



At The Nines in Crans-Montana, Switzerland, Japanese freestyle snowboarder Hiroto Ogiwara landed the world's first backside 2160. He did six full rotations on his snowboard.

The Nines is a biannual freestyle skiing and snowboarding event that **alternates** between winter and summer events. Some of the world's top athletes participate in six days of unique action on specially built jumps that produce a spectacular show full of tricks and moves that **defy** gravity.

16-year-old Ogiwara initially planned to try and land a backside 1800 that he was unable to do the previous day. When he accomplished that quicker than he expected, he decided toward **progression**. Five attempts later, Ogiwara landed snowboarding's first-ever backside 2160.

Japanese snowboarder Reira Iwabuchi also completed a world first as the first female frontside triple 1260, which is three and a half rotations.

Difficult words: **alternate** (to happen repeatedly), **defy** (to go against something), **progression** (development towards an improved situation or state).

**Discussion Questions****Topic Talk**

1. Define the following words: *alternate*, *defy* and *progression*
2. What is The Nines? And where was the last event held?
3. Who was the snowboarder that landed the first backside 2160?
4. How many rotations does backside 2160 consist of?
5. Why did Hiroto Ogiwara decide to do a backside 2160?
6. After how many attempts did Ogiwara succeed in the backside 2160?
7. At the same event, who was the first female to complete a frontside triple 1260?

Express Your Thoughts

1. Had you heard of The Nines before? How popular is this sporting event in your country?
2. Does your country have representatives for The Nines annually?
3. How many skiers and snowboarders have brought honor to your country from different international sporting events?
4. Does your government support athletes in any way, for example financially, to take part in these kinds of events?