

# SALMON RIVER SEND-OFF

FLY BY

## The CDI Memorial Classic

01 Carson Ianson was a quick learner. Here, he's pictured airing out of the "halfpipe" at Boise, ID's local resort Bogus Basin back in '89. Photo: Bon Ianson

02 With a lot of buckets, beer and friends, you end up with this large of a drop-in. CDI organizer, creator and participant Corey McDonald points it straight down the hand-built, two-story sliver. Photo: Greg Call

Words Greg Call



IT'S LATE MAY and the majority of the peaks in Idaho's Salmon River Mountains have already lost their snow. But close to 100 snowboarders outfitted in board shorts and flip-flops aren't done yet. Cars stuffed with camping supplies, they are en route to Snowbank Mountain near Cascade, ID. For 13 years this annual pilgrimage for one last session on a hand-dug backcountry quarterpipe has taken place. Led by Corey MacDonald and Dustin Johnson, they are here for the Carson David Ianson Memorial Quarterpipe Classic.

"Seventeen years ago, in this very spot, Carson threw my bachelor party," Corey says while sitting around the campfire. Carson introduced both Corey and Dustin to snowboarding in the late '80s. He was one of the first kids in town who had a snowboard. He inadvertently sent Dustin and Corey toward a life based on snow—Dustin works year round at the local resort, Bogus Basin, while Corey returned this year to run the parks at Bogus during the winter and continues to spend summers as the head digger at High Cascade Snowboard Camp on Mt. Hood, OR. Tragically, Carson passed away while visiting Thailand in 2002. The event is a way of celebrating his life and, on a broader scale, the tight-knit snowboard scene of southern Idaho.

Many of the riders that show up for the event never met Carson, which is a testament to his legacy, to the strength of the community. As Brittany Roper, a 30-year-old rider from Boise explains, "I wasn't able to ever meet Carson while he was alive, but he passed on a legacy with the way he lived his life—I know Carson through this event." Brittany's one of many attendees ranging from 5-to-50 years old riding this spot that Carson and his crew first discov-

ered in the '90s. It's in a shady bowl that holds snow later than most of the other peaks in the area. There, they would milk the remainder of each season by building jumps and riding lines until all of the ribbons of snow disappeared from the summer heat. It took a few years of riding the area before Carson and Corey found the quarterpipe setup. They thought it would be cool to throw a contest there one day, but Carson passed away before they could put plans into action. The event began that same year.

The quarterpipe itself is a truly DIY feat of determination, passion and hard work. There's no backing from any major companies, but there is a bit of grassroots support from companies like Dinosaurs Will Die, whose co-owner Sean Genovese is a regular at the event. It takes several days of hard labor from a broad assemblage of snowboarders to put up a two-story transition and equally impressive drop-in on the top of a ridge in the backcountry. They do it by hand with shovels, buckets, beer and sweat. Regardless of how much snow remains, the event goes on.

On this late-May day, a healthy dose of salt is necessary to keep the limited snow in place, but the transition holds up for eight hours of nonstop action. While some chase the hair of the dog in lawn chairs and wait out the heat of the day, others lather on high-SPF sunscreen and stand patiently in line to drop in and put on a show. Once the sun starts to get low on the horizon, exhausted riders dismantle the rails and scaffolding, and then haul them out piece by piece. They load them up into trailers and everyone heads down to the campsite to share stories of their season--- and try to outdo last night's party. It would make Carson proud. ▲