

magazine coverage

Transworld Skateboarding

1997

Chad Muska Pro Spotlight.

The logo consists of the letters 'E' and 'S' written in a stylized, cursive script. The 'E' is positioned above the 'S', and they are connected at the top.

TRANSWORLD

SKATEBOARDING



> **TONY HAWK** **PRO SPOTLIGHT** <

HEALTH WEST
HEALTH WEST
HEALTH WEST
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HEALTH WEST

TIME AWAY
PARKING FOR
SUPERIOR
PROFESSIONAL BUILDING
PARKING
VEHICLES WILL BE TOWED
EXCEPT BY PERMIT

RESERVED FOR
HANDICAPPED

RESERVED FOR THE USE OF
HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH
FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL
LAW. VIOLATORS WILL BE
PROSECUTED. NO PARKING
EXCEPT BY PERMIT.
NO PARKING 8:00 A.M. TO
5:00 P.M. MONDAY THROUGH
FRIDAY.

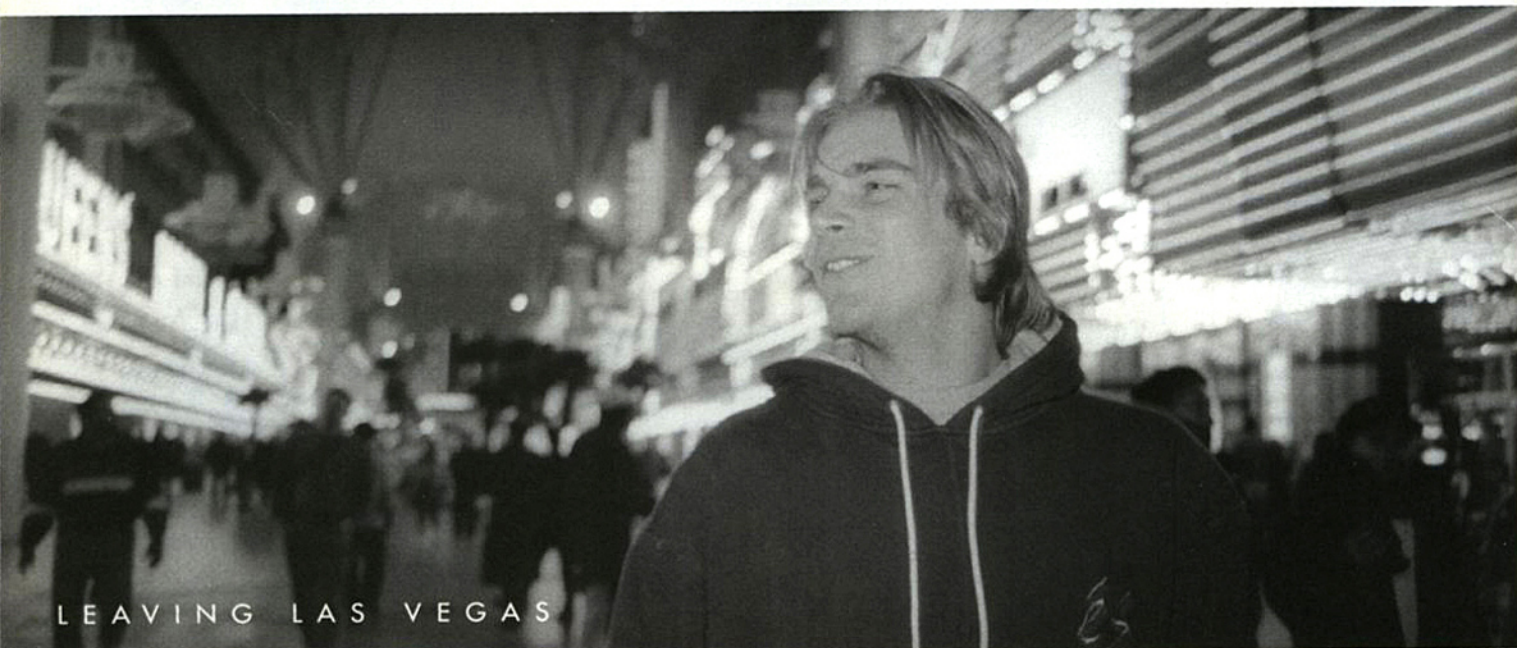
OCTOBER 1997

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> **MATT BEACH** > **AUSTRALIA** > **MIAMI** > **LOUISIANA** > **BALTIMORE**

C H A D M U S K A



LEAVING LAS VEGAS



P R O S P O T L I G H T

AT NINE O'CLOCK ON A SUNNY SATURDAY MORNING, CHAD MUSKA AND I ARE PLOWING THROUGH THE MOJAVE DESERT ON A MISSION TO LAS VEGAS, NEVADA TO FINISH CHAD'S PRO SPOTLIGHT. WE'VE CHOSEN LAS VEGAS NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT'S THE CITY HE ESCAPED TO START THE LIFE HE LEADS NOW, BUT ALSO DUE TO THE AIR OF RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOWN DUBBED "SIN CITY."

