

Jitloff's 5th in super combined his best finish in 2 years

By U.S. Ski Team

BANSKO, Bulgaria -- World Champion Ted Ligety of Park City matched his career best Audi FIS Alpine World Cup super combined result with fourth Saturday as the men's World Cup made its debut in Bansko.

Tim Jitloff of Reno was eighth for his best result in two years and Colby Granstrom of Lake Stevens, Wash., just missed scoring his first World Cup points finishing 31st despite posting the 15th fastest slalom run. Italian super G World champion Christof Innerhofer won as first run leader Jean-Baptiste Grange of France went out in the super G portion, which was run after the slalom due to forecasted fog.

Official results, Audi FIS Alpine World Cup, Bansko, Bulgaria, Super Combined

1. Christof Innerhofer, Italy, 2:23.87
2. Felix Neureuther, Germany, 2:23.88
3. Thomas Mermillod Blondin, France, 2:24.20
-
4. Ted Ligety, Park City, UT, 2:24.37
8. Tim Jitloff, Reno, NV, 2:24.78
31. Colby Granstrom, Lake Stevens, WA, 2:29.39
-

Did not start super G

Will Brandenburg, Spokane, WA

—

Did not finish slalom

Nolan Kasper, Warren, VT

Vonn wins World Cup downhill; Mammoth's Cook takes 5th

By Ski Racing News Service

ARE, Sweden – Lindsey Vonn of Vail looked like her World Cup downhill-winning self again today, taking her seventh victory of the season following three weeks of dealing with the symptoms of a concussion.

Vonn, who won a world championship silver medal in the downhill two weeks ago, kept a tight line down the 2731-meter Olympia course in tough, flat lit conditions to finish in one minute, 40.93 seconds, 0.13 seconds ahead of Slovenian Tina Maze in second.

“Today was tough, it was pretty dark and you had to be extremely clean to be fast – that’s a difficult combination,” said Vonn.

Overall leader and yesterday’s super combined winner, German Maria Riesch was 0.21 seconds back in third place to carefully stay on top of the standings by 176 points with 1416 points to Vonn’s 1240.

Vonn, the reigning Olympic champion in the discipline, maintains the downhill lead with 520 points over Riesch's 417. The duo have combined to win the past 15 World Cup downhills. Three World Cup downhills remain on this season's women's calendar as Vonn battles from behind for her fourth consecutive overall title.

Vonn's concussion, suffered in a training run fall on Feb. 2, threw her normal training and competition schedule out the window leading into the Garmisch-Partenkirchen World Championships. In the weeks that followed, Vonn was evaluated daily by doctors as her participation on the slopes was hit and miss depending on test results. After a sluggish, seventh-place performance in the opening super G, Vonn pulled out of the super combine between runs to continue resting. Days later she finished second in the downhill, then left the championships with the giant slalom and slalom still on the table, heading to a wellness hotel to prepare for the remainder of the World Cup season.

Today's victory takes 26-year-old Vonn's World Cup career total to an even 40, putting her fifth in the all time rankings, just one win behind still active Swede Anja Paerson (DNF today). It was her third win in Are.

Riesch, a double bronze medalist at her home championships in Garmisch, stepped up to her 13th World Cup podium of the season. She has had at least one top-three finish in all five disciplines.

Behind Vonn's victory, the U.S. women had a tremendous day.

Stacey Cook finished fifth after putting down an impressive run (1:41.99) in the No. 3 bib, taking the early lead and holding through the next eight racers until the top-ranked women were ushered in by Maze. It was Cook's second-best World Cup result ever since finishing fourth at Lake Louise in 2006. Cook gave credit for her best result in four years to some

western U.S. powder skiing.

“Last week I got to go home and free ski some powder in Mammoth, so I came back with just a really good feeling and really loving skiing,” said Cook, who had never been on the track before. “I just had a really positive attitude and tried to keep that freeskiing mentality that I had going in Mammoth here in Sweden.”

Recently minted world championship super G silver medalist Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley never quite found the right line and finished 11th, 1.51 seconds off the winning time. Leanne Smith and Laurenne Ross also found the points in 18, and 25th, respectively.

