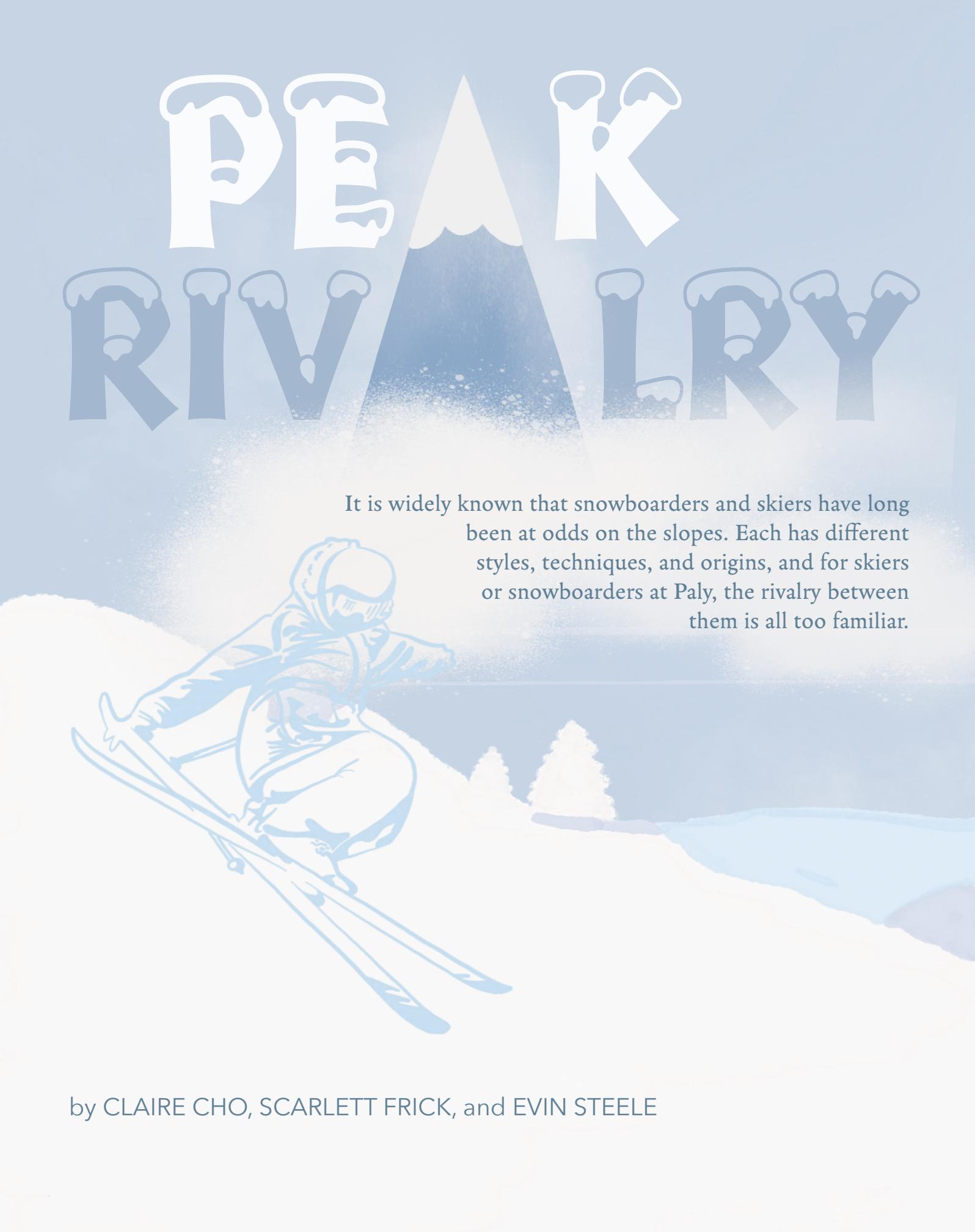
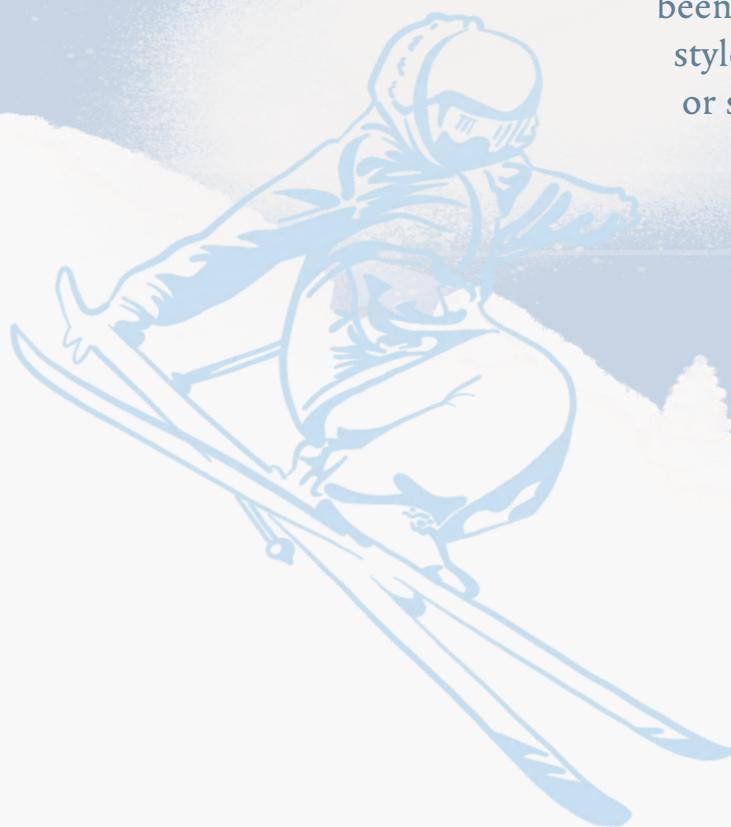


