

Terrain parks aren't where all the best snowboarders ride

By Josh Dean, Men's Journal

When the Winter X Games hit Aspen in January, the world's snowboarding greats were all present, throwing double corks over the halfpipe. But one was notably absent: Jeremy Jones. The world's preeminent freerider was busy prepping for his upcoming expedition to the glaciers of Alaska, where he'll strap a tent to his back and camp out between blizzards, waiting for the weather to ease so he can locate, climb, and then snowboard down chutes and couloirs so hairy that he is one of the few humans alive who would attempt them.

For the past three years, the eight-time Big Mountain Rider of the Year has dedicated himself to hiking and climbing up mountains so that he can snowboard down them. His primary tool for this is a splitboard, a snowboard that breaks in two to become skis. Jones' enthusiasm for the splitboard has popularized the genre, and in 2009 he founded a company that manufactures them. His ultimate goal is to get young boarders to follow him out of bounds.

Jones' transition to a purer, more old-school brand of adventure is not that surprising given his background. Now 36, the Truckee resident learned to snowboard before parks and pipes were ubiquitous.

"I would have loved them, but growing up, the parks just weren't there," says Jones. "So to me, it's always been about riding the whole mountain, finding the stashes and the top-to-bottom line that connects them all."

From his onscreen introduction in the 1997 film *Totally Board*

6 – he dropped into a near vertical Alaskan face, triggered, and then disappeared into an avalanche, only to reappear from the tidal wave of white at the last minute and ride to safety – the Vermont-raised resident of Lake Tahoe has spent the better part of two decades seeking out and riding some of the most difficult lines on Earth.

As Travis Rice, the world's best all-around snowboarder, once said, "Jeremy is breaking down the boundaries of 'I can't.'"

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