

Street Sports

**Notes from the presentation to the
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Overview

1. What streets sports are
2. How popular & unpopular they are & why?
3. How do we respond?
4. How do we manage them ?
5. How do we develop them as sports?

1. What are street sports?

- **Inline skating**

- Speed
- Aggressive
- Recreational/fitness
- Hockey

- **BMX**

- Flatland
- Downhill
- Street
- Racing
- Dirt
- Vert

- **Skateboarding**

- Street
- Vert
- Freestyle
- Luge
- Downhill

- **Trials bikes &**

- **Jumps bikes**

1. What are street sports?

Are they sports?

These are well established sports although only a small proportion of riders compete

- Given credibility by Aust Sport Commission sponsoring of Reverse series/Planet X sponsored "grom sessions" etc.
- You can compete in skate shop sponsored comps at local skate parks in season
- There are many well established clubs in BMX and Inline
- Competitions are sanctioned by BMX Aust & Skate Australia eg State and National titles
- If you are good, even if you are young; you can ride for a sponsored team
- In 2008 BMX will be an Olympic sport!
- You can compete in games eg. XGames Gravity Games, Gravity Challenges & World cup events etc. by entering qualifying rounds

1. What are street sports?

80% Lifestyle 20% Sport ?

- The demographic is about 8yrs to 40yrs
- Average age is 14yrs
- More female inliners than males
- Substantially more male boarders
- 80% buy it 20% do it
- 80% is around the neighbourhood
 - occasional riders
 - generalists
- 20% technique or setting specialists

2. How popular?

How popular?

ERASS 2003

Aust. pop 15yrs+

Roller sports
(inline & skateboard)

- .8% of pop
- 1% male .6% female
- More than athletics, badminton, baseball, gymnastics, rugby union, softball, table tennis
- 2.4% 15-24 years
- BMX??

ABS 2003

Aust. Children 5-14 yrs

Leisure & Cult. Activities

- 98% television or videos
- 75% reading
- 71% electronic/ computer games
- 62% bike riding
- 50% art craft activities
- 23% skateboard/ rollerblading.

8% decline in skating since 2000

2. How popular?

What is the appeal?

Streets sports:

- are directed by participants
- have been able to embrace street culture- non establishment kids
- are a lifestyle badge
- have been able to tap a market & hold their appeal
- the moves and facilities have evolved & diversified with the culture, and improvements in equipment and construction techniques

Streets sports:

Don't have the things kids say about other sports*:

- Rigid rules
- Uniforms
- Training drills
- Focus on comps & winning
- A big decline in participation after puberty

- * Children and Sport 2004
Uni of Sth Australia

2. How

popular? **How unpopular are they?**

Then (50s's)

- skate equipment the cause of accidents
- outlawed: went underground
- connected with punk music culture & apparel: rented garments, baggy pants- hurl your self down the stairs
- Skateboarding still suffers from this poor public perception

- Advent of trucks and polyurethane wheels - could do more- safer

Now

- nuskool money, commercialisation hip hop, techno music styles
- Fast energetic / extreme lifestyle selling breakfast bars, cola, fast cars, even banking products!
- Evolving art form enormous number of disciplines

2. How popular?

How unpopular they are?

Injuries

- Sports ranked highest for hospital treated injury:
- Aust Football (30%)
- Basketball, soccer, (7%)
Netball (5%)
- Cricket (4%)
- **Skating (6%).**

Monash Accident Research Centre hospital
treated injuries in Victoria 2002-3

1621 Skate Injuries in VIC 2002-3

- 28% in recreation areas
- 19% on road **A major change since 2001.**
- 68% of injuries from skateboards
- 32% from in-lines.
- 39% sustained by 10 -14 yr olds
- 15% by 15-19 yr olds
- Males had 78% of all injuries
- 69 % of females injured were on inlines.
- Fractures accounted for 51% of injuries.
- 24% wrist, 13% the ankle, 11% the forearm
- 9% the elbow & 8% the hand/ fingers.

Monash Accident Research Centre from
presentations to hospital emergency

2. How unpopular?

Deaths in sport Aust. 2003

- swimming (24)
- motor cycling (14)
- fishing (8), scuba /snorkelling (8), surfing (5)
- other water-based activities (3),
- snowboarding (2)

Single deaths:

- yachting, water-skiing, canoeing,
- horse-riding
- rock-climbing,
- cycling,
- paragliding, parachuting, other 'aero', and gliding
- athletics.