HE'S SITTING IN THE PASSENGER SEAT OF MY CAR, GHETTO BLASTER IN

HAND AND A SHOEBOX FULL OF TAPES AT HIS FEET. IN THE FEW YEARS I'VE KNOWN CHAD, HE'S NEVER TALKED MUCH ABOUT HIS PAST, BUT AS I THROW HIM SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT WHO HE IS, HIS LIFE STORY SLOWLY BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE.

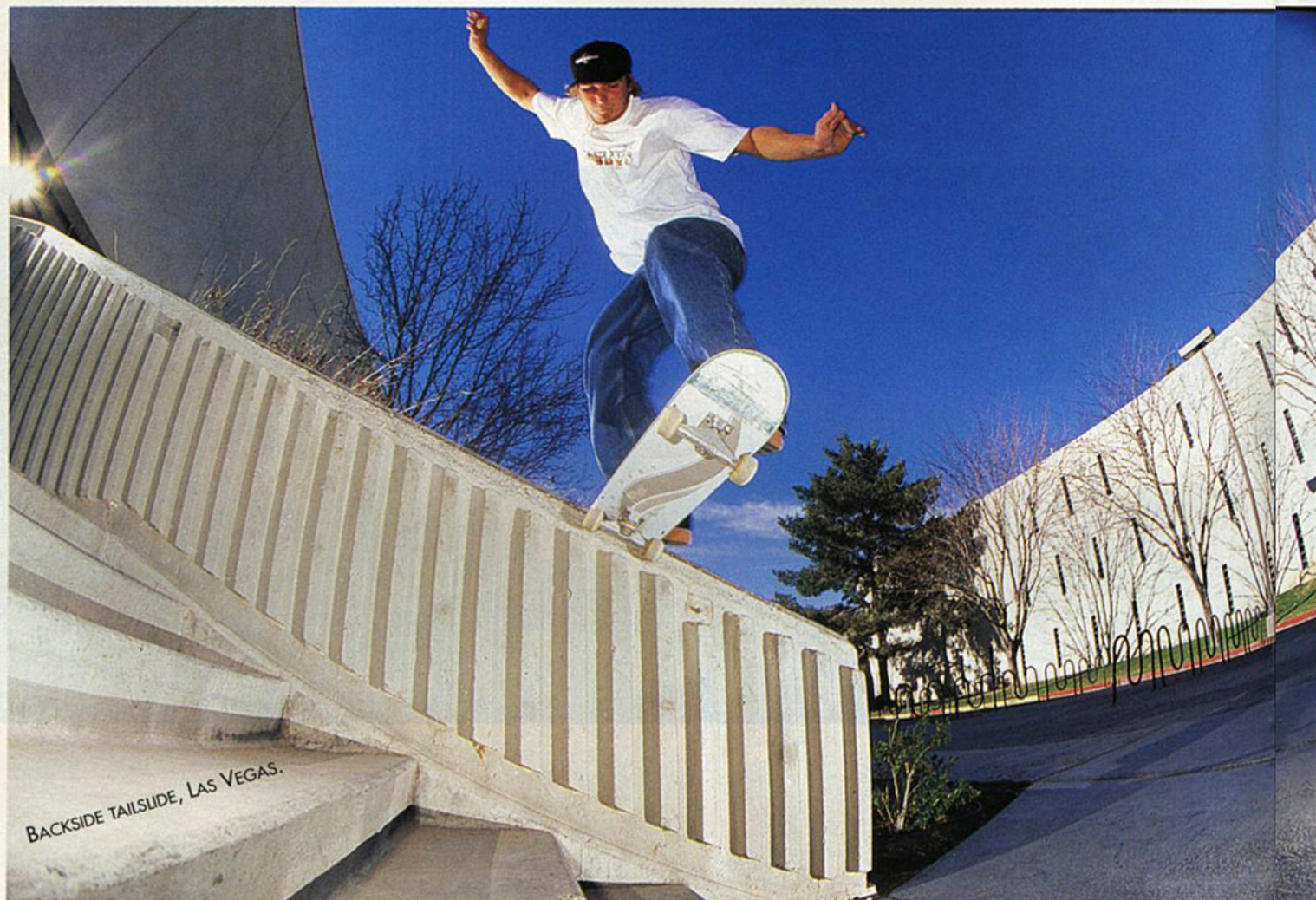
AFTER A STOP FOR GAS, A MICRO-CASSETTE RECORDER IS BROUGHT OUT AND SWITCHED ON. AT FIRST CHAD SEEMS A BIT APPREHENSIVE, BUT ONCE HE GETS INTO THE RHYTHM OF PUTTING HIS LIFE INTO WORDS, THE INTIMIDAT-

ING PRESENCE OF THE TAPE RECORDER IS FORGOTTEN. CHAD STARTS TO TALK.

