



FREESTYLE SKIING



Origin

Freestyle skiing can trace its early roots back 200 years to Norwegian peasants who pioneered rudimentary aerial competitions and trick skiing. At the beginning of the 20th century somersaults on skis were recorded in Norway and Austria and in the early 1920's US skiers started to flip and spin. In the 1950's and 1960's skiers on both continents continued to experiment with new ways of moving and jumping on skis and out of this attitude of creativity a new sport began to emerge, known as 'hot dogging' or 'freestyle'. A professional circuit

started to grow in the mid 1960's and flourished in the 1970's, attracting corporate sponsorship and large crowds. In 1975, John Johnston, a professional Canadian freestyle athlete and pioneer of freestyle's amateur status, approached the International Ski Federation (FIS) about making freestyle a recognised FIS event, with a view to ultimately gaining Olympic medal status. By 1979, all professional freestyle athletes were offered an opportunity to turn amateur, launching a new era in the development of freestyle. Today seven FIS World Championships and four Olympic Games have marked the sport's maturity on the international circuit and 28 nations with representatives from all five continents, have fielded freestyle athletes in competition.

At the Olympic Games

The jump, ballet and moguls have demonstration status at the Games in 1988 in Calgary. Shortly after the IOC granted Olympic status to moguls at the Albertville Games in 1992 and aerials followed in Lillehammer in 1994.

Salt Lake City Olympic venue

Deer Valley Ski Resort, built in 1981, is about 58 kilometres (36 miles) from downtown Salt Lake City in the historic mining town of Park City. Deer Valley sits at a base of 2,195 m (7,200 ft.) and has a summit of 2,917 m (9,570 ft.). About 13,000 spectators could attend the moguls and aerials Olympic events.



The Deer Valley venue.