Monash Accident Research Centre Research from coroner reports

2. How unpopular?

The unpopular market

Adolescents are the bulk of the street skate market. They are often unpopular but they too need:

- To play: is not only beneficial, it's essential.
- To be motivated by risk & challenge, control, fantasy, curiosity
- Safe places to gather
- Constructive activities during idle periods
- Positive role models
- More institutional resources
- Leadership / monitoring

They seek:

- The formation of a strong and coherent sense of identity
- The initial exploration of intimate relationships outside the family
- Learning to accept responsibility
- Gaining social acceptance & autonomy

3. How do we respond

This unpopular market

- Supportive social & physical settings prevent poor health & development outcomes
- If we isolate teenagers from their families, & public life: the greater the divide becomes
- Positive warm relationship with parents/adults-key predictor of health
- The majority of riders are the less specialised riders seek escape & social benefits
- They place more emphasis on luck in having a good ride
- They favour less restrictive regulations
- The bulk of riders are into freedom & individualism & are unlikely to join a club

3. How we respond

The unpopular market

- Adolescents are not a homogenous group.
- There are identifiable development phases of adolescence: each with unique development challenges, opportunities & risks.
 - We need to ensure design, layout & management of street sport facilities can respond to these.
- The younger age groups: often more interested in identity of being a skateboarder (language, dress, music etc.) sense of belonging etc./ social opportunities
 - Put facilities in high profile social spaces where conflicts with older people are less likely
- Older age group: more likely to be interested in the buzz the activity provides, & to be technique or discipline specialists.
 - We need to provide a diversity of settings to ride, including a range of elements, and cater for the key disciplines ie vert, street, freestyle as well as BMX dirt.

3. How we do respond?

The unpopular market: teenagers

Not all play socially acceptable & all players are not always voluntary participants.

Adolescence often characterised by:

- Sensation seeking
- Need to appear more mature
- Heightened egocentrism
- Poor decision making
- More intense emotions
- Peer pressure – challenges & dares, coercion, social acceptability
- Over confidence in own abilities
- Locate facilities away from houses & with other recreation & social opportunities
- Provide a management presence
- Include access to outreach services
- Prepare a management plan to address likely conflict areas

3. How do

respond?

Risk and Danger are different

- Risk and challenge are positive -and essential in adolescent years- they enable us to learn
- Danger is when comprehension of the risk is beyond the developmental age of the child.
- Example of danger: children younger than 12yrs (who do not have developed senses of judgement mixing with traffic)
- **Understanding the age /proficiency of users is essential**
- **Provide a hierarchy of facilities**
- **Provide areas for less proficient riders to learn**
- **Make sure design reflects proficiency**
- **Provide off road routeways to parks and through neighbourhoods to avoid kids having to mix with traffic**

3. How do respond?

with facilities...

- We can make them beautiful so they look good but are not functional- so no one uses them, or
- We can put them away from everything to stop conflict (where no one uses them), or
- We can design them to be functional where kids want to be and manage the negatives, or
- We will have accept that a large group of adolescents are not going to have physical and social activity that benefits everyone!!

4. How do we manage them?

- Skate parks and purpose built facilities are not the whole solution, as many riders prefer the challenges that urban terrain provides. Don't think that by providing a skate park you will remove skaters & bikes from the streets!
- Some skaters say that skate parks are the way we try to institutionalise skating and try to control them- so they prefer to skate free on the street - true to the culture.
- The action will always be on the street. It is more able to provide the challenge, unpredictability and control by them, sought by many skaters.
- We can manage the impact of the activity
 - Harden fixtures & edges
 - Kick plates on doors
 - Elevate pedestals
 - Dissuade or slow where conflict (studs, rubber strips, brass strips between pavers, tactiles etc.)
 - Direct along skate zones or routeways, in favour of others.

