

ESPN to conduct review after Caleb Moore's death

Rachel George, USA TODAY Sports | 8:20a.m. EST February 1, 2013



(Photo: RJ Sangosti, Denver Post via Getty Images)

The death of snowmobiler Caleb Moore on Thursday following his crash in the X Games has raised questions about the safety of the event. They're questions ESPN, which owns the event, plans to address, although the company did not elaborate on how that would happen.

Moore, 25, died a week after his Jan. 24 crash during the snowmobile freestyle competition in Aspen, Colo. He was initially diagnosed with a concussion, but he had emergency surgery for a heart contusion and suffered a "brain complication" over the weekend.

His death is the first in the X Games since the winter event began in 1997.

In a statement released on Thursday, ESPN expressed its condolences for the Moore family while promising to review safety.

"As a result of this accident, we will conduct a thorough review of this discipline and adopt any appropriate changes to future X Games," the statement read.

RELATED: [Caleb Moore dies from injuries sustained in crash \(http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/olympics/2013/01/31/caleb-moore-dies-after-injuries-x-games-crash-snowmobile/1880587/\)](http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/olympics/2013/01/31/caleb-moore-dies-after-injuries-x-games-crash-snowmobile/1880587/)

ESPN did not respond to requests for further comment about that review. On Sunday, Scott Guglielmino, senior vice president of programming and the X Games, said that a formal review is conducted after each X Games and that organizers are in constant talk with athletes about safety.

The X Games expanded to six cities worldwide this year, with the next stop in Tignes, France, in March.

Moore's death highlights the extreme, if rare, consequence of inherently dangerous sports. His was one of four major snowmobile crashes during the games. Colten Moore, Caleb's younger brother, separated his pelvis in the same competition. On Sunday, a spectator was hurt fleeing from a runaway snowmobile that left the course.

"Any action sport property is always sort of operating on the edge anyway," said Dany Berghoff, vice president of business development for 21 Marketing, a global sponsorship sales and marketing consultancy.

"I think that thrill is always part of the property," he added. "I think they're always edging a fine line of safety and providing those thrills to their fans."

It's a line the X Games has walked for years. Although there have been other deaths in action sports – most recently of freeskier Sarah Burke before the 2012 games – this is the first in an X Games, which is widely considered to be the premier event in the sport with the best courses.

"This kind of thing will have to have an effect because of what their insurance carriers will think going forward," said Chicago-based sports marketing consultant Marc Ganis. "And corporate lawyers at networks carrying this will be there saying, 'What are you doing?'"

"Where do you draw the line now? Now it's getting to that edge, especially when it comes to sports with motorized equipment."

Although Moore's death is a tragic example of what can go wrong, those in the sport point out that it is rare. Each snowmobiler takes risks, but usually not unnecessarily. The trick on which Moore was injured was one he had landed many times before.

"It's a bit of a reality check," said Aaron Cooke, executive director of the Athlete Recovery Fund. The ARF provides



financial assistance to injured BMX, freestyle moto and skate athletes, helping cover medical and sometimes funeral costs.

"Nobody wants to think about this outcome when they're trying these extreme tricks that they practice so hard," Cooke continued. "The fact that it happened on a visible stage like the X Games brings more attention to it, but it's very rare in these types of sports."

Rockstar Energy Drinks, which began sponsoring Moore when he began snowmobiling, and the Athlete Recovery Fund are helping cover the medical and funeral expenses. A Give Forward page created this week had raised more than \$31,000 by Thursday evening.

WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY [CLICK FOR COMPLETE COVERAGE](#)

WATCH GOLF'S GLOBAL MATCH PLAY

THE GOLF CLUB AT
DOVE MOUNTAIN, MARANA, AZ



accenture
Match Play
Championship