PEAK RIVALRY



It is widely known that snowboarders and skiers have long been at odds on the slopes. Each has different styles, techniques, and origins, and for skiers or snowboarders at Paly, the rivalry between them is all too familiar.



by CLAIRE CHO, SCARLETT FRICK, and EVIN STEELE

Junior and dedicated skier Milo Sabina knows how stereotypes can affect people's opinions on the debate.

"As a skier, I will always say that skiing is better than snowboarding, and I'm sure most snowboarders would argue the opposite," Sabina said.

But which one is harder? Looks cooler? Is more impressive? More dangerous?

The supremacy of skiing or snowboarding has been a big topic of discussion over the past few decades. Both have a prominent place in North American winter culture and are an attraction that pulls many tourists to visit colder, snowier places in the winter.

As snowboarding has increased in popularity in more recent years, so has the strong opinion of many skiers who believe that snowboarders have no place on the slopes.

Skiing certainly is the older sport, dating back all the way to the ice age. Skis were initially designed for faster transportation and hunting; the first ones found back in 8000 BC in Northern China were 2-meter-long pieces of wood and were covered in horsehair.

By the 1800's, skiing had become a popular sport and a recreational activity, and soon after in 1868, a big advancement of the Cambered Ski took place in Telemark, Norway. These were the first skis that contained a side cut that allowed the users to carve instead of slide sideways- much like modern-day skiing.

Snowboarding was invented much later, in 1917, created by a 13-year-old named Vern Wicklund. In his backyard in Minnesota, he stood on a sled

modified to his liking. He invented the more modern version of the sport two decades later.

The sport started to become popular in 1965 when "Michigan's Sherman Poppen created the Snurfer by cross-bracing two skis and adding a string at the front of steering," (Smithsonian Magazine). In 1976, Snowboarding gained even more popularity after a rivalry between two prominent figures, Jack Burton Carpenter and Tom Sims. Carpenter, who was a racing enthusiast from Long Island, ultimately came up with the conjoined word, "snowboarding".

Although the two sports wildly differ, they share some things in common. Paly junior and skier Lydia Mitz shares her least favorite aspect about resorts.

"The worst thing about going to the snow is the lines," Mitz (25') said. "The

"What I love about skiing is that I get to be outside with my friends and family."

- Lydia Mitz ('25)

lines are always super long and it can be super crowded because everyone loves to hit the slopes."

Alongside this common struggle on the slope, it is acknowledged that both sports can be very difficult.

Sophomore Maeva Herbert-Paz is an avid snowboarder who believes snowboarding and skiing share this common trait.

"They are both physically intensive sports that require a lot of skill and training, but I think the two are very different and someone who says one is harder than the other does not fully understand that they are both challenging," Herbert-Paz ('26) said.

As of 2023, an estimated 55 million people hit the slopes to ski, and there's a reason why it's so popular. In general, people ski with their friends and family, which makes it more than just a sport but also time to spend with loved ones.

"What I love about skiing is that I get to be outside with my friends and family," Lydia Mitz ('25) said. "It's a very social sport and I really like that. It also just feels exhilarating going down the slope."



