

POINT COUNTER-POINT

Snowboarding vs. skiing: Which is the better sport?

All about boarding

ALEC ITALIANO
sports editor

It kills me to badmouth skiers.

Once upon a time, skiers ruled over the mountain. Snowboarders were kicked out of resorts simply for pursuing a newborn passion that eventually swept the country into a frenzy.

Gradually, young kids started picking up only one piece of wood instead of two before heading out to the slopes. And it was these kids who slowly revolutionized American culture.

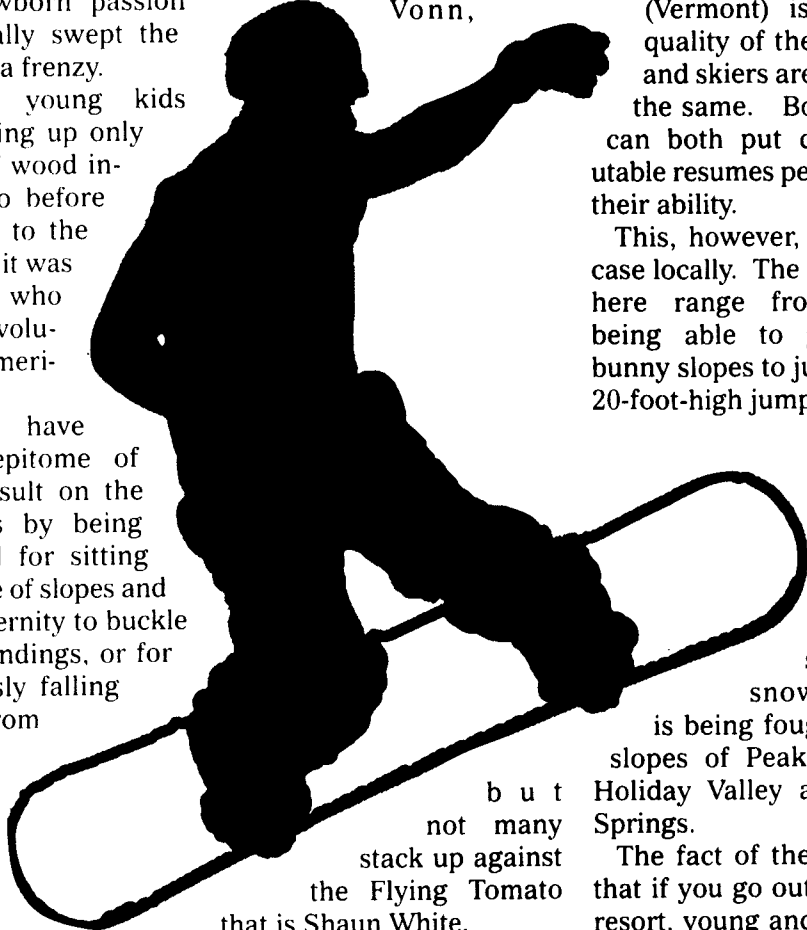
Boarders have been the epitome of many an insult on the local slopes by being badmouthed for sitting in the middle of slopes and taking an eternity to buckle into their bindings, or for spontaneously falling five feet from you on a slope they obviously shouldn't be on.

I hate these little twerps as much as the next guy, but because of these incompetent few, it does not give skiers the right to undermine a sport where they can only dream about half the tricks boarders do.

Don't just take my word for it. Look at the Olympics and the popularity sparked

in boarding within the games.

Just about every boarder and skier has heard of Shaun White and the absolutely ridiculous things he can do on snow. Skiers have their stars with names like Bode Miller and Lindsey Vonn,



but not many stack up against the Flying Tomato that is Shaun White.

Skiers and boarders may attempt to get along on the outside, especially when traveling to other parts of the country. I have seen the two groups perfectly co-exist.

Riding up the gondolas in Killington, Vt. there was no grudge between the two

unique sports.

Almost everyone had enough respect for the other to prohibit the use of the "stink eye" and merely go on their way enjoying the beautiful terrain.

A major difference between here (Erie) and there (Vermont) is that the quality of the boarders and skiers are relatively the same. Both parties can both put down reputable resumes pertaining to their ability.

This, however, is not the case locally. The skill levels here range from barely being able to get down bunny slopes to jumping off 20-foot-high jumps.

Because of this, an underground war between skiers and snowboarders is being fought on the slopes of Peak N' Peak, Holiday Valley and Seven Springs.

The fact of the matter is that if you go out to a local resort, young and enthused teenagers are taking over the slopes and leaving the old sport of skiing to the old men.

Snowboarding is taking over this country's snow resorts, and this revolution is not slowing down for anyone, especially not skiers.

All about skiing

NEIL JAMES
opinion editor

Winter sports are few and far between.

Yes, if you are currently watching the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, you'll see lots of events.

However, most of these aren't very appealing and don't offer much to someone in the market for a new winter activity.

So, unless you want to take up curling or speedskating (and get freakishly monstrous quadriceps in the process), you're only viable options are to pick either skiing or snowboarding.

This creates an even bigger dilemma: Which one should a person choose? Which one is cooler? Which is more expensive? Can summer just come sooner so I can get back to beach volleyball?

Sadly, summer is out of the picture so you might as well buckle into some ski boots and make the most of it.