Today’s race was marred by the horrific crash of Swiss racer Nadja Kamer. High on the course, Kamer took a turn too wide and collided with the safety netting on the left side of the course, sending her somersaulting across the course, finally coming to rest in the right side fences. She was taken down in a ski patrol toboggan. The race was delayed for about 15 minutes. According to early reports, Kamer escaped with only bruising on her left wrist and hand and will be fitted with a cast.

South Tahoe attorney faces disciplinary action from State Bar

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe attorney Jordan Morgenstern faces

disciplinary action from the California State Bar.

"We would not have gone forward with (the) matter if there was not evidence of misconduct. We do not go forward on speculation and conjecture," Susan Kagan, deputy trial counsel for the State Bar, told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Jordan
Morgenstern

In the 12-page report, it details several instances where Morgenstern took money for work, held onto the money for months, didn't do work and didn't return money in a timely manner.

Common practice for an attorney is to set up a trust account for each client so money is not co-mingled.

In the December ruling, the State Bar Court of California recommended Morgenstern be on probation for two years. The state Supreme Court will have the final say, which usually takes four to six months after the Bar has made its decision.

According to Kagan, the Supreme Court rarely overturns the Bar's ruling.

If the court rules to discipline Morgenstern, the probation would begin 30 days later.

"What I admitted to was not providing clients with accounting as quickly (as I should have)," Morgenstern said. He said he agreed to a settlement because "I didn't want to continue to pay a lawyer and go through all the garbage they put you

through.”

Morgenstern said the disciplinary action is not newsworthy.

However, Kagan with the State Bar said, “We get a large number of complaints every year. Only a small number get to investigation and then an even smaller number to discipline.”

In a terse conversation with *Lake Tahoe News*, Morgenstern repeatedly bad-mouthed one of the people who brought allegations against him.

“I’m filing a restraining order against her today for what she is doing,” Morgenstern said Feb. 24 of Brenda Rogers.

Morgenstern and Rogers told *Lake Tahoe News* they plan to sue each other. Neither had anything nice to say about the other.

Report: Early childhood education helps economy

By Michael Martinez, Reno Gazette-Journal

A report that outlines the economic value of early childhood education was unveiled this week by staff from the Children’s Cabinet and school district officials.

Mike Pomi, Children’s Cabinet executive director, and others from the nonprofit group were joined by Washoe County schools Superintendent Heath Morrison and school district Trustee Estela Gutierrez and Gov. Brian Sandoval at the governor’s mansion in Carson City.

The report attempts to describe how the early childhood

education industry has become a significant component of Nevada's economic infrastructure and helps drive the economy, providing financial benefits in three primary ways.

Read the whole story

IHOP warming the syrup for National Pancake Day

In celebration of National Pancake Day, IHOP restaurants nationwide – including the one in South Lake Tahoe – will offer each guest a free short stack of buttermilk pancakes in an effort to raise awareness and funds for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

This year, IHOP is hoping to stack up more donations than before, with a goal to raise \$2.3 million, for a total of more than \$7.65 million in six years.

Diners will be asked to leave a little something behind. Tahoe donations will benefit the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals' programs at UC Davis Children's Hospital.

Pancake Day is March 1 from 7am-10pm.

Pancake Day is a tradition that dates back several centuries to when the English prepped for fasting during Lent. Strict rules prohibited the eating of all dairy products during Lent, so pancakes were made to use up the supply of eggs, milk, butter and other dairy products.

This year, IHOP's National Pancake Day will come one week early, as the popular annual campaign has evolved into a monthlong celebration that takes place during the month of

February. It will culminate with the free flapjack giveaway on March 1.

Study delves into life of hibernating bears

By Joe Palca, NPR

For the first time, scientists say they have been able to monitor a bear's vital signs continuously during a six-month period of hibernation. To their surprise, the researchers discovered that despite lowering its metabolism by 75 percent, a hibernating bear's internal temperature barely drops at all.

The bear study took place at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. The bears spent the winter in a hibernaculum – basically a big box. The researchers weren't sure whether the bears would be willing to spend the winter in this small, artificial cave.

"We anticipated they might just tear the place up or go on strike or something," says Brian Barnes, one of the authors of the new study. "But they actually showed very natural behavior of getting ready to hibernate. They curl up, they go to sleep. They begin to quiet their heart rate, slow their breathing and their metabolic rate plunges."