“Skiing and snowboarding are both physically intensive sports that require a lot of skill and training, but I think the two are very different.”

- Maeva
Herbert-Paz
(‘26)

But while fun, the sport can be quite challenging, and many people like to compare its difficulty with that of snowboarding.

“I think skiing is harder than snowboarding because you have to control two skis instead of just one board, and it’s really easy to have bad form,” Mitz said. “Every slope you go on at least one person is pizza-ing down the hill.”

“Even though skiing is probably easier to pick up, it’s harder to get good at,” junior Milo Sabina said. “And while it’s harder to start on a board, I feel like it becomes a lot easier to get good once you get the hang of it.”

Nonetheless, most people would agree that skiing is more popular than snowboarding.

“I think skiing is more popular because it’s older,” Sabina said.

Since skiing was popularized much earlier than snowboarding was—about 160 years prior—it makes sense that it is also more popular now.

“I think a lot of people start skiing because their parents ski and it’s natural to learn from your family,” Mitz said. “The risk of injury is also much lower in skiing than snowboarding, at least in my experience. I have hit my head on the snow several times while skiing but nothing serious. I think it’s a pretty safe sport.”

Herbert-Paz agrees, having suffered from multiple moderate injuries in her time as a snowboarder.

“I would say snowboarding is often more dangerous. In my experience, it’s easy to catch an edge and fall. To mention some injuries, I’ve broken a knee, an elbow, and a finger, I’ve sprained my wrist, and received a lot of bruises.”

Tyler Kramer (‘25) talks about the positives and negatives he faces during snowboarding.

“The best thing about snowboarding

that is different from skiing is that hypothetically if I were to fall, the snowboard wouldn’t pop off like skis do,” Kramer said.

Snowboarders strap both feet to the board using bindings. The bindings keep feet securely and tightly strapped onto the board.

“The worst thing about being a snowboarder is the discrimination I face on the mountain. People heckled me on the chair lift and yelled at me when I hit them.” Oftentimes, snowboarders feel as though they are treated differently than skiers on the slope.

There can be many different reasons one might choose one over the other, whether it’s family tradition, the need for a new sport, the tricks that come along with it, or maybe just for fun.

“One of the reasons I stuck with snowboarding is because I think there’s more versatility in it, and I think trick-wise there’s more opportunities and you can be more creative with it,” Herbert-Paz said. “In skiing, I feel like there’s not much diversity within the way you do it, it’s all very cookie cutter but there’s a lot of different ways to snowboard.”

However, many snowboarders are aware that by choosing to snowboard there could be stereotypes coming their way from skiers.

“On the mountain, there are some prejudices against snowboarders that I feel don’t really have any real meaning,” Herbert-Paz said. “For example, I’ve had skiers crash into me before but nobody says all skiers are reckless. There are some nice skiers who lend me a pole and help

me out in tough situations though. I’ve been lucky to have a lot of good friends who ski that are very nice.”

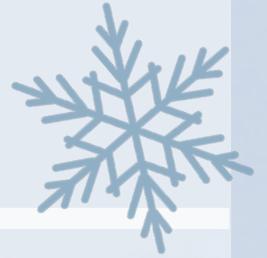
Today, there are three resorts in America that don’t allow snowboarders on the mountain. Some resorts claim it’s purely a business decision, explaining that banning snowboarders is what attracts many skiers to their slopes as it creates a niche experience for the tourists. These resorts include Alta Ski Resort (Utah), Deer Valley (Utah), and Mad River Glen, (Vermont). Many skiers enjoy visiting these specific mountains due to the absence of snowboarders.

Regardless, for students like Herbert-Paz, the debate of which snow sport is superior continues.

“All that matters is being in the snow and enjoying your time on the slopes with family or friends.”



SKIERS VS SNOWBOARDERS



PIZZA STYLE

HEEL SIDE TURN

BIG + SLOW TURNS

TOE SIDE TURN

BEGINNER



“Learning to heel side turn really helped develop the skills I needed to become a better snowboarder.”

-Maeva Herbert-Paz ('26).

PARALLEL SKIING

S-TURNS

HOCKEY STOPS

INTERMEDIATE

MOGULS

MOGULS

“I don’t ski park myself but I think it’s really cool how park culture and style is different from the rest of skiing and boarding.”

-Milo Sabina ('25).



OFF-TRAIL SKIING

ADVANCED

CARVING

TERRAIN PARKS

TERRAIN PARKS