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Concrete Wave: The History Of Skateboarding



Synopsis

Most people think the history of skateboarding started with surfers trying to find a way to sidewalk-surf, but there's a lot more to the story than that. Did you know that people were skateboarding in the early 1900s? Before most people were surfing, hip city-dwellers were getting around by attaching roller skate wheels to a two-by-four. And your parents think today's skateboards are dangerous! In the 1950s, surfers rediscovered skateboarding and popularized the sport. These boards were safer, but still pretty dangerous, so skateboarding was actually outlawed in many places. Skaters kept the sport alive, but it wouldn't become mainstream for many years - not until 1995 when skateboarder Tony Hawk was nationally televised winning two medals at the first X Games. Michael Brooke is a self-proclaimed "skategeezer" - he's been skating the streets and empty pools of California since the early 1970s. Brooke's research and skateboarding experience make this audiobook better than a frontside 540 nosegrab tail tap (almost).

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Customer Reviews

This book grew out of author Brooke's work on the SkateGeezer web site, and while it does do a pretty decent job at recounting the history of skateboarding, it suffers badly from shoddy editing and poor design. The book is divided into the four "waves" of skating (1959-65, 1973-80, 1983-91, 1993-present), each of which has a one or two page introduction, followed by a mix of pieces on the technological developments, interviews, random skater stories, and company profiles and histories. This format makes it easy to pick up and flip through, reading here and there at random (much like a Web site), but if you read it cover to cover, it's not very cohesive. The book is probably strongest in

detailing the progression and development of various manufacturing techniques and materials in making boards, the section on urethane wheels is especially good. Where it's weakest is in dealing with some of the "cultural" components of skating. For example, references are made to tension between "skate and destroy" and "skate to create" philosophies of skating, but what those terms mean isn't explained very well. The book could use considerable editing, as some of the pieces seem to be lifted straight from hastily written e-mails, there are a number of typos, and the apostrophe is consistently misused. I can live with those things in a DIY 'zine, but in a \$20 book, it's unacceptable. The photos are a mixed bag, with the older 70s stuff being pretty interesting, but most of the newer stuff being sub par. The book's overall design is a joke, it's hands down, the most poorly designed full color book I've ever seen.

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