

## View for a skimboarder's dream

**New Webcam gives live conditions at skimboarding's renowned Aliso Beach location.**

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By Ashley Breeding

Victoria Skimboards recently introduced the "Vic Cam," a video camera that provides live footage of Aliso Beach on the company's website.

The purpose of the camera is to allow skimboarders to view weather and ocean conditions without physically going to the beach, General Manager of Victoria's Trigg Garner said.

He said the camera was installed less than three weeks ago, but the site has already received a multitude of hits.

Aliso's topography makes it one of the most popular skimboarding locations around.

"It's a world-renowned spot," Garner said. "The mountains drop into the water, which creates a shore break perfect for skimboarding. The cove sets a lot of different swell directions too."

The Vic Cam is the first video camera dedicated to skimboarding. And these innovators are not giving away their secret location. "It's a test project for the whole industry," Garner said.

The company plans to launch the camera on [earthcam.com](http://earthcam.com) in the near future, which will expand the view to all beachgoers, not just skimboarders.

Garner hopes this will serve as an advertisement for the sport and encourage more people to try skimboarding.

"We want more people to enjoy what we're enjoying," he said.

Although the exact history cannot be traced, it is believed that skimboarding was born in Laguna Beach in 1920.

Old photographs and artwork depict riders skimming on homemade plywood boards.

Over the years, the activity has grown into a competitive sport, which now hosts eight major U.S. competitions each year, and several local events in numerous locations.

Tex Haines, a Laguna native and avid skimboarder, founded Victoria Skimboards in 1976, where he would revolutionize the entire industry. Haines is excited about the Vic Cam.

"The Vic Camera can be incredibly addicting," Haines said. "One can easily see the number of skimmers on the berm, the swell direction, and the state of the shorebreak, whether it is sunny or foggy, parking lot crowded or not. Combine that with our tide information, and any skimmer can very accurately plan his escape from work to coincide with great conditions. Just one more great innovation from the folks at Victoria, still a few moves ahead after 32 years."

He added: "Anyone on the Internet inquiring for images of Laguna Beach will be directed to our camera website. The mecca of skimboarding has made it to the global stage. So when you visit Aliso, smile, wave to the camera, you're live all over the world."

The company was named after Haines' favorite hangout — Victoria Beach. "The skimboard industry began with the creation of Victoria Skimboards," Garner said.

The boards, which were originally manufactured from wood, are now made with various types of fiberglass and are designed using aerospace technology to increase durability and maneuverability.

"The newer boards are stronger, lighter and float you farther," Garner said.

With the vast growth in popularity of the sport, the company constantly aims to improve board construction to accommodate new maneuvers and tricks performed in the water.

"We're always working hard to keep everything going for the industry," Garner said.

The Vic Cam will broadcast the 2008 West Coast Championship competition at Aliso on July 26 and 27.

The event draws in skimboarders from all over the world — Chile, Japan, France and Australia to name a few, and will feature 60 pros and 80 amateur boarders.

