



YOUR GUIDE TO SKATEBOARDING



Sophomore Greg Stropolos, pictured, has been skating for years and has brought his love of grinding and tricks to UNC after transferring from Temple University in Philadelphia.

Kickflips, ollies and a range of other tricks can be spotted as Stropolos carves across campus, though taking the occasional tumble.

"That's the thing about skateboarding; you fall all the time but it's just about getting back up," he said.

BY AMANDA YOUNGER
STAFF WRITER

Jim Rees was born in 1963. And by 1966, he had a skateboard in hand.

"I always had a skateboard when I was a kid," the skater and skate park builder said. "I've been skating since '76 pretty much nonstop."

Such is the case for countless skaters across the nation, not excluding North Carolina, a state rich in action sports traditions.

While Greenville may have been pushed into the BMX spotlight with the help of New York-to-North Carolina transplant Dave Mirra, skateboarding also has found a home in backyard bowls and local skate parks.

In cities like Wilmington, Charlotte, Durham and Raleigh, skaters have formed a community that continues to carry on the tradition of vert and street skating even as the sport declines in popularity on the national scale.

A majority of skaters, both in North Carolina and beyond, have adopted street skating as their

style of choice. Street skating, with notable athletes like Ryan Sheckler and Paul Rodriguez at its helm, refers to skating on paved street terrain, rather than on vert style, skating on ramps in skate parks.

But North Carolina's coastal areas also have infused a unique component to skating as techniques and tricks used in surfing found their ways into the concrete playgrounds of local skate parks.

"I think in North Carolina, on the coast, there is a little more surf-oriented style, but I think recently it hasn't been so much," Rees said. "I think now what they're doing in surfing is borrowing from skating."

Though the sport was popularized in the 1970s with vert skating, a lack of access to parks and ramps throughout North Carolina and the rest of the country became a catalyst for the rise in street skating that would be seen in the 1980s and 1990s.

"With vert skating you've got to have a ramp, so either someone's got to be motivated and build one, or the parks got to exist," lifelong

skater Brian Wainwright said. "Street skating's everywhere; you just step out your door and go."

The popularity of skateboarding grew throughout the late 70s and peaked in the 80s.

"In the early 90s it kind of went underground," said Tommy Harward, a professional freestyle skater and Raleigh native.

The ebb and flow of skating in the state and on the national scene continued until a resurgence in the 1990s with ESPN's annual display of skating prowess, the X Games.

Though some skaters admit that the sport is again on the downhill slope of its hills and valleys history, due in part to closings of skate parks and overall economic downturn, some skaters are looking at the bright side.

"It weeds out the people who are in it for the wrong reasons, because they think it's cool," Harward said.

"The people who love it and skateboarding is in their hearts, they'll do it whether the kids down the street are doing it or not."

TERMS

- **Ollie**— back foot is pressed against the tail of the board, causing the top of the board to be raised in the air.
- **Goofy Stance**— when a skater stands on his board with his right foot in front and his left foot in back.
- **Flow**— how smooth the transitions are between tricks or moves in a given skate park or area.
- **Grind**— skater grazes the edge of a surface, such as a rail, and dismounts, landing on his board.

PLAYLIST

1. "This D.J." Warren G
2. "Be Easy" Ghostface Killah
3. "Cab Fare" Hieroglyphics
4. "Voyager" Daft Punk
5. "Gut Feeling" Devo
6. "Police Truck" Dead Kennedys
7. "If It Takes All Night" Frank Black and the Catholics
8. "Safe European Home" The Clash
9. "This Ain't a Scene" Fall Out Boy
10. "1,000,000" Nine Inch Nails

MUST-HAVE GEAR

1. Headphones

Double Agent \$100
www.skullcandy.com



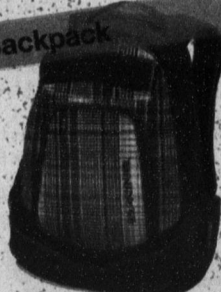
2. Kicks

Owens Hi \$75
www.vans.com



3. Backpack

Dakine Varial \$35
www.dakine.com



4. Skateboard

Kommi \$199
www.sector9.com



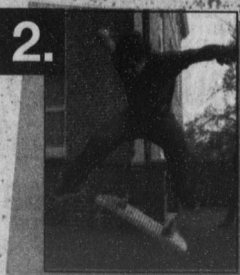
HOW TO KICKFLIP

1.



As you skate and gain momentum to make the jump, press your back foot against the board. It will resemble an ollie.

2.



Drag your front foot outwards across the board and kick out, causing the board to flip.

3.



Catch the board with your back foot as you hit the ground, then straighten up your body as you land.