

Tweaks to skis put snowboards on the shelf

By Tony Chamberlain, Boston Globe

Like most young men who work part time in ski and board shops, Adam Sanchez is a student of the products he sells. A junior at Bridgewater State, he has also seen plenty of changes in snow sports, despite his young age.

He started as a skier in junior high, then took the almost inevitable turn teenagers do into snowboarding.



More skis than snowboards are found in racks. Photo/LTN file

For about two decades, that was the way of the winter world: Snowboarding was by and for kids – at one point it rescued a moribund ski industry in the 1990s – and was seemingly destined to grow forever.

But with Sanchez and thousands of other young people, the ball has taken another unexpected bounce, as snowboarders have been bailing out in droves.

“I snowboarded for four seasons,” said Sanchez. “The skis then were pretty traditional, and the technology was not advancing. But the past couple of years, the new designs have made skiing

much easier, especially in powder and the woods. So I went back into skiing.”

The new technology?

It's called rocker, or reverse camber (tech details later), and it allows skiers to take advantage of another of the sport's trends: skiers and boarders skiing the groomed trails in sometimes densely wooded glades where making quick turns in loose snow is the required art form du jour.

To Sanchez and other young skiers, the new rocker generation of skis simply work better.

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