

Ranchboarding 101

Contributed by Augusto Lage
Wednesday, 22 June 2005
Last Updated Friday, 04 August 2006

Submitted by NinjitsuMethod

When we visited San Louis Obispo we were treated to a new form of land surfing. Dubbed by its creator Jonny Miller "Ranchboarding". A mountainboard, towrope and electronic golf cart and watch the fun be unleashed. Sick corners and gnarly slides on gravel and wet grass make for an intense experience. Read on for the basics of this emerging discipline

Ranchboarding is Jonny Miller's name for the activity enjoyed by a courageous few guests at his property in SLO Town, CA. The Discipline involves an off-road skateboard (ATB) modified by removing the foot straps and adding a "block of wood for the back foot to rest against. The board and skater are pulled by an electric golf cart with a tow line attached.

The tow line is approximately fourteen feet long and has two wooden handles for the skater to grip as he is being pulled. Johnny's advice is to hold on with the lead hand only. The other hand is needed for cornering techniques—touching the ground and assuming a tripod stance or grabbing the rail. Thick leather gloves are required.

The course at Johnny Miller's property is hazardous and no attempt is made to minimize this. Speeds are low but around corners the rider can experience rapid acceleration requiring courage, strength, and technique to overcome and maintain. Similar to waterskiing, the idea is to keep the tow line taught as much as possible in order to avoid being jerked violently during the ride. Slides are common. Wipeouts are expected. It's important to release one's grip immediately upon losing control of the ride to avoid being dragged through the dirt and jagged stones.

Moderate consumption of cold ones seems to improve one's ability to ranchboard; if nothing else, it should help with the pain of gravel rash and bruises.