

Get to Zee Chopper
A gut punch of confidence



Traders & snowboarders alike know the game is all about progression and pushing your limits. In my 10+ years of snowboarding, the sport itself has progressed dramatically. I started during the days of step-in bindings and what's a terrain park? Now you have 12 year olds throwing down fucking triple cork 1440's like they're buttering a bagel.

Every since my first year snowboarding, I was always the best snowboarder among my buddies, not cocky if it's true? At my peak, I was throwing down 900's and winning a few pro-am competitions here and there. One low point, however, was entering into the *Grenade Games* and letting Danny Kass take his lap in front of me. It's pretty hard to one-up a guy who's opening run consisted of a double rodeo 900. Incase you're wondering, I sure as shit did not advance to the finals in that one.

We always said, "If you ain't fallin', you ain't tryin'!" It's all par for the course when boarding (or trading, for that matter). We all take our falls; a broken wrist here, a torn acl there, even a fractional tailbone are all in a day's work. The worst falls, just like the worst trades, all tend to supply us our most important lessons. One lesson could be 'don't bomb it down the mountain and huck a front 900 on your first lap.' Who knows, you might blow out your knee overshooting the landing! Or don't buy a few thousand shares of a 3X leveraged short ETF? You know, take it slow -- much easier said than done, same with trading and virtually anything in life.

If you're a real fan of the sport, you know the dream is Heli Boarding. You know you've dreamed of waking up before sunrise, walking out to the heliport, jumping in a \$2 million machine, pointing at a mountain and getting dropped off exactly where you want. Uber should have been in that game 20 years ago, right? Now the obvious pitfall for most are the costs associated with actually *going* heli boarding. Flights, hotel rooms, renting the chopper, and having the right equipment can be a very expensive day. Most don't have \$5,000 to \$6,000 to throw around on a few turns down some fresh pow. Chair lift it is for most unfortunately.



But when you got the money to spend, I can attest it is DEFINITELY worth every penny. Now I would fancy myself an experienced snowboarder, as well as my partner Shake. After we booked a day Heli Boarding at Whistler Blackcomb (voted the #1 resort in the world) we could not be more confident in our abilities to fly down each run like Travis Rice in *The Art of Flight*. For months we were hyping each other up on how we were going to make that back country our little bitch. Our cockiness within a game we hadn't really played was eerily similar to cocky demo traders who come across a few lucky wins and feel they have the keys to the kingdom. Both parties had some lessons to learn very quickly.

So we plan to go heli boarding on the third day of our trip. we wanted to go the first day, however the pilot advised we get a few days under our belt, considering it was our first day of the season riding. We haven't strapped up in a year and we thought we're just stepping on the chopper ready to ride day 1 --- just a bit cocky. Ok fine Mr. Pilot, day 3 it is. Day 1 rolls around, après-ski and riding is in full effect. I think between Shake and myself we drank 20 Irish Coffees before noon, started to see shit out there! Day 2, we took it a bit lighter to prepare for the big day.

Day 3, the big fucking day! We wake up at the ass crack of dawn, 4:45am, to get the first gut punch of the trip -- the weather forecast. They were calling for heavy snow, which means

unless you want to die crashing in the Whistler backcountry, you're not heli boarding. We being Americans still tried to press it "you sure we can't just go?" The coldest "NO" fired back the pilot, aren't Canadians suppose to be nice? So we had built this day up in our heads for years and now we had to go ride the slopes like everybody else. Poor us right, boo fucking hoo, cue the baby violin.



We were told that we will be on stand by, meaning if the weather is good any of the following days, we will get the 4:45 am call saying "*it's go time.*" Day 4, no dice, but we get the green light saying that we're about 80% good for the following day. This day/night we obviously party the hardest and quickly forget that in a few short hours we will be in a helicopter flying up to some of the biggest peaks in the world. A filet, half a dozen martinis, some irish coffee's, and a few canadian bottle girls into the night, let's just say heli boarding was the is the last thing on our minds.

