



## Skateboarding

**Martina Biquard and Chaz Merryweather from TR7 Skateboarding tells us**

We are still relatively new as an Indoor Skatepark as we only opened January 2020, but since the Olympics we have seen a massive increase in different ages getting involved or rediscovering skateboarding. Also, kids are getting into it at a younger age meaning the progression is constantly moving forward. We have had kids as young as 3 years old and adults in their 50s come in for lessons!

We believe that skateboarding's inclusion in the Games has definitely encouraged more people to take up the sport. This is massively due to the comradery in skateboarding, which the Olympics helped to expose. Skateboarders support each other in a way that no other sports do so it was great that so many people were able to see that first hand. Skateboarding is for everyone and we believe that more and more people are starting to realise that they too can get involved, whether they are complete beginners or not!

There have definitely been changes in the type or age of person trying to skateboard. In our shop we are seeing more and more parent/child duo scenarios where the child has decided to give it a go and mum/dad get involved too! It is great to see a few locals take up skateboarding in their 50s (having never done it) and also due to girls such as Sky Brown being in the Olympics. Recently there has been a massive boom on the ladies side of things... Women's skateboarding 10 years ago was extremely rare but nowadays it seems to be just as popular as men's, which is great.

There have definitely been a few people mention that they have taking up skateboarding after seeing it on the Olympics, in particular kids who would have seen others their age or slightly older, who are already at a very high standard. Also as I mentioned before, loads more girls than ever before also!

## BMXing

**Team Extreme, who provide Skateboarding and BMX events explain:**

We have had clients ask us to provide Declan Brooks (Bronze in Freestyle Bmx) and Charlotte Worthington (Gold in freestyle Bmx) at our events, showing that people have taken note of BMX as a sport and want to see the sport's high achievers. The downside is that the BMX athletes are charging a lot more money than previously which has an impact on our profitability as we have to carry a higher level of insurance for the country's best riders who arguably carry less risk.

We have also seen a bigger uptake in young female skateboarders at our skatepark events that we run. Sky Brown is a great role model as a young skater in the world. Not all skateboarders were happy with the inclusion of the sport in the Olympics, but as an event/showcase I consider it really worked.

The number of those interested in and taking part in the sport in lockdown went up massively across extreme sports, with people looking back at what was fun in their youth and having the time to do it again whilst on furlough. Inclusion in the Olympic Games has benefited the sport by showcasing it on the world stage. That will always help people to want to give it a go, and start, just as seeing Team Extreme shows does.

We have always had a good turn out at BMX events with a good young crop of riders taking part. I think there has been more of a take up in girls skateboarding especially in diverse cultures which could be attributed to the Olympics and the movie Skater girl which was released in 2021.

At a recent event in France where we had Declan Brooks and the French reserve rider from the Olympics it was clear that people came to watch them because of the Olympics with lots of young people riding BMX bikes at the event.

For our business, I have made new Ramps to cater more towards skateboarding as I feel that there will be a pick up in shows in the next few years not only here but also in France where the next Olympics is being hosted.