

Maintain Your Brain

As you all may or may not know, I am an avid supporter of helmets when skiing or snow boarding. It is not that I am worried about my skiing hurting me; I am worried about other people's skiing hurting me.

On three different occasions, my helmet has saved my head.

- **Time #1** - I was walking through the parking lot, slipped in my ski boots, and slammed my head off the icy pavement. Not a "cool" way to slam my skull, but that helmet saved me from a nasty concussion.
- **Time #2** - Skiing down Northface toward the end of the season, icy patches here and there, (I was probably going too fast) wiped out, slammed my head off the ice. Saved my head again.
- **Time #3** - Skiing a few years ago on a Washington Ski Club trip, went down a blue, some guy was showing off, caught some air, didn't check out his landing zone, and the landing zone was me. He took me out below the knees. Mrs. Fuerst (Miss Mariano back then) told me that I looked like a cartoon when I went down. She said I was at least 5 feet in the air and I bounced twice when I landed. I landed on my shoulder and my head. My head was saved, my shoulder was partially dislocated. I have no doubt in my mind that had I not worn a helmet, I would have been carried off the mountain that Thursday night. Physical Therapy for my shoulder was nothing compared to what could have happened to my head. I think about the helmet saving my head, every morning since then, when I wake up with a sore left shoulder.

Helmets are expensive to buy, and I know that many young people think they are uncool. However; considering the alternative, they are worth it. As 7 Springs states on their website:

"A helmet is an important safety consideration. Use your head. Educate yourself about helmet use."

Helmets are available for rental at 7 springs and Hidden Valley. They cost \$10 - \$12, which is a small price to pay for safety. If you want your child to wear a helmet, you may be able to find them on clearance at Ski North for as low as \$50. (That is how I got my helmet.) You can send the money with your child on a per trip basis, and I will get the rental tickets for the students.

Students can also wear a skateboard helmet (around \$30 at Walmart) or a motorcycle helmet if they already have one. If you wear a skateboarding helmet, then be sure to take the hat you will be wearing with you when trying on the helmet. Since skateboard helmets do not have warmth insulation, you need the hat, or you will have very cold ears! Be sure the helmet sits correctly on your head. Do not buy a helmet that sits on top of the head with the hat underneath. It does not work correctly then.