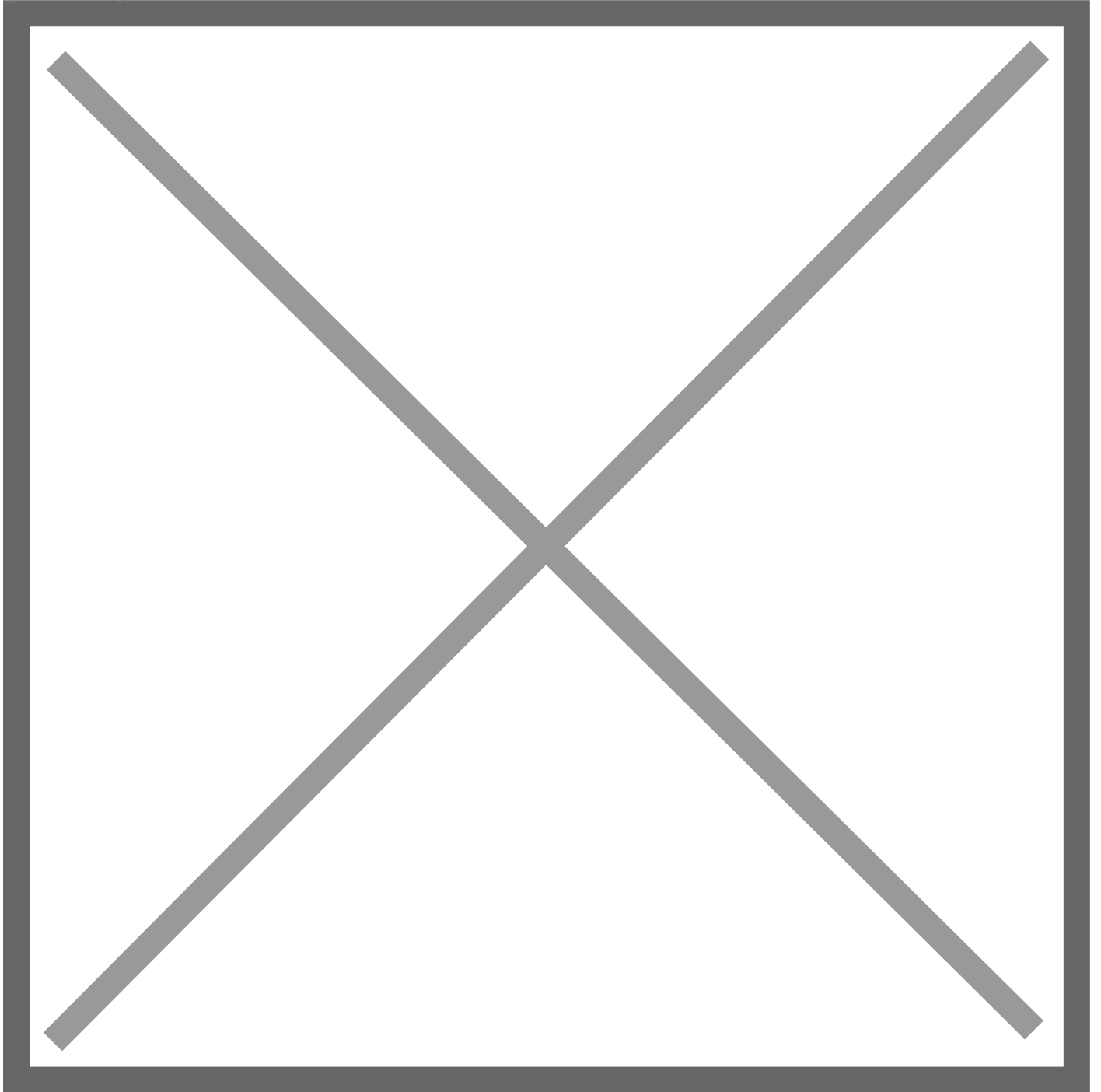


Louie Vito Is Focused on His Next Destination: Beijing 2022

November 24, 2021

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Team Toyota athlete [Louie Vito](#) grew up in central Ohio, learning to snowboard at a resort with only a 300-foot vertical. Today, Vito has been a professional snowboarder for almost 20 years — and has solidified himself as one of the most well-known names in the sport.

