



Milton Bradshaw, owner of Sierra Nevada Skateboards.

would expect a skateboarder to look like. ... When you look at me, you think, whose uncle is running this?"

His customers aren't shy about asking questions.

"They'll come in, and they have a Walmart board. And they say, 'Can you give me some new wheels? My board is really slow.' And I look at 'em, and some of these are plastic. Plastic trucks and everything. The real key is that they're so cheap that normal skateboard wheels won't work the bearings or anything that go in them. So, I have to turn around to the kid and say, 'I'm sorry, kid, but I can't fix your skateboard,' and then I have to explain it. I keep these complete skateboards on the wall. And they're a little bit more, but they can afford them, and they're real skateboards. So, when I say, I can't fix this one, but I have this one over here. And when they see the price, they usually do it, and I'm starting a skateboarder on his way. I'm not just fixing a problem to sell some wheels. ... I didn't introduce him to skateboarding—or her—but they got what they needed when they came and saw me. That's the important part."

But once his customers have the proper equipment, he's happy to tutor them on maintenance and repair.

"A lot of kids don't know how to put together their skateboard, so I get a chance to show them how to do that. And would they get that from Amazon or eBay?"

And he thinks skateboarding is due for another increase in popularity.

"Next year is the Olympics, and skateboarding is in the Olympics for the first time," Bradshaw said. "And we have a bunch of new people from California in Spanish Springs who are already welcoming to skateboarding. They're already acclimated to it. I figured rather than have them drive across town—they drive past me to go to work. We give a Tesla discount."

It's a different world for skateboarding than in the '80s when Bradshaw was starting out.

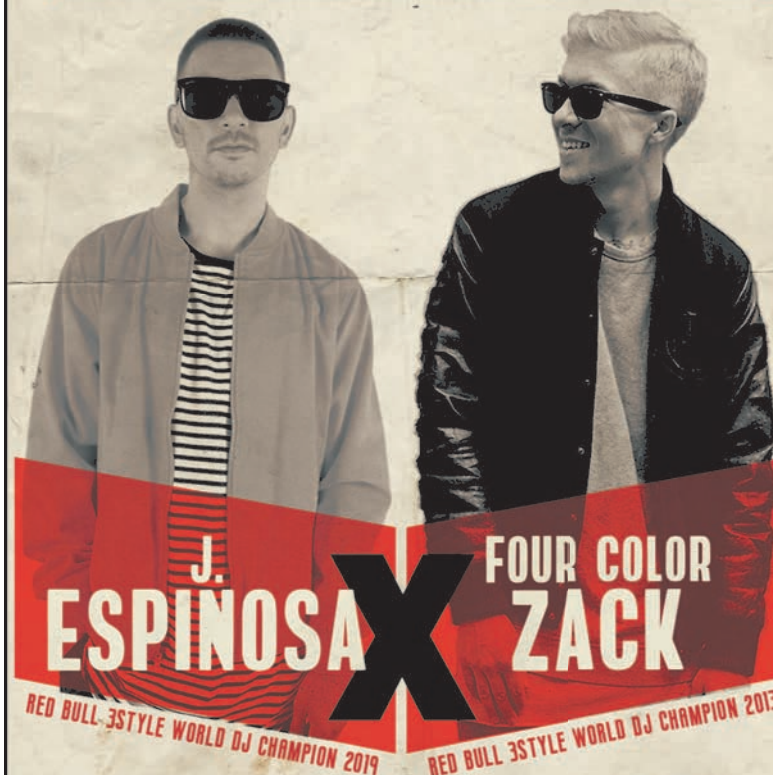
"It was illegal," he said. "I've gotten tickets for it and been arrested."

One remnant from that era is the "no skateboarding" sign posted above the entrance to his shop. It looks like it's been there for 20 or 30 years. □

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