AN HOUR LATER, ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF LAS VEGAS CITY LIMITS, THE TAPE RECORDER SQUEAKS, THEN, WITH A LOUD SNAP, COMES TO A STOP AS THE TAPE REACHES ITS END. THE END OF AN INTERVIEW IS ALWAYS A RELAXING MOMENT, THE TENSION OF PLAYING INTERVIEWER AND INTERVIEWEE MYSTERIOUSLY AND SUDDENLY GONE.

THE FOLLOWING STORY

IS
CHAD
MUSKA'S.



BACKSIDE TAILSIDE, LAS VEGAS.

OHIO

I was born in Ohio and lived there for a couple years with my mom and dad. My parents broke up when I was three. My dad drove his Harley out to California; he went out there to stay with his brother. I stayed with my mom—things got crazy.

We moved to Philadelphia, then Delaware, then New Jersey—all over that area. We went from house to house, and my mom was getting all crazy with drugs and stuff. I was so young, I didn't know anything else. That's what I thought life was like, so I wasn't really tripping on it.

Finally, things got so crazy my mom moved

back in with my dad. By that time he was in Phoenix, Arizona. I was in the third grade. I didn't have any really deep friendships, because I was always bouncing from area to area.

PHOENIX

I was kicking it in Phoenix, in this ghetto area—that's when I started skating. I used to ride my bike in this empty pool; all these skaters were always there. One day my bike got stolen, so I started skating. The first things I skated were pools—I can't even remember the names of the guys I started skating with.

When I started, I was skating pretty hard.

I could get tile and carve in the pool, but when I rode down the street, I'd have to pick my board up to go up curbs and around corners.

There were rad street skaters in Arizona, and I started hanging out with some of them, skating the streets every day. My parents let me drain our backyard pool. Twelve years old is when I started getting crazy. My dad would take me to Tower Skatepark on his Harley, drop me off, and I'd skate there all day.

LAS VEGAS

After a while things started getting crazy again with my parents, and I was getting in



HIP OLLIE, LONG BEACH.



50-50, CARSON RAIL.



trouble with the law. Finally, my parents broke up and my mom moved to Las Vegas. My dad stayed in the house they had been trying to buy for a while, but he ended up losing it.

The park closed, so I started skating the streets a lot more. I wasn't really living with my dad, I was staying with friends. But I'd see him once a week, and try to hit him up for some money.

I almost never went to school; instead I used to skate with my friend Mike. The gangsters at our school used to trip on us and try to beat us up because we wore baggy clothes. So, we used to skate the H-Banks from seven in the morning until school finished.

After a while I told my dad I was going to live with my mom in Las Vegas. But I ended up meeting Paul Smith and Ryan Fabry [in Vegas], and I moved in with them. I bounced back and forth between Arizona and Vegas for a while. I'd call my dad, and he'd send me 60 bucks a month, that would get spent on all the homies.

I scrounged and ate as I could. Top Ramen—three for a dollar. Twenty-five-cent hot dogs from AM/PM. I dug quarters from the couch every morning—three quarters would be three hot dogs. Tap water and hot dogs. Sometimes I'd get lucky and find enough to go to Wendy's.

Paul Smith's parents were rich. When he was a kid, they sent him to this Mormon work camp and he got messed up; they kinda owed him, so they paid all the rent. I was the little mascot of the house. I'd bail out when I was starving—my dad would get me a ticket to go stay with him in Arizona, but I'd always bail back to Vegas after a while.