The fact that a bear could reduce its metabolism so much with such a small drop in temperature was a surprise. Barnes says two factors appear to be responsible. First, a bear has a lot of fat and thick fur, so it is well-insulated. Second, when a bear's internal temperature drops below about 90 degrees Fahrenheit (99 degrees is normal for a bear), it starts to

shiver. The shivering produces heat, and the bear's temperature rises a few degrees. This periodic shivering occurs throughout the winter.

Read the whole story

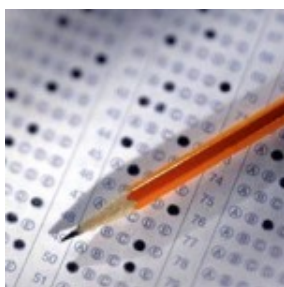
Educators grapple with necessity of mandated testing

By Kathryn Reed

Testing was going on this past week in many classrooms within Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

Nothing out of the ordinary about that.

And that is the problem for some educators. Testing seems to be more common than teaching.



Is education
in the United
States best
defined as No
Child Left
Untested?

Politics is a large part of the problem. It's people in

Washington, D.C., and Sacramento telling local school districts what to do. These people may not have been in a classroom since they were a student.

Superintendent Jim Tarwater says the powers that be ask districts what they want or need, districts respond, and the politicians do something else.

If he were in charge of the state or federal Education Department for a day, Tarwater said his first priority would be to measure schools on growth and not against one another.

"I would set up a plan so every child would have one-on-one computing from third grade up. Assessment would only be for growth and how to support kids, and I would not compare them to other kids," Tarwater said.

He would also eliminate the high school exit exam.

"They don't do that in college – take one test to see if you get a degree," Tarwater said.

Part of the problem is the federal No Child Left Behind, which is still in place even though President Obama has introduced Race to the Top to supersede his predecessor's education policy. NCLB mandates all students – including special ed and English learners – be at a proficient level by 2014.

"There is definitely a level of frustration in having to move to that performance level," said Sue O'Connor, English learner program coordinator for LTUSD. "We hear the federal government is moving to a growth model. We just haven't seen it."

LTUSD board President Wendy David would like the state and feds to give school districts more flexibility.

"I would like the pendulum to swing back so there is some choice for teachers and students," David said. "Maybe the financial crisis will do that. Testing takes away from valuable learning time."

Board discussions

Some teachers call it No Test Left Behind.

At the Dec. 14 school board meeting, Bijou Community School second-grade teacher Loreen Norberg read a holiday themed testimony about testing into the record. With her, she had a stack of material related to the myriad tests she gives – and this is to 7-year-olds.

“I don’t have time to teach children before the next assessment,” she told the board. “In my mind, what we are doing is backward. This testing is ridiculous.”

That night, David said, “Learning should be our most important focus.”

At the Feb. 2 board meeting, a discussion item was the movie “Race to Nowhere” that had been shown on the South Shore in January. The movie’s website describes it this way, “Featuring the heartbreaking stories of young people across the country who have been pushed to the brink, educators who are burned out and worried that students aren’t developing the skills they need, and parents who are trying to do what’s best for their kids, Race to Nowhere points to the silent epidemic in our schools: cheating has become commonplace, students have become disengaged, stress-related illness, depression and burnout are rampant, and young people arrive at college and the workplace unprepared and uninspired.”

One issue in the movie is the amount of homework students are required to do each night. LTUSD’s homework guidelines call for 10 minutes per grade level. This means a second-grader has 20 minutes and a senior two hours.

That’s the suggested minimum.

“I agree it sounds good, but there is no maximum,” board member Larry Green said. “So many times they are coming home

with so much more.”

David relayed the story of a young man she worked with through CASA who had been accepted to the Naval Academy. He never made it to Annapolis. He shot himself. He left a note saying something to the effect of, “I can’t do this anymore.”

“In honor of him, I think we always need to be cognizant of that – and the need for counselors,” David said.

South Tahoe High School Principal Ivone Larson said homework is a unique concept to the United States. International students at her school are used to studying from a book.

She said the percentage of homework fluctuates from teacher to teacher.

