

New film company gets big start

By Daily Courier Staff

Four Okanagan College students turned a passion for snowboarding, a thirst for adventure, a reading break road trip and a video competition into a promising start for a new film company: Shin Digger Films.

With the February trip south of the border still fresh in their minds, Stephanie Bourgeois, Montana McKinnon, Allard van der Veen, and Sid Ruhland are revelling in the news they have won a Poach for Freedom video contest put on by Burton Snowboards and evogear.com of Seattle.

The contest started in December 2007 and ended March 1. Entrants had to create the best video of them "poaching" one of the four ski-only resorts in America that ban snowboarders (poaching is a snowboarder term referring to snowboarding where it is prohibited).

The videos submitted were put into categories based on the ski-only resort poached in the video with a top prize of \$6,250 up for grabs.

There were rules in place to ensure the entrants would act in

a reasonably respectful manner without causing any harm to the ski resort or its patrons.

Ruhland and van der Veen learned of the competition on Feb. 3. The closest ski-only resorts were Alta Ski Area and Deer Valley Resort, both of which are more than 1,500 kilometres away in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"This would be an opportunity to travel, snowboard, have some fun, and make some money on the side," said Ruhland. "But with less than a month until the deadline and only one opening to do the trip - reading break - it would require careful planning to pull it off successfully."

The 72-hour trip was spent driving, hiking, waiting and filming.

When the foursome returned home early on Feb. 19, the project was still far from over. The remainder of the reading break was spent with computers, cameras, cables, cords, wires, energy drinks and beer.

Conquering technical complications, van der Veen and Ruhland worked 16 to 19 hours a day editing the four-and-a-half hours of raw footage into two,

five-minute movies (one five minute movie for each mountain they poached).

"We were impressed with the quality of the Shin Digger submission," says Burton's Nate Bosshard. "We received a lot of entries, but here are four students from Canada who feel passionately enough about snowboarding to load everything into a car, travel dozens of hours to poach a ski-only resort, and then piece it together as a very watchable, fun film."

"It's not that any of us are trying to promote poaching really, it's more about equality in snow sports for boarders and skiers alike, not to mention men and women... we are all out there for the same reason right?" said Molly Hawkins, strategic marketing co-ordinator, evogear.com.

On March 18, Ruhland received word that the team's video of the poaching experience on Alta Ski Area had won them \$6,250.

To view the videos, and for more information, go to www.shindiggerfilms.com and www.youtube.com/shindiggerfilms.