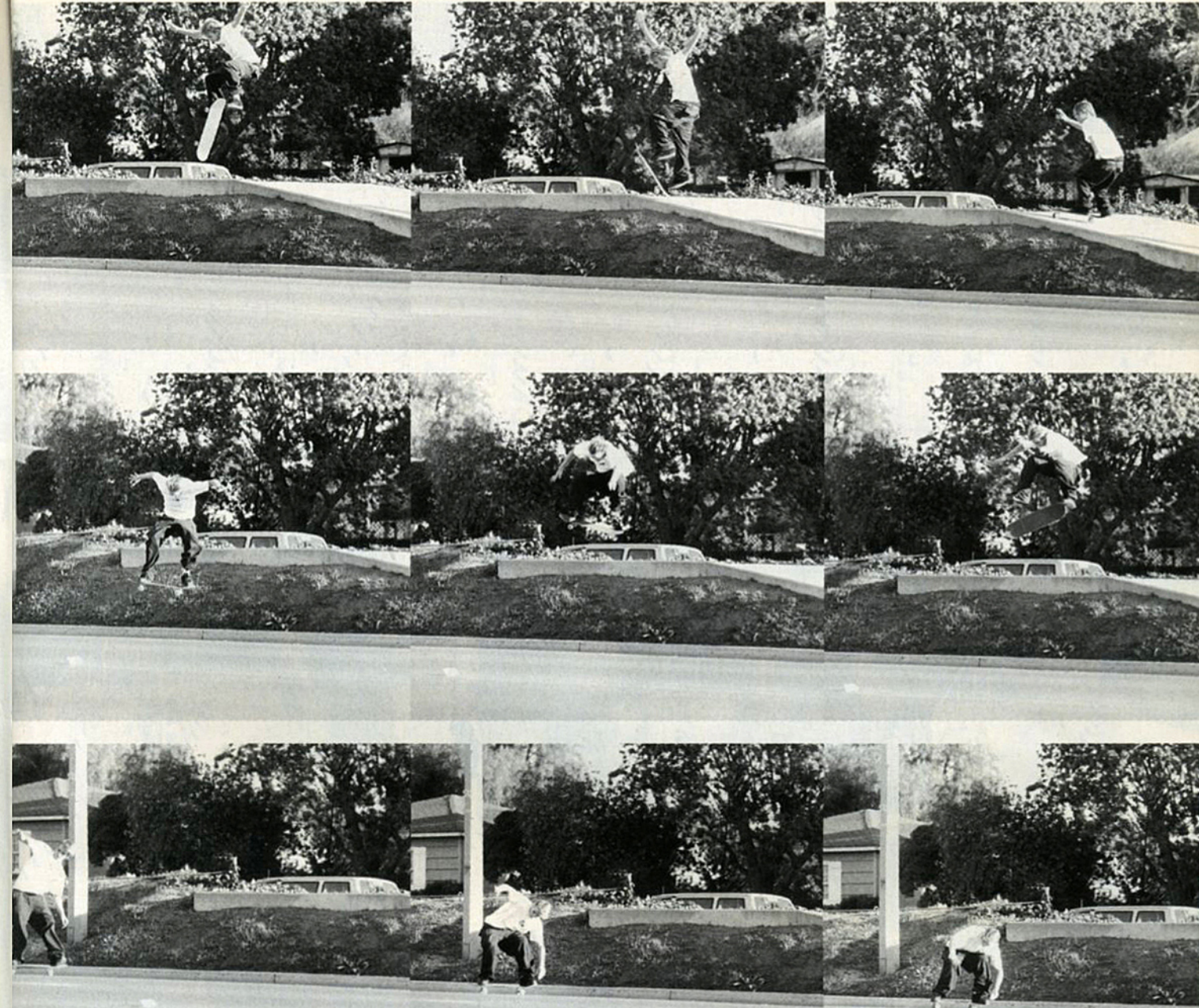
OLLIE TO FIVE-0, SANTA ANA.

C H A D
M U S K A

P R O
S P O T
L I G H T



LIPSLIDE, LAS VEGAS.



FRONTSIDE FLIP, SAN DIEGO.

The first time I went to California was from Arizona. We went to some punk-rock shows in L.A.—Fear, and some other bands—we partied and skated. I was so stoked on California—I loved it—the weather, everything. I knew I didn't belong in Arizona or Las Vegas.

CALIFORNIA

At fifteen I was skating the best I ever had. I was doing tricks I can't even do now. But I broke my ankle, and it took two years of skating out of my life. I fully thought my skating was over. So, I got a job with my mom's boyfriend—I needed money. It was about this time that everyone in the house I was staying in started to lose touch.

I moved back in with my mom. She lived in this trailer park in a ghetto outside of Vegas. I was working in construction, driving a forklift from six in the morning until six at night in the middle of the desert. I'd go home at night, get faded, and paint my room. Life was hard. Then I got busted by the cops for the third time, and it looked like I was going down.

I could either show up for this court date, get 10,000 dollars in fines and five months of community service, or get a ride to California with these chicks and try and get my shit going. I had saved up three grand. I was

sitting there one night thinking about what to do. Later, I called those girls and was all, "Let's go to California."

