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February, 2013

Halldor Helgason - Up Close

January 26, 2012 - [Rob de Luca](#)

Halldor Helgason is in full gear straight from riding. It's a week before X, and there's just enough time to shoot photos with new Skullcandy product and hit up the PCMR park for a little practice. In between laps and shots, we pulled him aside for an interview. No matter what, there are always as many cameras in the room as there are people. 'Tis the season.



Halldor has his business partner, Lord Johannes, and a friend, Gunnar Gunnarson, along for the trip. Gunnar has a camera and a quiet demeanor; Johannes has neither. They are the extremes between which Halldor exists, neither boisterous nor reserved.

SK: So you have what, three companies now? How do you manage that yet still ride and compete?



HH: Actually my brother Eiki and I have four: Lobster, 7/9/13, Hoppipolla and now Switchback. We're launching Switchback this year.

SK: OK, four. Snowboards, belts, hats, covered. What is Switchback?



HH: Our new binding company. You buy everything custom. All you do is screw this insert to the board, and everything else you just add using your hands, no tools. Everything can be changed. You can pop off the highback and ride without it if you want.

[Outside, we are shooting stills of Halldor in the Aviator and FIX. Everybody talks about the cold and the coming storms. It is 2 degrees F.]

SK: So you can shoot movies and compete and you're still running four companies? We still just have one company.

HH: Well, we have really good people backing us up. We do science on the mountain - we ride the boards and test everything while we are shooting or whatever, and then we go back to the office and tell them what we want to make new or what needs to change. I don't get into the sales part.



SK: Fair enough. Speaking of shooting, Loud Laps is hilarious. That's all one day at PCMR? That seems like what helgasons.com is all about - quick and dirty and hilarious.

HH: Yes, absolutely. We put that together the same day, shoot in the morning and then edit in the afternoon. That's how we do almost all our videos, super fast.

[Back inside, on the couch]

SK: What about Real Snow?

HH: [laughing] I think we shot Real Snow in like, two days maybe? Three? We just go out and find a spot and do whatever and put it together and add music. There are sometimes kids hanging around when we are shooting, and we make them work for us, pulling bungees or helping our with lighting, even shooting different angles. You know the first shot in Sexual Snowboarding? This 12-year old kid that's always there when we are shooting, he shot it. [whole crew laughs] It's true!

SK: Everything makes so much more sense now. Why are all movies so serious and dramatic these days? Where does that come from? Are you even cold?

[Outside again, Halldor is modeling the new Aviators in a deck chair. The sun is setting so it's about 1 degree now, and he seems unaffected]



HH: No, it's like this in Iceland. [all the Icelanders laugh] Everything seems serious now. You go to the park and people used to ride the pipe, but not anymore. Now it's all about competing and the pipe is so big and icy, nobody is just there to have fun. And in the comps nobody is doing old tricks, like alley-oops or threes or handplants, it's all, you know, [makes flipping motion] flips. I think park is almost going the same. It's so tech, and it's all about how many flips you can do in one run. Not hating on doubles or anything, they're sick. It's good progress. But did you see Mikkel Bang's run at Dew Tour? He had a perfect run, sooooo perfect. He didn't do any flips though, so there was no chance he would get on the podium. That's not the way it should be.

SK: So if you had your own contest, what would you judge on?

HH: Style, I think. I would have at least one hit where you couldn't throw more than one flip, or spin more than five. I want to see people's style.

SK: We'd watch that. So then how are you feeling about X Games? Stoked?



HH: I'm stoked. Aspen has a great park. Some British guy [Billy Morgan] threw a triple back rodeo in the jump line, not big air or anything. And he grew up riding Snowflex? [laughing] Pure madness, man! What's important to me is not winning, but to go and have a good time, first or last, always. I haven't had much time to practice on big jumps this season, but I always want to bring something new. We'll see. They need to make the landing steeper for Big Air, I heard.



[Back in Skullcandy HQ, Halldor is sitting in the CEO's office pretending to answer the phone. Gunnar and Johannes are filming a piece for helgasons.com, in which Johannes wears a leather trench coat and makes shady deals with Halldor]

HH: [in Icelandic gangster voice] No, no. One hundred thousand million dollars is not enough. [hangs up phone]

SK: What comes after X Games?

HH: Well right after X, I am going to Japan for 2 weeks to shoot powder with Method Mag. I've never ridden Japan and I have always wanted to go, plus they are getting so much snow...plus I like Japanese food...it should be good. Then right after Japan I fly back to Norway for the World Cup. [laughs] So, no practice again. We'll see.

SK: Jealous. Of course, you know we have to know what you're listening to.

HH: Of course, man.

SK: Thanks for sitting down with us and good luck in Aspen.

HH: Thank you. No problem. Thanks for the interview.



Halldor Helgason's Five Songs – Jan 18, 2012

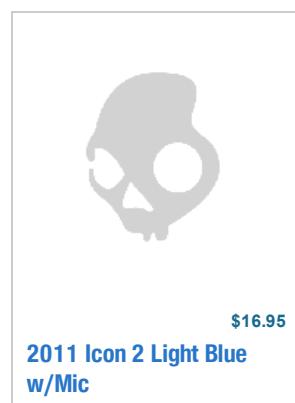
Led Zeppelin – Communication Breakdown
Dimmu Borgir – Burn in Hell
Rick Ross – Big Bank
Slayer – Angel of Death
The Doors – Backdoor Man

UPDATE: if you haven't seen it, here's the video we shot while Halldor was in town.

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