the resort joined the party by allowing the activity at night, and during the week on Wednesday.

Acceptance

Snowboarding has legitimately transformed itself into a lucrative popular sport that is taken seriously by resort owners, retailers, and athletes. And in recent years boarders have been allowed to join other competitive athletes in major amateur and professional events such as the Olympics and X-Games.

Riders wishing to enter the world of competition can do so by joining the USASA (United States of America Snowboarding Association). This is the only amateur group that allows boarders to compete in their own division. Riders can register locally by contacting SoCal Surf & Sports, situated in Monarch Bay Plaza. The retail shop can also be reached via the phone by calling (949) 218-1242. Paul Durant, the store's owner, is the Tech Director for the freestyle event.

Go for the Gear

Part of snowboarding fun is being able to choose from among all the high-tech gear. Giro Helmets, made by Bell Helmets, feature a sturdy cap with a built-in connection port for any MP3 player such as Apple's I-Pod. Also readily available are digital cameras and camcorders small enough to easily fit into one's pocket or backpack.

Along with all the gizmos and gadgets that snowboarders can buy, basic clothing necessities offer the coolest features in winter gear. Jackets have special layers incorporated into them primarily to keep the kidneys warm. Snowboarders will also find that outerwear have a special magnetic strip, which is designed for the opening and closing of a venting flap.

To make snowboarding as painless as physically possible, gel pads have been created to protect the feet from digging binding straps. Also readily available is a shoe tongue gel, invented to help cushion the toes from those unbearable hard landing.

Powder Days Are Here

As a fully functioning self-contained group, snowboarders (which includes 90% of Orange County's surfers) are now gearing up for fun filled winter days. Temperatures will drop and resorts will crank up snow making machines to perfectly groom the slopes. Then surfers and boarders will make their way from the surf and sand to the local mountains, ready to carve fresh powder under sunny winter skies. ●

— Leslie Stevens

SNOWBOARDING TRIVIA

As snowboarding is widely recognized today, there is still one controversy surrounding it. Just who started it anyway? Three gentlemen stake their claim.

1. **Sherman Popin** tied two skis together, in the early 1960's, to create a board for his daughter.
2. **Jake Burton Carpenter** claims to be the one. He started Burton Snowboards in 1977.
3. **Tom Sims**, owner of Sims Snowboards and skateboards, also takes credit for being the original inventor of the sport.