

Big-air snowboarding to make Olympic debut

By John Jeremiah Sullivan, New York Times

The history of snowboarding dates to 1938 in Yosemite National Park. A slight young man named Robert Trumbull, a Honolulu newspaper editor who wrote a weather column under the byline Sol Pluvius (Rainy Sun), was on vacation. Chicago-born, Trumbull had seen plenty of snow, and he had been surfing. That was the all-important crossing of the wires. “Yesterday Sol showed the natives a new trick,” reported The Honolulu Advertiser, “snow-surfing, or as Sol called it, ‘snurfing.’ ” He coined the word.

That may all be sports trivia, but it’s about to become important trivia, because soon, in this very winter of 2018 – 80 years after Trumbull’s breakthrough – will occur the Olympic debut of a sport known as “big-air snowboarding,” which is the snurfing equivalent of big-wave surfing.

It is best described as the most beautiful, insane, stupid, dangerous, death-wishing, insane and beautiful sport ever perpetrated on innocent spectators.

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