



# Skiing and Snowboarding Are They Really That Different?

***Richard Lubin, D. C.***

"the Snowboarding  
Chiropractor"

the Far West Ski Association Safety Chair

As the only snowboarding member of an all-skiers club, I am constantly harassed. Mind you, I do not really mind the attention; however, some of this is just because I am a SNOWBOARDER. There are many reasons why skiers find snowboarders objectionable. Many of these reasons are valid, some are just discriminatory.

If you don't like the way snowboarders look, hey tough luck, learn to live with people's differences. You will find that most boarders who are your age look pretty much the same as you do, whereas most younger ones look like, well, younger skiers. Since there are many more younger boarders the overwhelming impression is of the M TV crowd.

The fact is, since snowboarding and snowboard clothing was introduced, it has influenced the way ski clothing looks, not the other way around. How many of you have the longer, looser fitting type of jackets so typical of snowboarding. Unfortunately, mostly gone are the days of the women's tight fitting ski pants. Both men and women have gone to a looser fitting style of pants, wow, similar to snowboarding. Even the freestyle skiers, admit that snowboarding has influenced their sport by introducing more outrageous types of tricks with asymmetric movements and weird names.

The whole new generation of shaped skis have been no doubt influenced by snowboard design. It is much easier for skiers to now feel that wonderful angular acceleration one gets from carving a turn. While original construction of snowboards relied on some of the technology of skis, like cap construction, it is apparent that, at present, they are co-evolving together.

So, is snowboarding and skiing different? Well yes and no. They are mostly the same because we all buy lift tickets, ride up the lifts, and use gravity to get down. While the tool is different, many of the principles are the same. The waxed base slides over the snow creating a thin layer of water over which you are propelled. The sharpened edges are used to carve and turn. We are attached to the device with bindings. We have (or should have) a mechanism to brake the ski or board in case it gets free from the boot. If you look at the terrain parks and half pipes you will see mostly boarders, but there are plenty of skiers that drop in too. Sure the mechanics of boarding and skiing are different, but they are a heck of a lot more similar than say golf is to swimming. Watch the next time you see a slalom snowboard racer with an alpine hard boot going through the racecourse. {By this I mean the professional ones, not us folks with the Singles League}. It is amazing how similar they look to ski racers *from the knees up*.

Many people comment that snowboarder's etiquette is poorly developed. I also note this and find it disturbing at times. Again this is more a function of age and experience as a skier or a rider. It is true that many newer boarders are more concerned with not killing themselves and do not pay heed to where they stop or how they are turning. Getting off the lift can be a scary proposition with only one foot in; occasionally they are going to fall in front of you. More experienced and mature riders well understand the responsibility code and are more likely to act normal.....just like you skiers.

So if you think there is a big difference, think again. Is it an age thing or a skiing thing? How the heck are we going to have world peace if you can't even get along with those goofy kids with the wacky hats? See what kinds of changes you can make to smooth this out.

As the Safety Director for the Far West Ski Association, I am in a position to try to have a positive influence on these types of behaviors. Look for upcoming articles on this.



The author, age 16

*Richard*

older