MISSION BEACH

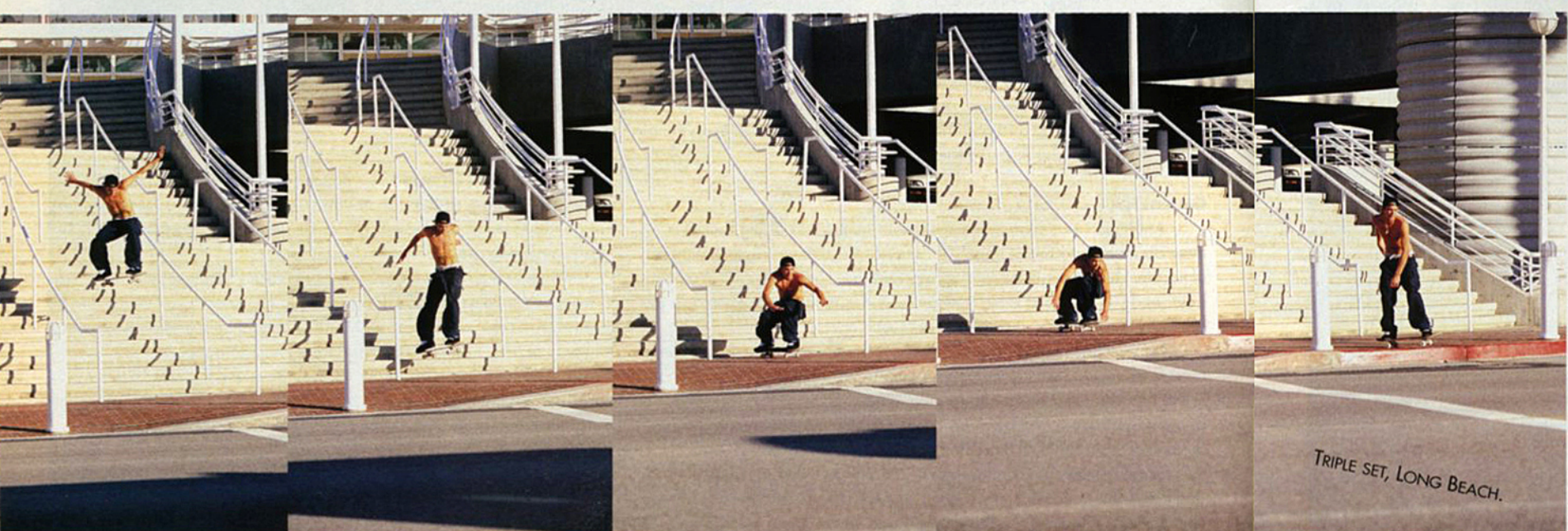
I got dropped off at Mission Beach [in San Diego] with a backpack, some headphones, and my skateboard. I was just sitting there, tripping out on the scene at the beach. My ankle was still pretty messed up, so I was just ollieing around.

When I came to California my goal wasn't to get sponsored, it was to work and be happy in California, and to not work in Las Vegas and be miserable in the heat. I came with 3,000 dollars and ended up spending it in two weeks. I partied and tried to get in with people.

When the money was gone, I didn't have shit. I started sleeping on the beach. Some nights I had a place to stay, but most of the time I just passed out in a park. Those were crazy times.

HILLCREST

I eventually got sponsored by G&S; G&S turned into Maple. So, I was an amateur for Maple. I was just partying on the beach, getting wasted



every night, and scraping money together. Pretty soon my ankle started to feel better. The beach had pretty much trapped me, so I moved to Hillcrest with a bunch of my homies.

I wanted to start to do bigger stuff on my skateboard. I've always done big stuff, probably because of Paul Smith's influence. I was already doing handrails—then I saw what Pat [Duffy] was doing, and that got me hyped up.

I was staying in Hillcrest, and one day Jamie Thomas came over. He watched some footage I had, and we started skating together. Then, just when I thought there was no way I'd ever go pro, things started coming together. Jamie introduced me to photographers and started the ball rolling.