Day 5, we sleep through the fucking wake up call, to that cold sweat feeling you get when you oversleep and know your fucked. Not the "Ahh Im fucked im going to be 20 mins late," but "OH FUCK, I'm about to be out \$5,000 with a zero tolerance cancellation fee," type of fucked. Let's just say it was a land speed record of how fast we got our boots on and down to the heliport.

Now being the confident (read: cocky) snowboarder I am, I show up rocking *Ray Bans* and bumping music. Everyone else has on full face helmets on and checking their avalanche probes while I'm making sure my Drake playlist is cued up. We go over some safety procedures as I nod along, really listening to my music and we get the green light, all aboard! So we get in the chopper and spend the next 10 mins fist pumping each other as we fly over endless amounts of freshly snowed on peaks into the middle of west bumble fuck British Columbia.



Not a house, person or road for miles. If you get stuck out here without a chopper, you're as good as dead.

So we land at the first peak and all anxiously bind up, ready to make this peak our bitch. The instructor asks "*who would like to go first?*" My hand shoots up faster than they know it all who sat in the front of your 8am lecture on Friday Mornings. I'm getting first tracks! (Dumb money at its finest) The instructor has one clear rule, stay to his right because to the left were cliffs. Cliffs = death. I'm bumping *More Life* nodding along like I'm listening to what he's saying. Its also starting to snow and my tiny little Ray Ban Club Masters are starting to ice over (impending death here I come). So I start bombing it down the hill, meanwhile everyone else is taking slow, smart turns forming S's down the mountain



(Smart Money With A Mentor)

Meanwhile I'm just like "WOOOOHOOOO FUCKK ITTTT!!!" Unknowingly heading right for a cliff.



(Dumb money I got this its my first trade.....DEAD!)

The instructor is screaming for me to stop but i'm in the zone, 100 yards ahead bumping music. As I start to get closer to the edge, it gets steeper and I start to see black squinting through my iced over glasses, fuck those are rocks/edge! Luckily I'm able cut hard right and stop myself from flying off a cliff. But now I am Fucked. I'm standing in 5 feet of fresh powder, which is your best friend with speed when you're ripping down the mountain, but your absolute worst enemy when you're at a stand still. As I look up ahead, everyone including the instructor is perched comfortably in a flat area a few feet from the next leg of the run (traders trading with a mentor). I'm down below like an asshole who couldn't be more stuck.



(fuck me right, well not actually me but you get the idea)

It must have taken me 30 minutes to climb back up, did I forget to mention I was hungover at 15,000 feet above sea level? Everyone else was comfortable waiting to continue the day. The cocky 10 year veteran, who knew it all when it came to snowboarding was quickly humbled within the first five turns back country boarding. Any real trader will tell you, once you get cocky, or think you have it all figured out, the market will quickly and happily come and punch you in the gut.

After that embarrassing start to the day, I followed the instructor, put on some god damn goggles like a normal person, turned off the headphones and had one of the best and most exhausting days snowboarding of my life. Prior to actually experiencing back country snowboarding, we could not have been more confident that we were going to be paying the pilot a few extra franklins to take us up after our 5 runs. When we were actually doing it, riding in 5

feet of powder using every ounce of our 3 day old snowboarding (read: hungover) legs, we were ready to pack it in by run 3.

At one point the instructor even made an incorrect call resulting in the chopper coming to pick us up in the middle of the back country instead of the designated pick up zone. However being that the guide had thousands of hours of experience, he was calm as a cucumber. He literally pulled out an axe, chopped down about a dozen small trees and bushes, while we all sat there clueless as to why the fuck this dude was chopping his life away. After he moved all the trees, he formulated a game plan, we all followed, the chopper landed in a 15 sq foot spot on the middle of the mountain, we climbed in and were whisked off to safety and the nearest bar.



(On the way back, Long Oakleys Goggles, Short Ray Ban Sunglasses)

In life, we tend to overestimate our abilities and underestimate others abilities. While it doesn't matter if you're in the backcountry of Whistler BC or at your desk trying to buy a breakout in the Apple, having a gameplan can be the difference between another day and your last day.