

Sierra's snow-skateboard course goes national

By Susan Wood

Athletes who make their living on boards appear to never be bored.

And television viewers may get a glimpse of why when they tune in this Sunday to ABC's weekly "World of X Games" show at 1pm.

A 22-minute short film is embedded in the show highlighting a first-time double snowboard-skateboard course constructed at Sierra-at-Tahoe last May.

SuperSnake, as it's aptly called, features competitive and professional skateboarders and snowboarders slithering down the board-and-snow, 1,000-foot-plus course on the Broadway run to the base of the Tahoe area ski resort.



Sierra-at-Tahoe briefly became a skateboard park after the resort closed last spring. Photo/John Rice

The customized course took two weeks to build, with more than 2,500 man hours and 20 tons of snow. It has combined skate and snow park features, including jibs, hips, quarter pipes and volcanoes in a boarders' paradise.

The brainchild of the adrenaline junkie's drink Mountain Dew, the Sierra-at-Tahoe venture with Snow Park Technologies and CA RampWorks remained somewhat hush-hush since all this occurred after last year's ski season.

"Coming off such a great season for snow, we had the ability to create the project and show off the resort. The build is a story unto itself. The TV show made for the 'World of X Games' will focus on the creativity of the project from vision to execution, as well as highlight the challenges of blending the two board sports," Sierra-at-Tahoe General Manager John Rice

told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The players had worked together before, so the trust was already there, Rice declared.

“The World of X Games’ special and the online show were spot on with our brand strategy for reaching the demographic,” he added.

Indeed. Lauren Machen of Fuse, who handles Mountain Dew marketing, dictated a 16-34 young male millennial as the target audience. There’s also the propensity to reach a slightly broader audience by simply having the show run on ABC.

Machen said competitors in these action sports “like to do new things,” otherwise, they feel “they can get stale.”

“We like to figure out ways to keep it fun and fearless,” she said. “This is the trend. Mountain Dew has instigated creativity in action sports for over 20 years.”

The soft drink company is preparing to put on the well-known Dew Tour at Breckenridge, Colo. in December – but other events featuring boarders will become more pronounced in the coming years.

For big-time starters, skateboarding and surfing were announced as new sports in the 2018 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. Machen predicts viewers will see more side-by-side events as elite athletes thrive on watching other moves from their fellow competitors.

About a dozen skateboarders and snowboarders took part in the inaugural project – including Olympic snowboarder and Dew rider Danny Davis of Truckee.



Snow is moved to create a one-of-a-kind snowboard and skateboard venue at Sierra. Photo/John Rice

“It’s really awesome to have skateboarders and snowboarders come together on one course,” said Davis, who was considered one of the top 10 riders of the year by Snowboarder magazine in 2008. “SuperSnake pushes the creativity and stylistic riding through the athletes’ visions and the course builders’ innovations and expertise. But most importantly, it’s always about progressing the sports and having fun.”

Davis is joined by professional Mountain Dew skateboarder Sean Malto and competitive snowboarders Jeremy Jones and Scotty Lago. Dew skate athletes Trevor Colden, Chris Colbourn, Jordan Maxham, Nick Tucker and Micky Papa are also in the mix.

The trailer shows a sense of camaraderie and appreciation for each other’s skills among the athletes.

Moreover, the sports do represent a good time for the fan base

as well.

“SuperSnake’s concept showcases Mountain Dew’s ongoing support of creating original, fun and progressive opportunities for both our athletes and fans to enjoy,” Mountain Dew Senior Vice President of Marketing Greg Lyons said.