“Central Ohio was not exactly a mecca for snowboarding,” Vito says. “I’ve ridden landfills turned into ski mountains. Still, over half my life, I’ve been a professional snowboarder. I love the people, I love the culture, everything about it. It’s definitely a part of who I am.”

Vito competed in the Olympic Winter Games Vancouver 2010 where he placed fifth in the men’s halfpipe. He’s also a four-time Grand Prix overall halfpipe champion and a two-time Dew Cup overall halfpipe champion. He’s been supported by Toyota (also a founding sponsor of the Winter Dew Tour) for about 10 years.

“There’s nobody that’s been on (Team Toyota) longer than me, that’s for sure,” he says. “Watching Toyota grow and get into the Olympic and Paralympic space has been great. You get to be around all different types of athletes — it’s like a family and I’m very thankful to be a part of it.”

When training in Salt Lake City, Utah, the snowboarder drives his Toyota Tundra Platinum to help him through the snow. Now, the seasoned athlete is gearing up for the season and what he hopes will be his second Olympic Winter Games.

“As far as nerves go with the Olympics, I feel pretty confident going back,” he says. “Between 2010 to now, there’s a lot that’s different for me. There’s been highs and lows and everything in between. But what’s great is that you can constantly evolve as a snowboarder, and the sport rewards you for it because it’s constantly changing.”

A Hometown Hero

Vito originally started skiing at a very young age, but he and his father switched to snowboarding when he was five or six. The pair developed a love for the sport around the same time, something Vito credits for helping him get as much time on the snow as possible.

“I lucked out because my dad developed such a passion for snowboarding before I did, so whenever I wanted to go, he would be down,” he says. “We rode all over the Midwest because my dad loved it so much. We were always stoked to ride something new.”

The Vito’s attended the Windells Snowboarding Camp at Mount Hood when the young snowboarder was eight years old. That’s where he first learned about the United States of America Snowboard and Freeski Association amateur series, and that he could compete in the contest in Ohio. But, according to Vito, the short Midwest season made it hard to compete with kids from the West or Northeast, so he was always middle of the pack — until the eighth grade. That’s when he started attending the Stratton Mountain School in Vermont.



“I think the wildest part is the fact that what I am good at is halfpipe,” he says. “Halfpipes [where I grew up] are, and especially were back then, nothing like what people out West have.”

Although Vito hit his stride in Vermont, and currently trains out West, he will always love his home state. Since 2003, he has hosted the Louie Vito Rail Jam for Charity at his home resort, Mad River Mountain in Zanesfield, Ohio. Instead of being an event with a monetary entry fee, the Rail Jam is a canned food drive for local food banks. Vito says the event supports two causes: Snowboarding expenses for young children and food pantries with low food stocks following the holiday season.

“It mainly started as a way to give back to the community,” he says. “The resort helped shape me into the snowboarder, the person, I am. It’s a great way to bring the community together and support not only kids snowboarding, but also the surrounding area. It’s been important for me because I’m so proud to be from Ohio.”

Constantly Moving Forward

Since Vancouver, Vito has reached the podium in 22 of the last 25 major snowboarding contests. Off the snow, he’s excelled at sports broadcasting. He is the first-ever athlete to both co-host and compete in the X Games at the same time.

“Snowboarding has opened up so many doors for me,” he says. “I’ve gotten to work with a lot of great people while broadcasting, including some of my mentors who are hosts and commentators. It’s fun to keep pushing yourself and learn something new.”

Vito believes that being self-motivated is a big part of competing, especially in a sport like snowboarding which is changing every day. Tricks are constantly evolving, and when an athlete has been in the sport for as long as he has, they can’t get complacent.

“I love to push myself every day in snowboarding, in fitness, in life,” he says. “Whatever it is, you try to be better than you were the day before. I want to enjoy the moment, but every time I’m on the mountain I ask myself, ‘What do I want to accomplish today? How am I going to get better?’”

After an event, Vito says sometimes his friends and family will call him out for not smiling on the podium. It’s not that he’s not happy about his results: In his head, he’s already looking toward the next event. And now, that’s Beijing 2022.

“I’m sticking with a plan and just trying to chip away at my goals and keep moving forward,” he says. “That’s what works best for me — one step at a time. I don’t really get stressed out. It is what it is. I can only control what I can control and focus on that, then I just go from there.”