Jodi Dayberry, second-grade teacher at Tahoe Valley Elementary School, told the board, “As you discuss homework changes, please include teachers. We are the ones responsible for assigning it. The second piece is assessment.”

She wants the district to look at what is mandated v. what the district has implemented when it comes to testing.

Kathy Haven, a former teacher and now ardent parent supporter at Bijou, said, “We need to create learners, critical thinkers and problem solvers. We need to teach parents more about what to do at home.”

She also stressed the need for teaching more through hands-on learning and less through worksheets.

“If something should be changed, I think it should be teacher driven,” board member Sue Novasel said.

Novasel said she had to intervene in her children’s education at South Tahoe High because they were getting burned out with all the advanced placement courses they were taking. Those classes require a specific test from the private AP company.

So many colleges require those classes for a student to be accepted.

Inside the classroom

This past week it was the Blueprint testing that was going on. It's a test to gauge how the students will do on the state mandated two-weeks worth of tests in May. The district has been doing this for five years.

"It's required by the state as monitoring of student learning; to see what they need extra work on," Tarwater said.

But this means students are being tested on something they may not have learned for a test that is three months from now.

Because LTUSD is labeled a program improvement school under No Child Left Behind, this is another round of testing the feds require.

Five out of six LTUSD schools are Title 1 – meaning at least 35 percent of the school population qualifies for a free or reduced lunch. Title 1 status means more federal dollars. But LTUSD isn't even allowed to say no to these dollars and therefore try to get out of NCLB.

Bijou first-grade teacher Susan Earnest calls Race to the Top "No Child Left Behind Lite" – adding, "It again is punitive rather than based on success. I do think testing is helpful. I just don't think it is being used correctly. It's labeling staff and schools as failures."

For Dayberry at TVES, she is frustrated that one test can have so much impact on a child's life, the fate of a district, the money that comes with a test score.

"We are putting labels on kids," Dayberry said.

Earnest believes the quick fix mentality in Washington is not allowing for systemic changes to occur that will bring the

United States' level of education up to that of other countries.

Gene Matteucci, fourth grade teacher at Tahoe Valley, said, "It's frustrating to be told (what to do) by legislators who have never been in the classroom. They know very little how a classroom operates and what kids need. They don't ask me what works."

He has 32 students, no classroom aide. He doesn't have time to give individualized attention when there about 320 minutes in the day.

Much of the testing requires Scantrons – those cards with bubbles to fill in.

Tarwater believes Scantrons are on their way out and testing on computers will be the norm. The district is moving toward having most students have a netbook. He believes testing using tools students are used to will engage them more. It also could provide for more accurate answers and no bubble designs. At the younger grades they don't have the manual dexterity for Scantrons, but still must use them.

Melissa Bornstein has to administer a test to her second-graders at Bijou that requires them to circle about 150 bubbles. And this is a test to gauge how well they read.

"If they read to me, I know if they can read," she said.

Bornstein knows testing is good to decipher how students are doing, "but I feel like we test too much. I would like to be teaching a little bit more."

After teaching for 28 years, Bornstein believes she has a strong grasp on identifying students who are getting the material and those who are not.

Matteucci feels the same way.

"We don't need the frequency of tests. When you are in the class you know what they know and don't know," Matteucci said.

Bornstein said, "If a child doesn't get it, my options are limited. I have been told my goal is to get to the end of the pacing guide. But, personally, I want to teach them."

Pacing guides are used to make sure students and teachers are where they should be along a time line set by people who don't work at the school site.

All of this rigidity has also taken a lot of the personality out of the classroom so it's difficult for the teacher to bring his or her twist to teaching that makes that room unique. It's all about jumping when the district, state and feds say jump. Asking, "Why should I jump?" does not appear to be an option for teachers.

Dayberry, at TVES, said the problem is teachers are always feeling like they are playing catch-up.

It's test, assess, reteach, retest and so on. But the learning part – the real learning, not the learning to take a test part, is what seems to be missing.

The four-times a year diagnostic testing the district requires is helpful to Earnest. It requires her to sit individually with each student for 30 to 60 minutes.

"It does take up a lot of instructional time, but the payoff is you can target instruction much more accurately so you don't waste time teaching what they know. This way you are not shooting at the middle," Earnest said.

