

# SnowGlobe entertainment goes beyond music



Professionals demonstrating ski and snowboard tricks is part of the SnowGlobe experience. Photos/Andrew Jorgensen

**By Jessie Marchesseau**

Dozens of music artists on multiple stages for three days. There is no question the SnowGlobe Music Festival offers plenty of music for ticketholders, but the entertainment doesn't stop there.

In addition to regulated decibel levels and ground-shaking bass which can be heard for blocks, festival-goers are also exposed to a variety of visual stimuli. They may witness fire dancers performing flame-entwined choreography, sculptors creating fresh artwork, and skiers and snowboarders soaring 30

feet above the crowd while executing finely tuned McTwists, backflips, 720s and inverted whatnots.

“People are coming here to experience not just the concert, but Tahoe. So whether they get on the hill or not, it still exposes them to that snowsports environment,” Rob Giustina, big air producer for OnCourse Events, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Giustina said the inclusion of winter sports was part of SnowGlobe’s design from the beginning. It was a way to incorporate the overall Tahoe atmosphere, add more visual stimuli and encourage sponsorship from local companies such as ski resorts. He also pointed out how other music festivals are incorporating sports, too, such as the Warped Tour with its skateboard and BMX demonstrations.



Snowsports events bring the mountains to the music venue.

Giustina puts together a roster of about 15 local riders who perform three to four 20-minute segments each night – Dec. 29-31 – on the ball field next to Lake Tahoe Community College in South Lake Tahoe.

“We get to showcase skiing and snowboarding to people who aren’t familiar with it, or at least not familiar with it at that level,” said professional skier and South Lake Tahoe local Kyle Smaine. He will be part of the snowsports demonstration for the third year.

He told *Lake Tahoe News* he views it as a cool way to showcase local talent and give concert-goers a taste of the true Tahoe atmosphere: being outside and having fun.

Situated off to the side of the main stage, the setup consists of elevated scaffolding from which riders start their runs. They drop down about 35 feet to the jump takeoff, then fly over a 30-foot gap before the landing.

Besides sheer visual entertainment, part of their job is to distract the crowd in between music sets. When the music ends, instead of everyone immediately rushing to the next stage, some will stay to take in the air show, a rather ingenious form of crowd control.

South Lake Tahoe local David Rodriguez has been part of the SnowGlobe crowd twice and thought the Big Air demonstration was cool, but seemed a little out of place.

“I felt like it was kind of a side note just because we’re a mountain town,” he said. His wife said she barely noticed it.

An avid snowboarder himself, Rodriguez would like to see the snowboarding become an even bigger part of the festival. That, however, is unlikely since Giustina said it was never intended to be a main attraction, more of just a filler between events. But this doesn’t stop the riders from putting on the best show they can.



Local athletes give

flatlanders a taste of what  
Tahoe is about.

Snowboarder Nathan Owen will be part of the Big Air for the second year in row and said riders will be treating viewers to a show of high-flying acrobatics with a variety of flips, twists, turns and spins. He said the crowd will also be seeing a lot of smiles "because we're all out there just having a good time."

Owen believes the demonstration really brings everything together.

"Music is a huge part of snowboarding. It's only fitting to have the two together, especially in Tahoe," he said.

So while most people are really there for the music, smaller events like the Big Air Demonstration give a little hometown flair to the SnowGlobe Music Festival. Plus, as Giustina put it: "You gotta have snow-related activities inside the snowglobe."