

Feature

The Most Progressive Parks

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There's no question—parks have had an immeasurable impact on snowboarding since their evolution. Nowadays, it's standard for even the big mountain resorts to throw in a few minor boxes and jumps, just for good measure. The difficult task, however, is making a park good, making it progressive, and overall, making it fun! It takes a huge amount of support from resort owners, a strong terrain park crew (who effectively know how to build and maintain the place), not to mention a very large budget for equipment to do it properly. The parks on this list not only possess these elements, they also have all, in one way or another, had a profound impact on the way we as snowboarders continue to advance...yes, even those claimers who insist, "I hate park, I only ride powder." You're not foolin' a soul.

Loon Mountain, NH

Location: Route 122, Lincoln, NH 03251 (White Mountain)
Nearest airports: Boston Logan International Airport (120 miles), Albany International Airport (138 miles), Lebanon Hanover/White River Airport (42 miles), Burlington International Airport (79 miles)
Site: www.loonmtn.com/white
History of park: 6 parks, 2 pipes
Year: 2,100 vertical feet, 12 lifts, 275 acres
Annual snowfall: 116 inches
Lift ticket price: college pass: \$320, adult day ticket: \$60-\$70
Big 700 words: The Coolest Name You Should Know: Another Hour, Eastern Shore's Last Call

Only the warriors ride the East Coast. These warriors are do or die, shredding the slopes in terms and conditions that are sometimes appalling. They are obsessively passionate about snowboarding, if they weren't, they'd be made somewhere, snagging freestyle with hot cocoa. As for parks, the East Coast has had a difficult time keeping up with the West's thrills. Being less than a Kanye chain create difficulties in building, stabilizing and maintaining features. But the peeps at Loon simply dialed their shoulders off, welcoming the challenge.

Loon utilizes a mile-long run for its main park, enabling its crew to provide more variety in size and difficulty of features. "We are constantly switching up features to make your riding experience new and exciting," explains Jay Scambio, Terrain Park Development Manager. "It is extremely rare to come here two weekends in a row and not see a new setup." Now that's something to brag about. Colleen Oulvey, who won Loon's Eastern Shore's Last Call contest last season, enthuses,

"The park is full of sweet stuff and nice things to snowboard on. I only ride the gnarbler when I'm there and ride 'The Fur.' One run over and over again, and it's the best single run ever." Loon is also Scotty Lajuga's stomping ground—"his career is reason alone to check out the place."

In this year working at Loon, Jay runs a tight pack of forward-thinking guys who are super hyped to make the parks their best. "We have a great crew. They're damn good workers and great park riders and they play a vital role in keeping things fresh," says Jay. "Most of them are in college and come into work with new ideas almost every shift. They all get so pumped to create new features for them and their buddies to ride." Loon also turns a series of secret parties each year, consisting of stretched film made in with the natural terrain to keep things interesting.

Props to Loon for holding down the East Coast and big ups to the riders whose passion can inspire us all.



Photo: Mike Cochrane/Photo Mike Amende