

Anderson keeps it real riding to slopestyle fame

By Melissa Larsen, ESPN Action Sports



It's Dec. 10, 2009. Some of the world's best snowboarders gather atop a 22-foot-tall halfpipe at Copper Mountain, Colo. Each has prepared a diligently practiced contest run to debut in the first of five competitions that will determine the final rosters of the U.S. and Canadian Olympic snowboarding teams. The air is quiet, the vibe tense. Two-time Winter X Games Slopestyle gold medalist Jamie Anderson – a 19-year-old phenom who is one of the best female snowboarders on the planet – gets ready to ride.

She is, understandably, a little nervous. On a slopestyle course she is almost impossible to beat, but her record in the halfpipe is spotty. She's placed in the top three a handful of times, but she's ended up 18th more than once. And unlike her halfpipe-focused peers who log countless hours perfecting their routines, Anderson's love for park riding is so strong that she has a hard time talking herself into leaving the park for the pipe. That makes her halfpipe training routine so sporadic, it could hardly be called "training" at all.

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