4. How do we manage them?

Risk management: 5 steps

1. establishing the context, your objects etc.
2. identifying source of risk & implications
3. analysing the risk: consequences and likelihood
4. evaluating risk: issues, opportunities
5. treatment of risk

- **Standards
Australia**

- HB 246-2002
Guidelines for
Managing Risk in
Sport &
Recreation

- AS/NZS 4360:2004
Risk Management

4. How do we manage them?

Consider the context - facilities have evolved

- Sidewalk surfing
 - Pools
 - Pipes
 - Large skate parks
 - Ramps
 - Street areas
 - Steel ramps & street gear
 - Concrete parks
 - Camps
 - Indoor parks
 - Urban terrain
 - Skate plazas & trails
- More recently parks have been attracting some parents as spectators/ coaches etc.
 - There is demand for new parks to cater better for:
 - Spectators
 - Food & beverage
 - Workshop facilities
 - Music etc.
 - A wider range of age groups

Skate facilities now in existence span 3 decades.
There are different risk issues for each type of park

4. How do we manage them?

Boards, blades & bikes ?

- Bikes are not a new phenomenon, but there is still growth here
- Bikes need more space, no coping, different heights, surface finish not so critical, you need to harden edges to stop damage from pegs
- In liners have more speed, like lower waxed rails etc.
There is growth here too.
- There are different risk issues for each activity

We need:

- Better briefs
- To create diversity not uniformity
- Management plans
- To teach education programs, and
- Grow a culture of respect
- Codes of conduct
- To consider separate areas/ separate schedules in high use areas.

4. How do we manage?

Indoor spaces

Street sports can be accommodated indoors. Some competition venues are now indoors and many in clubs principally compete indoors.

Indoor spaces provide opportunities to:

- Manage Risk
- Provide & enforce protective gear
- Schedule & program to target different users
- Change elements around
- Provide for different proficiencies
- Offer longer hours of use
- Monitor use
- Control noise
- Provide outreach
- Use less expensive ramps ie marine plywood

4. How do we manage them?

Changes in the law & insurance

Recent negligence cases suggest

- you may need to warn potential users of unusual dangers (ie suitability of equipment for certain age groups)
 - it is unreasonable to assume signs would be enforced and have bylaws and for such to be enforced.
 - the focus may not just be on whether something was maintained, but when it was last inspected and on the records of inspection.
- Civic Mutual Plus, a major insurer of local government:
 - Suggest few claims related skate parks progress; most relate to the condition of older facilities.
 - Provide incentives through premiums for Council to manage their assets in a responsible way.
 - Undertake random audits of assets & systems

4. How do we manage them?

Changes in law

- Changes to the Trade Practices & Goods Acts and the State tort law regimes have significantly altered the law on liability arising from personal injury incurred during recreation
- The TPA was amended to “ permit self assumption of risk by individuals who choose to participate in inherently risky activities and to allow them to waive their rights”.

Most states have introduced new legislation in this area in the last 2-3 years. It differs between states. There are some grey areas especially around minors.

Councils should familiarise themselves with the new legislation and relevant reforms in their state. See the table over the page a guide.