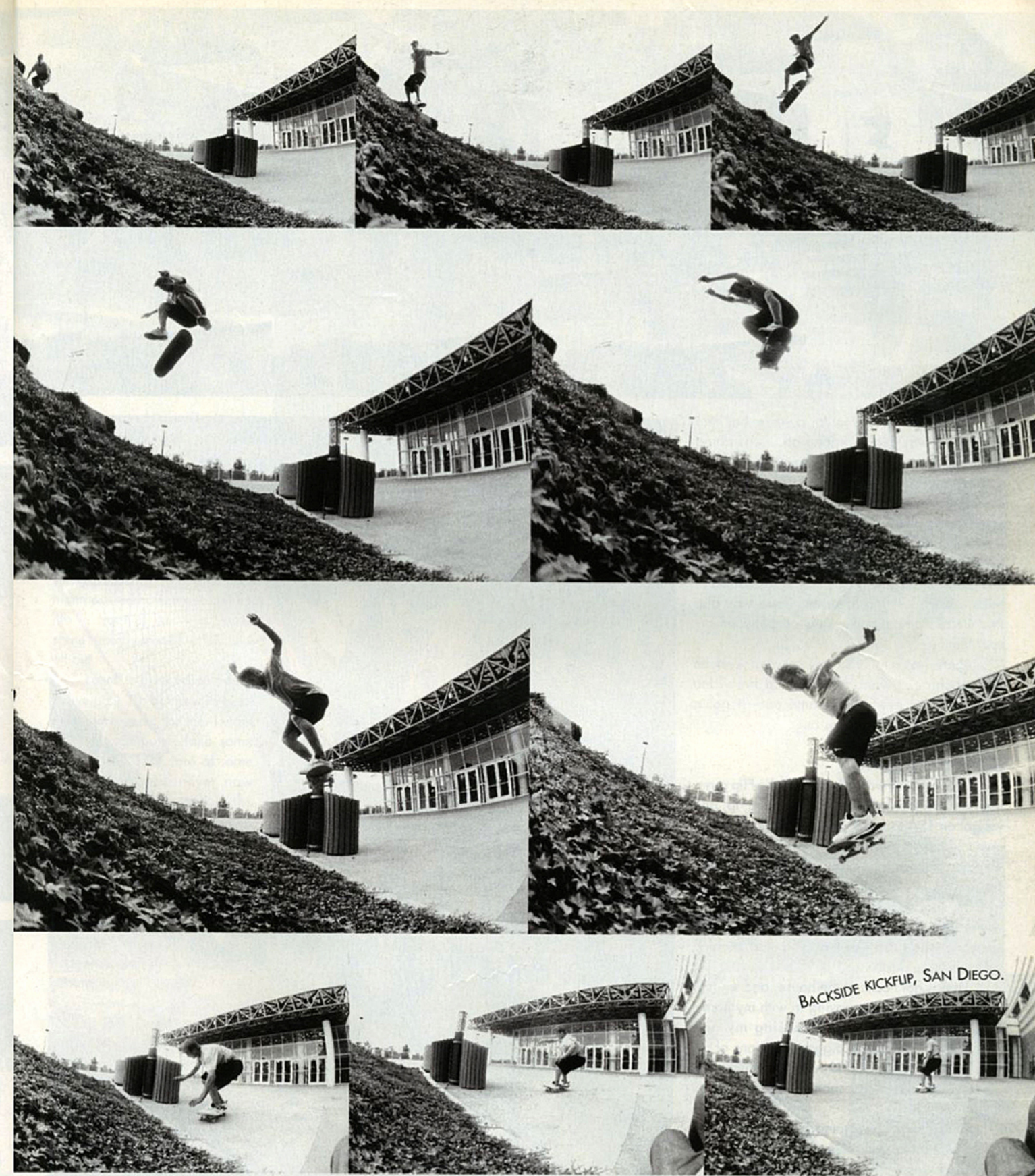
Photographers are scared to shoot with people they don't know. A skater



TRIPLE SET, LONG BEACH.



NOSESIDE, LOS ANGELES.



BACKSIDE KICKFLIP, SAN DIEGO.

could be super rad, but if a photographer hasn't heard of him, they won't go shoot with him. A lot of real good guys aren't seen because of that.

