

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CLASSIFIEDS, 7B SPORTS, 1B
COMICS, 5B TALK, 7A
NATION, 8A TELEVISION, 6B
OBITUARIES, 4A WORLD, 8A



TODAY'S WEATHER:
HIGH 81, LOW 55



COPYRIGHT 2007
MEDIA GENERAL OPERATIONS, INC.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
VOL. 132 ISSUE 274

Downhillbillies ready for 'uphill battle'

Skaters hope events' success will give sport a positive image

BY BRAD NORMAN

WNORMAN@STATESVILLE.COM

With skateboards in hand, the four-person group headed to the car — license plate, Quebec — and piled in slowly.

They pulled out of the parking lot, stopping only to take one last look at the cone-lined course.

And with that, they pulled out of sight, saying so long to Statesville.

The 2007 World Championships of Slalom Skateboarding ended Sunday, and the skaters who congregated and competed all weekend dispersed and went back home, wherever that may be.

"We had a great time," said Darren Holt, a Statesville resident and member of the Downhillbillies. "I heard very minimal com-

plaints, and you can't hold any event, much less a world championship, without any complaints.

"Ultimately, I'd say it was epic."

Some skateboarders were from North Carolina, while others came from California and Texas.

Others, from Sweden and England, flew across the Atlantic Ocean. And there were a lot from Colorado — both amateurs and professionals.

"Colorado is kind of a mecca for slalom skateboarding," said Zak Maytum, a 16-year-old. "I loved Statesville. It was a great place for slalom boarding."

Maytum, at only 16, makes his own gear and products that several riders used.

"I'm kind of a mad scientist when it comes to that," he said with a grin.

Kyle McLaren was one of those who donned Maytum's gear and used his products.

McLaren, 12, has been skating for about six years and may have defined the word "toughness" at Sunday's race.



2006 defending tight slalom downhill champion Ramon Konigs-hausen races to get into the final round during Sunday's event.

See **SKATERS**, Page 4A

ALLISON
PHILLIPS /
NEWS@STATESVILLE.COM