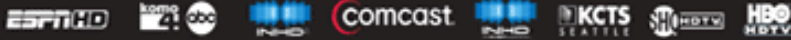


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### Skyler Siljeg drops in on success

2002-08-15

by Andy Nystrom

Staff writer



Skyler Siljeg is having the ride of his life.

Ever since receiving his first skateboard at age 4 1/2, the Bothell resident has been focused on making the big time.

“He sat down at the dinner table at Christmas and told us that he was going to practice every day (‘Even on my birthday’) until he goes pro,” said Siljeg’s mom, Pam Miller. “My initial reaction was, ‘OK, cool.’ And my older son, Josh, said, ‘Mom, he really loves it ... this is what he wants to do.’”

From then on, Siljeg, now 8, was well on his way to fulfilling his promise. He won a skateboard deck in his first competition at the Bothell Skate Park at age 5, won a pair of first-place awards two years later and he’s currently second in his age division in the Northwest League standings.


And the youngster also has some big-name sponsors like Jones Soda and Quiksilver in his corner, by the way.

“My first ride was kind of scary, but I really wanted to do it,” Siljeg remembers. “I rode 4 feet, hit the curb and jumped off.


“And I knew it was something that I would love. So I kept on practicing ... and practicing,” he said.

Siljeg has since gone from performing basic ramp maneuvers to dropping in 12 feet on a vertical half pipe just two weeks ago.


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``What I've seen in the last year just blows my mind," said an enthusiastic Miller, who has gotten caught up in her son's activity. ``It's like a different version of Little League. As a parent I'd feel I'd be making a big mistake not to be involved in this aspect of his life.




``This is a real positive esteem builder. What impresses me the most is the respect you get if you're 2 feet tall and skating side by side with older kids. You tap your board for each other," she added.



Siljeg has been beating some of the older skaters as well. At the recent Sound and Fury competition in Seattle, he finished 17th in the unsponsored all-age division, which featured 50 skaters. Next up will be a league competition in Newberg, Ore., later this month.



Whether he's competing or just practicing at a local park, Siljeg is hoping to spread the word about skateboarding.



``I'm always trying to do new stuff. And maybe someone will spot you and they might start skating," he said. ``Skateboarding will never die."

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