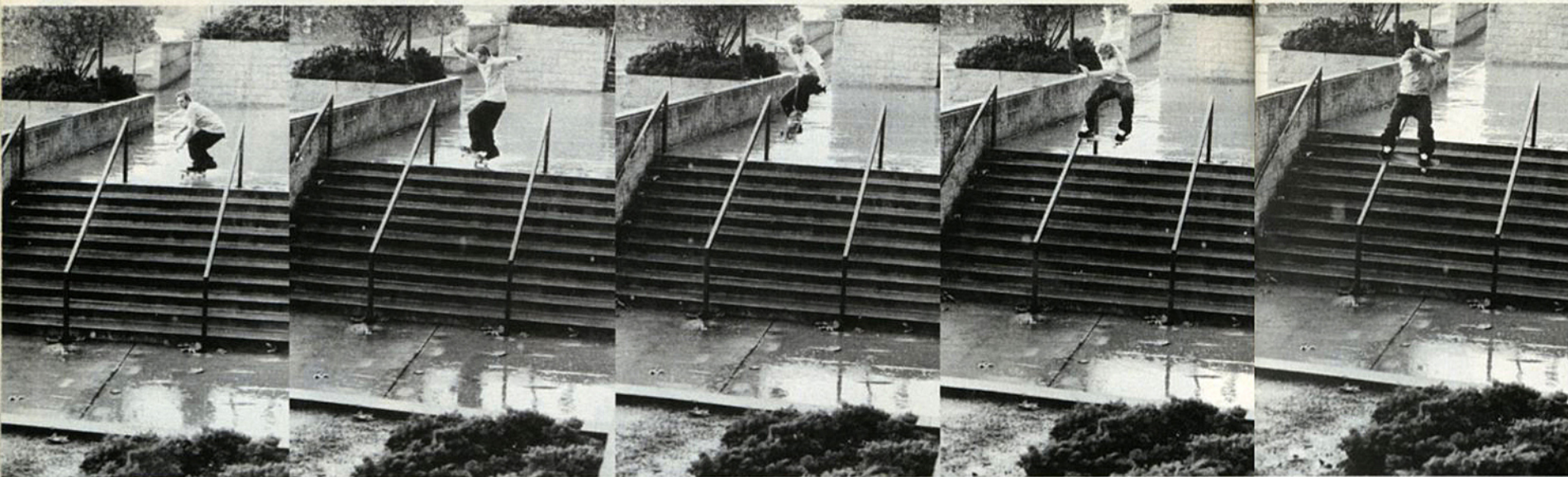
My name was getting out there, but it still wasn't happening for me. Maple was a rad company, but it was pretty new. I was getting a hundred dollars a month from them as an am—I was stoked then, but looking back, I got used.

So, I quit Maple and Jamie got me on Toy Machine. Toy Machine was a rad company, too. I was stoked that I would go pro someday, but

time passed and they were lagging. I needed the money—I knew I was ready, but Jamie thought I wasn't. I was getting mad trying to live on a hundred dollars a month, and I couldn't ask my dad for any more money.

I was bumming so hard, I started going to raves, hanging with this crazy scene, and doing a lot of drugs. The drugs I was doing messed my back up and started slowing me down. I had to get out. I ended up staying with Ed Templeton in Huntington Beach for a while.

Finally, I went pro. Toy Machine paid me 750 dollars a month,



FRONTSIDE TAILSLIDE TO FAKIE IN THE RAIN.

which, I thought, was a lot for a while, but then I realized I was getting ripped off. I was doing so much for them, and not getting much in return. Money isn't everything, but when the owners of companies are becoming millionaires off your name, you should be getting something back.

The more I hung out with Jamie and Ed, the more I realized I was a totally different person than them. I like those guys a lot—they're my homies—but we were just too different. There was also this weird competition going on between me and Jamie.

There was a lot of stress in my last week on Toy Machine. I went off on Ed at the video premiere and everything came out—it got a little hectic. After that it was over.

