Mt. Hood Meadows stresses Safety

As a result of the recent accident on January 5th, 2007, when skier Geoffry Bradeen was in a collision with a snowboarder, which resulted in his passing, Mt. Hood Meadows is implementing more stringent safety rules, especially related to reckless, fast skiing. The ski area manager, Dave Riley, says in his recent blog:

“We implemented a new program this year called "Are You Aware". It consists of a large investment in signage to communicate the appropriate messages to the entire guest population at the resort. Additionally, this program (which Ms. Toney developed last fall and I support fully) calls for aggressively confiscating lift tickets and season passes. More tickets and passes have been confiscated already this year than any entire season in our history.

“We have three groups of people focused on this: the MHM Professional Patrol Department, the Mt. Hood Volunteer Ski Patrol staff, and the Safety Hosts.

“Once a ticket or pass is taken, the "Are You Aware" program requires the individual to attend a safety class which we present almost every day now at the resort. It includes a safety discussion by a pro patrol leader and everyone has to watch a DVD which Vail created. The DVD is very compelling and covers gruesome examples of accidents from skiing/riding too fast, two person collisions, running into fixed objects like trees, and deaths from skiing out-of-bounds.

“Season pass holders have their passes confiscated for at least one week (longer based on circumstances and/or attitude). Also, in order to get the season pass back, in addition to attending the safety class, the person must have five people sign a form which we provide which says they have been educated on Your Responsibility Code.”

More details in Dave’s blog on the Meadows web site.

Building up on the idea of a new vision for skiing in the 21st century, started in the July/August 2005 issue of “Lift Lines”, resorts could make the slopes safer by providing more opportunities for us to practice controlled turning, by simply setting up a variety of fun obstacles on the slopes. This would not only make the slopes more fun, but would also slow traffic down, make the slopes safer, and lift lines shorter.

Urge ski areas to implement this idea, in any of a number of ways. Here’s just one of them:

Use whisker gates

Whisker gates can be used in place of traffic cones, in a fun obstacle maze (not necessarily a race course).

They can also be used in place of gates for a simple race-training course.

These whisker gates can be skied over with no damage to the skis or the gates.

For more info on whisker gates, see:


For more ideas, and the whole vision, see our web site at: www.mthigh.org/Vision.htm.