

Freeskier dies from injuries sustained at Kirkwood competition

Pete Thomas, GrindTV

Pro freeskier Ryan Hawks died early Tuesday of injuries suffered during an extreme competition in Northern California. He was 25 and a rising star in the sometimes dangerous sport of big-mountain freeskiing.

Hawks, a Utah resident originally from Vermont, had had been attempting a 40-foot backflip Sunday during the North American Freeskiing Championships at Kirkwood Ski Resort near Lake Tahoe. He fell hard after landing and was airlifted to Reno's Renown Health Center, where he was being treated for internal injuries.

An official cause of death is pending an investigation, according to Reno's Washoe County Medical Examiner.

Dan Abrams, president of FlyLow Gear, which sponsored the athlete, told Outside magazine: "The comp was in full swing. All of the heavy hitters were skiing, but a lot of the guys were falling. There was an opportunity for Ryan to go all out get on the podium. He has a history of back flips and basically going for it in comps."

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