But she admits if no aide is available to help during this time, she has had the rest of the class watch an instructional video.

"Nationally and statewide we need to look at how much time we are taking to administer tests," Dayberry said.

Matteucci is also an advocate of diagnostic testing as well as a proponent for taking a holistic approach to each student.

“We give them language arts and math and if they don’t get it, we give them more language arts and math,” Matteucci said. He wants arts, music, science and history to be as important and not threatened to be eliminated because of budget cuts.

“Test scores are going up, but are kids really smarter?” Matteucci asks. “I want to instill a lifelong love of learning and that is more than filling in bubbles.”

Furthering the discussion

Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village this academic year has been putting on a series called Discussions in Education. The third presentation will be March 3 from 7-9pm in rooms 139/141 of the Tahoe Center for Environmental Sciences at SNC.

Learning in the 21st Century is the topic next week. Educators and researchers will share insights into the necessary changes needed in the United States’ education system. A video from Sir Ken Robinson and Daniel Pink will also be shown.

Chamber mixer at Gar Woods

Gar Woods Grill and Pier will host the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce Mixer and the annual Kick-Off to SnowFest Party March 3 from 5 to 8pm.

Gar Woods is located at 5000 North Lake Blvd. in Carnelian Bay.

The cost is a \$20 per person.

SnowFest, celebrating 30 years, is scheduled for March 4-13 at a variety of venues throughout North Lake Tahoe.

For more information about the mixer, call Kym Fabel at (530) 581.8764 or email kym@puretahoenorth.com.

Chili fundraiser benefits Choices for Children

All you can eat chili for just \$1 on March 3 from 5-10pm at Coyote Grill in Round Hill.

Proceeds benefit Choices for Children.

Any questions, call Kathy at (530) 541.5848.

I-80 reopens; weather has businesses in Tahoe closing early

Updated: Feb. 25 4:03pm.

The **South Lake Tahoe Recreation & Swim Pool Complex** will be closed by 6:30 tonight. Evening lap and water exercise are canceled for tonight, so the pool will close at 4:30pm.

Parents Night Out is also canceled for tonight.



Traffic on Highway 50 in South Tahoe the afternoon of Feb. 25 is light, but some need help.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

Call the front desk at (530) 542.6056 if you have any questions. The complex is expected to open Saturday at 9am.

Aramark has canceled boat cruises and snowmobile operations for Friday.

Interstate 80 reopened about 4pm. First it was closed because of a small avalanche that did not trap vehicles; then because of whiteouts.

This from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office at 3pm, "The closure of **Highway 395** near Muller Lane in Minden will continue until approximately 6pm. This time frame is based on an estimate from NV Energy on time required for repair crews to switch transmission lines to reroute power and to remove disabled power cables from the roadway."

This in from Curtis Fong, *Lake Tahoe News*' ski reporter, "Most all **resorts are closed** due to high winds and snow. Call ahead." He also reports as of 12:40pm highways 431, 80 and 88 are closed.

Squaw Valley at 3pm was reporting 3 feet of snow in the last 24 hours. **Alpine Meadows'** total snow accumulation is 130 percent of the 40-year average with 17-feet having fallen this season.

Bank of the West in South Lake Tahoe and **El Dorado Savings** throughout the Tahoe region will be closing at 3pm Friday.

Lake Tahoe Community College is closing at 1pm.

El Dorado County sent its non-essential employees home home early Friday afternoon.

This from the **Nevada governor's office**, "Due to the significant snowfall and the potential for hazardous traveling conditions, non-essential state employees have been sent home early and state offices will be closing this afternoon. This release affects Carson City, Douglas, Storey, Lyon and Washoe counties. Affected employees will be granted administrative leave.

"Because the governor is in Washington, D.C., he consulted with Acting Governor Brian Krolicki who directed this action be taken."

AAA in Carson City and Damonte-Reno offices close at 4pm.

Friday night's **Tahoe Derby Dames'** scrimmage is canceled.

According to the *Sacramento Bee* at 3:20pm, "In El Dorado County, 24 outages affecting more than 500 people were reported, and in Placer County more than 5,000 people were **without power.**"

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*