I've skied since I was 4 years old. So trust me, it is a good choice.

Skiing might not have the glitz, glamour and shattered collarbones of the half-pipe tricks that snowboarders can attempt, but it has its perks.

First off, I'd like to direct my readers to the number one Man Rule: "Guns make everything cooler."

With this in mind, look at the biathlon. It's an Olympic event comprised entirely of skiing and shooting. The only thing that could make it cooler is if the Olympic Committee made zombies the targets.

Cross-country skiing also has a rich history. The sport was first used by prehistoric Nordic people as a form of transportation. This will come in handy in the future, because we all know history tends to repeat itself. So when World War III finally occurs and the planet is covered in nuclear winter, you will be able to travel in style as you scavenge for food and fight off Deathclaws.

On a more serious note, becoming a good skier takes more skill than one would originally think. Instead of standing on a

single surface, a skier must learn to evenly distribute their weight between skis, and since turning is all about weight distribution, it is a pretty important concept.

Now most snowboarders will say that skiers cannot use a half-pipe, thus it is not as fun.

However, skiers can say the same thing to boarders about moguls. Moguls are nearly impossible for a boarder to tra-

verse and, depending on which resort you go to, are on most Black Diamonds.

That will really restrict the places a person can go at a particular resort so make sure you do your research before you get the lift passes.

These are all pretty good reasons to ski, however, the deciding factor for people usually comes down to which one is cooler.

Coolness is usually given to snowboarding because of the tricks associated with the sport.

That being said, don't count skiing out just yet. The next time you get a chance, check out the X-Games or the current Winter Olympics.

Skiers can pull off some gnarly tricks too. And when it comes to the laws of physics, skiers actually have a vast advantage.

Not to knock boarding, but the physics at their disposal are somewhat limited.

A boarder's legs are confined to the restraints of the board. A skier, however, has the free use of their legs in the air. They can use the momentum of their independent limbs to pull off extremely unique tricks.

If you get a chance, look up skiing trick videos on YouTube. I think you may be in for a pleasant surprise.

Skiing also provides a great lower-body workout and cross-country works the whole body like nothing else. Between the poles and the kicking, cross-country skiing provides and unparalleled cardio workout.

Skiing is a great sport. But regardless of whether you choose to ski or snowboard, shredding is shredding.

So just go hit the slopes and decide for yourself.

THE EDITOR'S BLURB

Stop retconning

Nothing irritates a comic book geek more than a crappy retcon. To see a beloved character have his or her story drastically change simply for the sake of asinine drama is extremely heartbreaking.

For those who don't read comic books and are not familiar with the term, "retcon" is an abbreviation for "retroactive continuity." It is a strange concept to explain to non-comic readers.

Basically, it means that the official storyline has been changed.

Here is an example. Imagine that you did something to upset your significant other. Maybe she caught you kissing someone else. However, it was later revealed that it wasn't actually you who kissed somebody else. It was actually a robot sent from the future.

This is very common in comic books, because it allows the writer to do less work get around plot

holes. Instead of having to think of a clever way to resolve a story, they can just change the past and the events that got the character to that point.

It's completely asinine for a couple reasons.

One problem with it is that it completely wastes the reader's time and money. I started reading comic books when I was 12 years old. My favorite was Spider-Man, and each week I would drop over 20 bucks on comics to follow his awesome stories. I loved watching his character grow and change from a dorky photographer to a respectable and matured science teacher.

However, in 2008, Marvel Comics massively retconned Spider-Man, essentially erasing 30 years of comic book history. Peter Parker never married Mary Jane. Harry Osborn never died and a whole bunch of character development never happened. And according to Marvel, this new universe is "officially canon."

With this thought in mind, I believe that I just wasted hundreds of dollars buying comic books that do not matter at all.

What is the point? I might as well burn all of them, considering how they are now entirely irrelevant.

I feel like it is the written equivalent of having the Marvel editorial board strap on a pair of cleats and stomp on the nuts of their readers.

The other reason that I can't stand retconning is because it completely disrespects the previous writers. The things they did helped shape Spider-Man into the iconic character that he is. To completely disregard the work of past writers is basically the comic book way to take a huge dump on top of their face.

Retconning is the vice of the lazy writer. Instead of actually putting time and effort into a story, a writer can just throw Scrabble tiles against a wall and whatever doesn't fit into the continuity will be rewritten like they are the hand of God rebuilding creation.

It's a cheap trick whose only success is in irritating loyal fans.



NEIL JAMES
opinion editor

AND AS SPACE STATION ASTRONAUTS OPEN THE SHUTTERS TO THE NEW OBSERVATION DECK...



Have Your Say:

Which is the better sport: skiing or snowboarding?



To see video footage of the interviews on Have Your Say, go to www.thebehrendbeacon.com



Justina Solties
senior
science education

"I think that snowboarding is better than skiing because it looks more hardcore when you fall."



Abby Dudzic
freshman
psychology

"I think snowboarding is cooler. It looks more fun, so if I had to choose between the two, I'd choose snowboarding."



Jenna Schwabenbauer
freshman
elementary education

"I actually know how to ski, but if I had to choose, I'd have to say snowboarding, because it looks a lot harder."



Brianna Fisher
sophomore
physics & chemistry

"I'd go with skiing because I can't balance sideways"