Australian Liability Legislation Summary as at 15 September 2003

Reform	Jurisdiction								
	NSW	Queensland	Victoria	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	ACT	NT	Commonwealth
General Damages Threshold	15% of most extreme case	None	More than 5% whole person impairment (more than 10% for psychiatric injury)	7 days impairment or incurs \$2,750 (indexed) in medicals	\$12,000	\$4,000	TBA	5% whole person impairment	TBA
Other GD reforms	Reduced damages up to 33% of most extreme case	General Damages points scale (0 to 100)	None	General Damages points scale (0 to 60)	Deductible up to \$48,500	Deductible up to \$20,000	None	Sliding scale up to 15% whole person impairment	TBA
Gratuitous Care Restrictions	Threshold and Cap	Threshold only	Threshold and Cap	Cap only	Threshold and Cap	Previously abolished in Tas.	No	Threshold and Cap	TBA
Other Damages Reforms	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Economic Loss cap, statutory discount rate only	Yes	Personal Injury & Death to be removed from Part V Div 1, TPA
Ipp Negligence Reforms	Yes	Yes	TBA	Bill	Bill	Yes	Bill	TBA	TBA
Recreational Services	Yes. Liability may be excluded or modified.	No liability for obvious or inherent risk in dangerous recreational activities.	Liability may be modified if prescribed form signed by customer.	May modify liability if undertake to comply with a registered code of practice.	Similar to NSW.	No liability for obvious risk in dangerous recreational activities.	Protection for equine activities only.	May modify liability by express warning to customer.	May modify TPA obligations via contractual terms.
Key Legislation (Other amending legislation and current Bills may also be relevant.)	<i>Civil Liability Act 2002, Civil Liability Amendment (Personal Responsibility) Act 2002</i>	<i>Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002, Civil Liability Act 2003</i>	<i>Wrongs and Other Acts (Public Liability Insurance Reform) Act 2002, Wrongs and Limitation of Actions Acts (Insurance Reform) Act 2003</i>	<i>Wrongs (Liability and Damages for Personal Injury) Amendment Act 2002, Recreational Services (Limitation of Liability) Act 2002</i>	<i>Civil Liability Act 2002, Law Reform (Contributory Negligence and Tortfeasors' Contribution) Amendment Act 2003</i>	<i>Civil Liability Act 2002, Civil Liability Amendment Act 2003</i>	<i>Civil Law (Wrongs) Act 2002, Civil Law (Wrongs) Amendment Act 2002</i>	<i>Personal Injuries (Liabilities and Damages) Act 2003, Personal Injuries (Civil Claims) Act 2003</i>	<i>Trade Practices Amendment (Liability for Recreational Services) Act 2002</i>

4. How do we manage them?

Examples of key sources of risk

- **Use**
- The built facility not meeting user requirements
- Conflict between riders (crowding & incompatible activities/ levels of proficiency)
- Getting there
- **Design**
- Inherent design problems
- Design in relation to use generally & specific types of use
- **Condition**
- The condition of the skate facilities -contributing to accidents
- No system for identifying and rectifying unacceptable risk
- Lack of cyclic and minor maintenance

4. How do we manage them?

Management Plans

- Few LGAs have management plans for skate facilities
- Management mostly is rubbish collection, toilet cleaning & graffiti removal
- Few skate/BMX parks have capital improvement or cyclic maintenance programs
- Most have little or no flexibility to change & meet the changing needs of the market
- Increasing use from bikes & inline - specific strategies?
- Prohibition: no impact on participation in street sports- but they may have on injury!

4. How do we manage them?

Management plans: the must haves

- A regular cleaning & inspection program
- Clear roles & responsibilities
- A cyclic maintenance & capital works program
- A system for organising, recording, inspections & checking & signing off maintenance & rectification work
- Regular communication with users
- A sport development program:
 - clinics, demos, competitions, coaching, scheduled activities
- Training personnel for inspections, hazard reports, & works
- Codes of conduct
- Policies e.g. crowd control, events, pricing, protective equipment & night use
- System for monitoring demand & use

4. How do we manage them?

Common hazards

- Narrow, undermined, platforms with a level changes, that also allow debris to drift onto the skating surface
- Badly dented coping
- Lumpy bumpy surfaces
- Bent metal edges that are sharp or provide trip hazards
- **Ensure parks are professional designed & constructed**
- **Use precast elements if no professional**
- **Have designs checked & construction supervised**
- **Ensure there aren't steep batters that will wear on the edge of the park**

4. How do we manage them?

Common risks

- Launching and landing areas too narrow
- Shade structures too low or supports too close
- Home made additions
- Rough surfaces , damage to surfaces
- Heights that skaters can climb
- Stairs and rails/ heights that don't conform to BCA regulations
- Elements at different levels where flying boards may strike other unaware riders

5. How we develop them as sports

- Promote them as sports !!! Give them some legitimacy!
- Educate residents about the benefits of targeting adolescents and the value of these sports
- Provide skill development in schools, program, recreation & shopping centres, & skate parks - but use skaters and people with street credibility & be true to the brand
- Provide areas for low proficiency+ role models + leadership in public parks
- Encourage “challenge” competitions, clinics and demos
- Encourage the peak bodies and older riders to educate young ones about preventing injury, using protective gear, equipment maintenance etc.
- Promote Skate patrols, leadership, and coaching in parks
- Develop codes of conduct & promote to users and associates

Concluding remarks

As these are mature sports; if we want them to grow we need to address the quality and management of facilities, improve the public perception of street sports, as well as address the sports development side.

References available on request.

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