

Skateboarding on campus seeks home & acceptance

RYAN JESSUP

STAFF WRITER

Whenever a new idea or trend comes along, sometimes it is slow to be accepted or appreciated. No one probably expected this to be the case with skateboarding; especially since skateboarders started hitting the pavement, sidewalks and curbs well over a decade ago. In fact, it has become a significant factor in the way students and even non-students express themselves around campus and other places.

Today, many students at UNC Wilmington ride a skateboard to go to class, to have fun, to look cool, or, simply, to get the "natural high" of hovering over the ground at certain speeds. Nevertheless, skateboarding on campus is not only a means of transportation, but also an expression of oneself, communing or interacting with the terrain. Sophomore Chris Waller said, "I enjoy skating and doing tricks around campus." Thus, to ban or stop skaters, such as Chris, from practicing their art form is considered by some as merely harassment or censorship, or both.

Some skaters have actually been stopped by campus police for simply doing a trick on the sidewalk where skating is "allowed." This happened last year to sophomore Kenne Mountford who did a trick on one of the campus' sidewalks where skating was allowed. To his total dismay, he was warned by a campus officer not to do tricks on the sidewalks at all...no exceptions.

Kenne said, "I was simply minding my own business while I was skating and was not interfering with any campus traffic,



James Flint/The Seahawk

Artistic in its own right, skateboarding is often viewed as an unorthodox style of sport and expression. Objects such as stairs and railings are perfect objects for skaters to perform their skilled tricks, as demonstrated by Charles Brown, above.

regulations, or pedestrians." In a recent interview, Lt. Dave Donaldson of the campus police said, "If it doesn't interfere with traffic or pedestrians, then it shouldn't be a problem for skaters to perform tricks on sidewalks or other areas where they can ride."

There are certain areas and things around campus that are not meant for skating because it would interfere with the public's use as well as create safety concerns. Some people, however, believe that skateboarders are very talented and just as deserving to be recognized, in a sport sense, as any basketball, baseball or soccer player. One substantial difference is obvious...skateboarders do not have their own campus facility where they can practice or perform their sport.

Donaldson provided a great insight into the way that skaters are or, perhaps, should be perceived, not only by the campus police but also by others of the campus community. Also, there may very well be hope for skaters getting to skate more than the sidewalks in the near future. "There could eventually be a facility for skaters to skate on campus if the popularity of the sport continues to increase," said Donaldson.

Although such a facility is currently being discussed by the campus police, the campus recreation department has not become involved with any discussion at this point. Perhaps, the university administration will, at least, give the idea some consideration. This is certainly an idea that Chancellor Leutze and the university administration could look into. Skateboarding has taken root and it is quite possible that it will grow to fruition in the near future.

Pier surfing mixes sand and waves for a unique draw

EVAN SWINK

STAFF WRITER

Beachgoers may have noticed a lot of surfers huddled around the pier and wondered, "Why don't they just spread out?" Here's why.

The waves are generally better near the pier and surfers want to be where the best waves are, (if they do not mind crowds.)

Weather and the ocean floor work hand in hand to make waves break the way they do. Therefore, the two components are important factors in surfing. For surfers, knowledge of the two variables is as important as carrying along your surf wax.

Judging by the crowd, Wrightsville Beach's Crystal Pier seems to be one of the best spots on the beach to surf. Martin Lee, an employee at Surf City Surf Shop explains, "The pilings of the pier catch

sand and create a sand bar." A sand bar is simply an area where sand tends to build up as a result of the waves and currents. In this case, the pilings of the pier cause abnormal patterns in the currents and deposit sand at the base of the pier.

Sandbars are created elsewhere along beaches as well. As the water returns to the sea after being pounded on the shore, it takes with it large amounts of sand. The water usually flows in the same patterns to get back out to sea and likewise the sand is then deposited in the same areas. This creates sandbars along the beach in places other than piers. Wherever these sandbars are, you'll find surfers.

These shallow places offer better waves for surfers by pushing waves up. As the bottom gets deeper, the wave gets smaller. Since the pier collects sand, it cre-

ates a sand bar. Therefore, the waves are larger and break more evenly and uniformly.

There is no need to get hung up on sandbars and pilings, just know that the surf is usually better near

the pier and where other sandbars form.

According to Chris Batten, a UNC Wilmington sophomore and Surf City employee, "Yeah, it breaks better there; there and Holiday Inn."

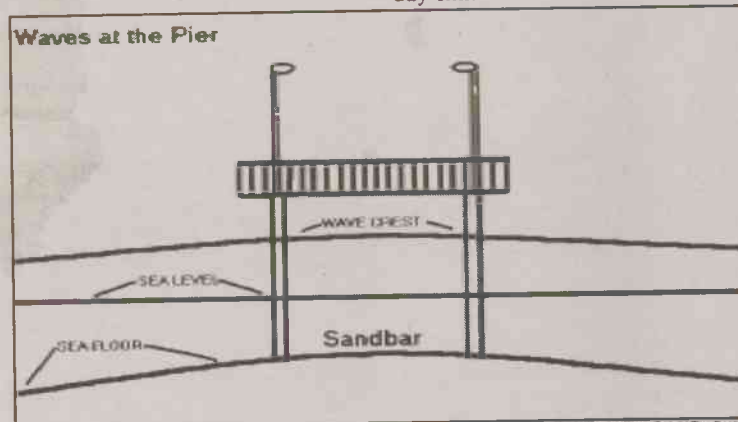


Illustration by Evan Swink/The Seahawk

Illustration showing how waves act near a pier, attracting surfers.