HUNTINGTON BEACH

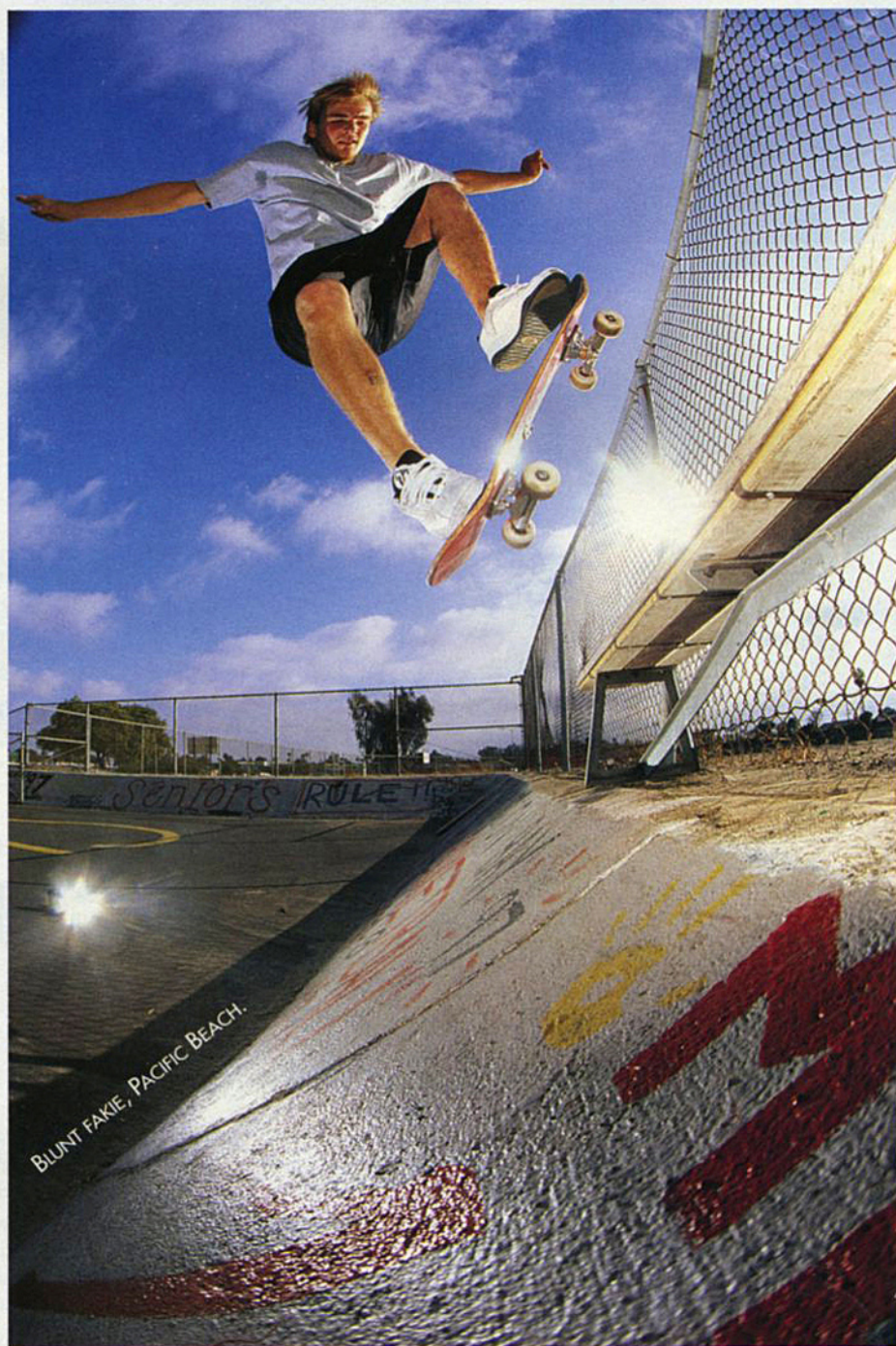
When I lived with Ed, I met all the Flip guys. Me and Tom [Penny] ended up hooking up, and we got on TSA together. Miguel [Cabada, TSA's owner] had a room for rent, so we moved in—we raged at this pad for six months. We went to Japan, skated every day, and became good friends. Tom was my favorite person to skate with—we pushed each other. If you skate with someone who's rad like that, you start pushing yourself.

Things got hectic at the house, and we had to get out. I ended up moving in with my homie Kenta in Pacific Beach. Choosing my new sponsor was one of the biggest decisions of my life, and I wasn't trying to rush into anything. I wanted it to be the last sponsorship decision of my life.

For a month I just skated and worked out my options. Shorty's had offered me to be their first pro, but I was worried at first because it was a new company. The more I thought about it, though, the more I realized Shorty's is a very established company. Tony [Buyalos], the owner, is cool; he's my friend, not just some company owner. So I did it, and that's where I am.

COSTA MESA

I'm living on my own now, in Costa Mesa.



It's mellow, and I'm trying to take care of a lot of stuff, instead of partying every day. I still love to party, because that's me, but I need to take care of business. Before, I never thought about the future, but nowadays I do. I think about what I want to do after skateboarding—I'm still only nineteen and have the rest of my life in front of me. I just need some time by myself to figure it all out.

I used to think I didn't want to live past 30, but now I've got a lot more going for me. I want to get a computer, take some classes, and take care of some design stuff. You never now what's going to happen in the future. I never planned anything, it just kind of happened.

Life's crazy, the shit I see every day freaks me out. I'm so happy right now, I can't believe it. I always told my parents, "It's going to happen, it's going to happen." Now that it has, I'm getting my life together.

I want to thank: Jim and Tony at TSA. Don Brown, Steve Black, Pierre and Frank at Etnies. Skin and all the photographers who shot with me. Jamie Thomas for helping me out. Everyone at Shorty's. Donny Dietrich, Kenta, Minnick. All my friends in Arizona and Las Vegas. Miguel, stay strong, I'll see you soon—don't be getting crazy in there.

My shit's all about skating, chilling, partying, and living life to the fullest. I'm not gonna sweat nobody, and if anybody doesn't like that, it's cool. I'm just going to do my own thing.



CROOKED GRIND, LONG BEACH.

T R A N S W O R L D
SKATEBOARDING



M C U H S A K D A