

TINA BASICH (Nevada City, Calif.)

A renaissance woman, Tina Basich was one of the most influential pioneers and ambassadors in snowboarding and action sports, helping put women's snowboarding on the map. She won X Games and U.S. Open titles, and was the first woman to land a backside 720 in competition. She led her sport to higher levels with public-facing initiatives, including co-founding Boarding for Breast Cancer. She was a pioneering athlete whose impact created a lasting effect on the culture and equipment that still drives snowboarding today.

Growing up in the mid-80s, she latched onto snowboarding in the early days of the sport, filled with excitement as snowboarding started to establish itself. Only a few Tahoe resorts allowed snowboarding, but that didn't stop Basich, her brother and their crew from riding every chance they could.

She was one of only a few women when she took part in her first contest at age 17 in 1986, earning the first of many podium finishes. A year later at the World Championships in Breckenridge, Colo., she was offered a sponsorship to be on the Kemper snowboarding team. It opened up opportunities for exposure with team photoshoots and travel expenses to compete across the country.

As was typical for the time in the '80s, she competed in all events (even moguls and giant slalom), but found her true love in the air. In the early days, she was dominant in halfpipe, winning or placing at nearly every competition she entered including becoming a two-time U.S. halfpipe champion. It was a dream come true as she traveled the world as a sponsored rider.

In a time when snowboarding was building its image as a popular new sport, Basich became its poster child. She led her sport to higher levels by taking every opportunity that came her way.

By 1994, with many championship titles under her belt, she launched her first pro model with Kemper Snowboards. The same year Shannon Dunn, her friend and snowboarding peer, also released her pro model with Sims. It forced the industry to notice that there was, indeed, a need for women's-specific equipment. She went on to have pro models featuring her own artwork for the next decade.

Basich and Dunn also designed the Prom and Tuesday outerwear brands, bringing technical women's apparel to the snowboard world. She was also a founding partner of Boarding for Breast Cancer in 1996, educating young women on the importance of self testing, early awareness and prevention.

Her most memorable career moment was at the 1998 Winter X Games where she shocked the snowboarding scene by landing the first 720 backside rotation, which had never been performed in a women's competition. It opened a new era of progression for women.

After breaking her leg in 1999, she downshifted her competitive career, focusing on riding powder and the freedom it brought her. She pioneered big mountain riding, doing first descents in Alaska and led film crews to the biggest lines any snowboarder was doing at the time.

In 2003 HarperCollins published her autobiography, *Pretty Good for a Girl*, telling her stories of perseverance and the challenges of rising up in a male-dominated sport.

From feature stories to cover shots, in media around the globe, she told the story of snowboarding from a woman's perspective. She appeared on national television from MTV to NBC, and even the big screen in many movies highlighting her riding. Her all girls action sports show GKA on Fuel ran 40 episodes.

Over the nearly four decades since she first strapped into a snowboard, Tina Basich has remained a relevant and vital pioneer in snowboarding. From athletes to sport leaders to media, she is respected as an individual who changed the sport through her athleticism, style and perseverance. If not for Basich's insight, passion and determination, snowboarding for women might have taken a different path.