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Injury Patterns among Skiers and Snowboarders at a Mid-Size Ski Resort

The purpose of this research project is to determine the injuries, injury rates and injury patterns of skiers and snowboarders at a mid-size Montana ski resort. This research may help gather information vital to developing policies and equipment that may help improve safety and injury rates among snow sports enthusiasts. For this project, 161 incident reports from the Ski Patrol Department at Discovery Ski Area were obtained. Each incident report was sorted through to gather information such as; skier/snowboarder, ability, gender, trail difficulty, probable injury, anatomical location of injury, etc. The data concluded that males were more commonly injured than females. Snowboarder injuries were predominantly male (76%), also these males were younger (ages 13-18) and of beginner level. Snowboarders were more likely to have injuries to their shoulders, wrists, and head. On the other hand, skiers had a sweeping majority of knee injuries. Skiers aged 6-12 and 46 and over had the most injuries. Both skiers and snowboarders obtained a majority of possible sprain/strains, with possible fractures following. Also, most incidents occurred during morning hours and on beginner level trails. Replication of this research could provide more information for safety guidelines and protocols for Ski Patrol personnel.