

This text is by no means academic research, but rather a collection of fragmented information sourced and pieced together from articles in snowboarding magazines, catalogues, and buyers guides, as well as listings on ebay and facebook marketplace. The need to rely on such informal sources reflects exactly how little information is recorded about women in snowboarding and their say in the industry. The history of snowboarding is scarce, even more so when it comes to women. This text is an early attempt at having a written down source, focusing on the women's role in shaping visual culture of snowboarding, even when their contributions were undocumented, dismissed or uncalled for.



1

So what's the deal with women's graphics in snowboarding?

See below four of the first snowboard pro models designed for women.

1 First woman pro model (kinda)- Petra Müssig Nitro EPIC (1990) There is no evidence that the board differs physically from the standard men's model in any way other than its graphics. Information on the board is scarce, other than unsupported claims found in a few articles and a comment from the founder himself: "This is the first ever women's Pro model at all."¹ Based on one of the only found photos on the internet of the board's topsheet (the visible upper surface of a snowboard where graphics are printed), it appears that the artwork was added to a pre-existing design rather than created for a unique model. Seemingly the only thing differentiating Müssig's board from the men's Epic model is exactly that: the ornamental golden graphics covering the original "Epic 154" marking. Taking all of those factors into consideration, there is no proof that this model is truly the legitimate first ever women's pro model. But it was a first big step towards the industry welcoming women, so a win is a win.

1



2 Lisa Vinciguerra pro model- F 15 Checker Pig Vinciguerra Sig model (1991). It was difficult to find information on this model as well. The company's 1991 model for women was apparently designed by Lisa Vinciguerra, but no additional documentation has been found to support this.² The same graphics, produced in different colors and without Vinciguerra's signature, also appear on the F16 models from around the same year, making the claim that Lisa Vinciguerra designed them herself highly doubtful. Another similar board from the same season contains a description in an advertisement stating that it was "designed by Michael Anthony Assec," though there is no further information about the designer or any connection to her model.³ Based on what is known about the model, it is still a scaled down version of a men's model, so still not an actual women's pro mod Up until 1994, these were the two women's pro models and the only women-focused graphics on the market.

Womens models = scaled down versions of mens models.

Graphics? Most probably dictated by men (a wild guess), barely any different than the graphics found on women's models.

Not widely distributed at all, companies didn't see the reasoning for focusing on the women's market. Including that, these models are not found in any

advertisements. In the scans available from 1990–1994, there's no indication of a women's board in any of the catalogues and buyer's guides.⁴

Women rarely had a word in designing the graphics nor the construction of the boards and even if they did, their contributions were largely excluded from the industry's visible record.

2



2



Why do women even need their own models, why is a scaled down men's model not considered as an actual woman's model? Women's snowboards are generally designed to match the average female rider's body proportions and weight. They are typically narrower to fit smaller boot sizes, slightly shorter for easier maneuverability and built with a softer flex so the board responds better to lighter pressure.

3 First women's pro model to be marketed for women and sold worldwide- Shannon Dunn's Sims model "S.Dunn 150" (1994) Dunn had no say in the construction of the pro model, but she did have the opportunity to design the graphics. The design she sent to the company was rejected with the response: 'Too feminine and bold, no one is going to buy that.' The company hired an artist to repaint the graphics. Dunn wasn't too happy about that, and responded to the company with an ultimatum: either print her exact graphics on the model, or they won't have a pro model with her. Gaylene Nagel, the marketing director, managed to convince the company into making the sunflower graphics happen, going as far as buying 5000€ worth of the boards herself for them to be convinced.

The board became the best-selling model of 1994 and featured the year's most discussed graphics, demonstrating that there was a women's market in snowboarding and that the industry needed women's boards.⁶



4 The same year, second first women's pro model- Kemper, Tina Basich pro model (1994)

For this model, Basich too had a say in the designing of the board, although again, no information found on whether she had a say in the construction. The part of snowboarding being such a male dominated sport wasn't much of a bother for her back then, but where the problem really appeared were the snowboarding kits. The trend was wearing oversized clothes and the market had overly wide snowboards which were not rideable by women.⁷ The top sheet had a medieval tower on a cliffside and the bottom had a pink or red (hard to tell) trident. A badass graphic for a women's board, even more so comparing it to the most recent women's models graphics.



¹ Tommy Delago, quoted in "Tommy Delago in Depth Interview – being the Nitro boss and one of the snowboarding pioneers." SnowSurf.com, 2023.

² The Herstory of Snowboards, Snowboarder. Snowboarder.com, 1995.

³ "Checker Pig G6" advertisement, Snowboarder Magazine. Rider: Rob Dafoe. Photo: Ruben Sanchez, ca. 1991.

⁴ BoardVault, accessed via "All-catalog previews" section. Boardvault.net.

⁵ Stephanie Wilkerson "Men's Snowboards vs Women's Snowboards vs Unisex Snowboards" Altitudeattitudessnow.com, 2024.

⁶ "First women's pro model snowboard designed by professional snowboarder Shannon Dunn," Smithsonian Institution – National Museum of American History. Si.edu, accessed December 4, 2025.

⁷ Sam Haddad, "Meet The First – Tina Basich," Glorious Sport. Gloroussport.com, 2022.