

diversion



Allen Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

Dave Wupper, an undeclared sophomore, spends Monday afternoon in front of Precision Skateboard, 19th & O streets.

By Bryan Peterson
Staff Reporter

Lip slides, grinds, ollies, eating it, hand plants, stroking and catching air -- these are all part of the world of skateboarding.

What used to be a neighborhood pastime using boards barely bigger than roller skates has evolved into a nationwide craze with its own language, style and rules.

Every slope, wall, curb, drainage ditch and empty pool is potential skating territory. Skaters now weave in and out among packs of business people roaming downtown streets, despite new regulations prohibiting skateboarding in almost every city with paved streets.

Skateboard parks are making a comeback after a decade of decline. Just last year, two skateboard parks opened in Omaha --

"... skateboarding is a special kind of madness. It's a combination of balance, technique, power, knowledge, love, hate, respect and fear -- instinctive perception gained only through repeated contact."

-- David Hackett in Thrasher magazine

Eat Concrete and Shredder.

In Lincoln, the Clyde Malone Community Center will be hosting a new skate park with three ramps or half-pipes. Numerous smaller ramps can be found in several back yards throughout Lincoln and Omaha, much to the chagrin of some neighbors.

The popularity of skating has grown tremendously over the past three years, and it appears that this is only the beginning.

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The store is small, with barely

enough room for the eight customers to view the merchandise. Outside, topless skaters practice hand plants, ollies and other feats which defy gravity and sanity.

Inside, dozens of brilliantly painted skateboard decks line the walls, competing for space with posters of skaters arcing through the air, seemingly oblivious to gravity.

Phil Burcher and Scott Bouwens have owned Precision Skateboard Sales at 19th and O streets for almost three years.

Burcher refers to the store as "the only real skateboard shop in Lincoln."

Several other stores in Lincoln sell skateboard equipment, but only Precision specializes in such products, including decks, bearings, rails, clothing and pads.

Burcher said he and Bouwens have already outgrown the store and are looking for a new, bigger location. Limited display area has been the biggest constraint on the store's sales.

If the store is moved, Precision will carry more skating equipment and much more clothing. Burcher said the store may also start selling used equipment in the new location.

The store now sells a number of skateboard-oriented maga-

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