From elite athletes to Tahoe business owners

Snowboarder Ryan Williams is the brains behind the app Stomp Sessions. Photo/Provided

By Alexandra Spychalsky, Moonshine Ink

It’s no secret that Tahoe is rife with professional athletes, both current and retired, but it may surprise some to learn that a number of local businesses, from long-standing staples to new companies just taking off, have former elite athletes at the helm.

The decision to leave a professional run in a lifelong passion is not easy. Here are five athletes who all decided their successes needed to be measured in more than medals and magazine covers.

Kristin Krone stands in the construction zone that will soon be her new bakery, deep in discussion with her team. The white subway tiles gleam behind her as Krone ponders the best placement for the kitchen sink. Although she has owned Wild Cherries for 18 years, this is her first opportunity to design a space from scratch. And she is loving the new challenge.

Before she got into the coffee shop businesses, Krone was chasing gold on the U.S. Ski Team, traveling on the World Cup circuit, and competing in the 1988 and 1992 Olympics. In her later years on the team, however, she found herself pondering different careers at every turn, which she took as a sign that she was ready for a life off the snow.

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