

Boarder Patrol

Snowboarders are joining skiers in the patrolling ranks.

Imagine lying on the snow—shivering with cold—as pain shoots through your leg or arm after taking a bad fall. You keep your eyes peeled, hoping the ski patroller your friend went to find isn't too far away.

Finally you see that familiar red jacket and sigh with relief. But as the figure gets closer, you realize the person pulling the toboggan isn't a skier—a snowboarder has come to your rescue.

Nationwide, the number of patrollers on snowboards is rapidly growing. In fact, the National Ski Patrol, the organization that certifies and educates patrollers, now includes tips in its training manual on toboggan handling for both skiers and snowboarders.

"Pulling a toboggan is easier on a snowboard because you're in your most natural, comfortable position," says David Levy, a patroller at Mammoth Mountain in California.

Patrolling on a snowboard has another advantage as well. The flexible boots snowboarders wear make caring for patients on the slope that much easier. In addition, there are several situations in which a patroller on a board is the best choice to send on a mission.

"The only way to catch a snowboarder who breaks an avalanche closure is to send a snowboarder," says Levy. "A skier just can't keep up."

Certain snow conditions and terrain features, like ice or flat spots, are more challenging for snowboarding patrollers. George Lemerise, patrol director at New Hampshire's Attitash ski resort, says some patrollers carry ice grippers to help stabilize themselves on steep, icy terrain. Because snowboarders must remove one foot to skate, pulling a victim in a toboggan over a flat area can be tedious. But possibly the biggest problem board patrollers face is the snowboarder stereotype.

"I often get an older skier-type saying something like, 'Some snowboarder cut me off,'" Levy says. "But then they look down at my feet and usually the sentence just trails off."

While having snowboarders on patrol might bother some of the more close-minded clientele, administrators and marketers say it's great for the mountain's image and can be crucial in assuring safe conditions in the resort's terrain parks.

"It's a benefit to have snowboarders to check the safety of the jumps and provide feedback to the groomers," says Dan Healey, ski patrol director at Loon Mountain, New Hampshire.

Despite the trend, some mountains still have a policy against snowboard patrollers. At Snowbird, Utah, for example, patrollers do a lot of avalanche-control work. According to Ski Patrol Director Josh Bennett, they often have to gain elevation in a hurry, and in deep powder a snowboarder would have to use snowshoes, which slows down the process.

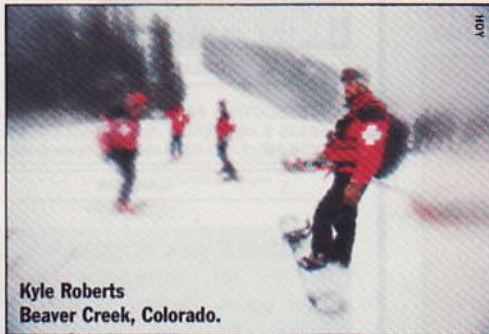
Other resorts with similar situations have come up with creative solutions. At Mammoth Mountain, snowboard patrollers share many of the responsibilities of patrollers on skis. For safety reasons, Mammoth draws the line at avalanche-control work.

While in some cases snowboard patrollers are restricted from performing certain duties on the mountain, National Ski Patrol Education Director Judy Over says they receive identical medical training.

"There should be no difference in their patrolling abilities or response time," Over said. "The only thing that's different is that they're using another form of transportation."

Attitash Mountain's George Lemerise concurs.

"Good lifesavers are worth their weight in gold," he says. "If someone is good medically and can make it work, I don't care what's on their feet." —Melissa H. Bearns



Kyle Roberts
Beaver Creek, Colorado.

Snowboard Camps Directory

Keep your edge during the off-season by checking out one of the following summer camps. For a complete list of camps worldwide, visit www.snowboardlife.com

DELANEY SNOWBOARDING CAMPS

Copper Mountain and Irwin Lodge, Colorado; Mike Wiegels, Canada; New Zealand; and Fiji
1-800-743-3790
E-mail: delaney@mlenet.com
Web site: www.delaneysnowboard.com

U.S. PRO SNOWBOARD

Grand Junction, Colorado
(970) 434-8757
E-mail: nick@usprosnowboard.com
Web site: www.usprosnowboard.com

HIGH CASCADE SNOWBOARD CAMP

Mt. Hood, Oregon
1-800-334-4272
E-mail: highcascade@empnet.com
Web site: www.highcascade.com

MT. HOOD SNOWBOARD CAMP

Mt. Hood, Oregon
1-800-247-5552
E-mail: mhsc@snowboardcamp.com
Web site: www.snowboardcamp.com

UNITED STATES SNOWBOARD TRAINING CENTER

Mt. Hood, Oregon
1-800-325-4430
E-mail: mail@snowboardtraining.com
Web site: www.snowboardtraining.com

WINDELL'S SNOWBOARD CAMP

Mt. Hood, Oregon
1-800-765-7669
E-mail: info@windells.com
Web site: www.windells.com

PRO RIDE SNOWBOARD CAMPS

Whistler/Blackcomb Mountains, B.C., Canada
1-877-778-RIDE
E-mail: snowboard@pro-ride.com
Web site: www.pro-ride.com

SHOWCASE SNOWBOARD SHOP CAMP OF CHAMPIONS

Blackcomb Mountain, B.C., Canada
1-888-997-CAMP or (604) 938-3450
E-mail: info@campofchampions.com
Web site: www.campofchampions.com

SUPERPIPE SNOWBOARD CAMP

Whistler Mountain, B.C., Canada
(604) 938-2800
E-mail: csm@whistlermet.com
Web site: www.superpipe.org

WHISTLER SUMMER SNOWBOARD CAMP

Blackcomb Mountain, B.C., Canada
(604) 938-3238
E-mail: info@whistlersnowboardcamps.com
Web site: www.whistlersnowboardcamps.com

WILD WOMEN SNOWBOARD CAMPS

Call for locations
1-877-743-7477
(1-877-SHE-RIPS)
E-mail: sunflower@conknet.com
Web site: www.wildwomenscamps.com



In a continued effort to educate as well as entertain, Board AID returns in 2000 with two domestic events. Deemed a "Festival of Awareness," Board AID combines professional skateboarding, snowboarding, and music with HIV/AIDS education and awareness.

Since its debut in 1994, Board AID, created by the non-profit TransWorld Foundation, has raised 696,000 dollars that was donated through LIFEbeat for HIV/AIDS prevention,

education, and service programs. The event definitely has the support of the athletes as professional snowboarder Tina Basich and skateboarder Andy Macdonald have both signed on as spokespeople for the event. This season spectators can watch the professionals in the halfpipe, big air, boardercross, and skate and BMX ramp demos.

Bands such as the Beastie Boys, Porno for Pyros, Rage Against the Machine, 311, Tribe Called Quest, Offspring, Wyclef Jean, and Sublime have all graced the stage of Board AID in years past.

Dates for the event are March 10-12, 2000 at Big Bear Mountain, California, and April 7-9, 2000 in Colorado. For more information, log on to boardaid.com or phone the Board AID hotline at: 1-800-788-7072, ext. 225. —Robyn Hakes