Sullivan hospitalized after crashing on slopes in Italy

BORMIO, Italy – Squaw Valley's Marco Sullivan crashed during downhill training in Bormio, Italy, on Tuesday. He was taken to a regional hospital in Sondalo for evaluation of a possible head injury.

According to U.S. Ski Team Medical Director Kyle Wilkens, Sullivan was conscious and alert. He will remain hospitalized for further observation.

– U.S. Ski Team

Moody's predicts slight improvement for gaming industry in 2011

By Steve Green, Las Vegas Sun

Analysts at Moody's Investors Service are a bit more optimistic about the U.S. gaming industry, issuing a report Wednesday projecting gaming revenue will grow 1-2 percent and casino operator profits will increase 2-4 percent in 2011.

This is an upward revision from Moody's previous estimate for 2011 gaming revenue to come in flat – between a decline of 1 percent and increase of 1 percent. The previous estimate for industry operating profits was that they would decline by as much as 2 percent or grow by as much as 2 percent.

Sustained increases in gaming revenue would signal a turnaround for the industry, which endured declines in 2008, 2009 and most of 2010.

Moody's made headlines in June by upgrading its gaming industry outlook to stable from negative, signaling the casino industry decline may have bottomed out.

Moody's on Wednesday updated the outlook, maintaining the stable outlook but saying "our outlook has a positive bias."

Read the whole story

North Shore entities receive nearly $50,000 in grants

The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, in collaboration with the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce, has awarded $49,133 in Community Marketing Grants to a variety of special events and organizations. Twenty nine applicants requested $105,000 in grant funding. Many of those not awarded grant funding are getting in-kind support from the Resort Association.

The 2010-11 Community Marketing Grant Program recipients are: Wanderlust Festival ($5,000), Telluride Film Festival ($5,000), Snowbomb Sick 'N' Twisted Freestyle Tour ($3,050), Alpine Meadows Ski Resort's Take the Lake ($3,000), Squaw Valley Neighborhood Company's Peaks & Paws Festival ($2,500), Tahoe Sierra Century ($2,500), Annual Ta-Hoe Nalu Stand Up Paddle Festival ($2,500), Squaw Valley Neighborhood Company's Village Oktoberfest ($2,500), Big Blue Adventure's Adventure Sports Week ($2,500), Sierra Mountain Soccer Club's 3rd Annual Fire in the Sky ($2,400), Tahoe Maritime Museum ($1,560),

Tahoe Mountain Sports' Annual Pro/Am Disc Golf Tournament ($1,500), Alpenglow Sports' Pacific Coast Trail Runs ($1,500), Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Team's Great Ski Race ($1,000), Disabled Sports USA Far West's Ability Celebration ($864), Girls on the Run Sierras' Lunafest ($750), Tahoe Cross Country Ski Area's Ski Dazzle Sacramento ($509) and Big Blue Adventure's Lake Tahoe Open Water Swim & Triathlon ($500). The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce also received a grant of $10,000 for programs and events.

The Community Marketing Grant Program provides marketing and promotional support to special events or projects and programs that bring visitors to the region; generate local and regional business revenue; provide local and regional media exposure; and opportunities for public relations. Since the funding for this grant program comes from Placer County Transient Occupancy Tax, through the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, the public revenue and other benefits generated must accrue principally to areas within Placer County.

Hoop house workshop

Northern Nevada farmers have discovered that hoop houses can extend the growing season and increase profitability for their operations. However, little training has been available locally for this innovative method.

In response, Western Nevada College Specialty Crop Institute will offer a low-cost hoop house construction workshop. The daylong event is Jan. 14 from 9am-5pm at 171 Campbell Lane, at the Yerington Paiute Indian Reservation.

Cost is $35 if registered by Jan. 7 or $45 if registered after Jan. 7.Lunch is included, and seating is limited.

The workshop will feature classroom instruction and physical construction of a hoop house, using a popular design developed by Utah State University Extension. The USU hoop house, also known as a high tunnel, is constructed primarily of PVC tubing, precut rebar, greenhouse plastic and 2-by-4s.

Featured speaker is Dan Drost, USU Extension vegetable specialist and a leading researcher/educator on high tunnel production. He co-authored the construction manual for the USU hoop house and has built dozens of hoop houses at workshops in Utah and other western states.

The Yerington Paiute Tribe will host the workshop and provide construction materials for the structure, which will be used as a pilot project to show farmers and residents how hoop houses extend the growing season and protect crops. Cooperative Extension Indian Programs will provide resources and follow-up assistance on hoop house production as needed.

For workshop registration or details, contact Ann Louhela at (775) 351.2551 or email louhelaa@wnc.edu.

Sheriff’s deputies ready for Stateline New Year’s revelers

The Douglas County Sheriff’s Office is readying itself for the upcoming New Year’s Eve celebration at Lake Tahoe. Each year upward of 60,000 celebrants ring in the New Year in the casino core area of Stateline.

Due to the ordinarily high volume of celebrants within the Stateline casino core area during the event, Highway 50 may be closed to vehicle traffic in the evening if necessary for the

safety of the celebrants. If that should occur, vehicle traffic will be diverted around the Stateline casino core area using upper and lower Lake Parkway Drive.

Drivers anticipating traveling through the Stateline casino core area on New Year’s Eve should allow themselves an additional 15 minutes of travel time. Drivers transiting the area in wintertime should always anticipate poor road conditions caused by winter weather. They should have snow tires mounted on their vehicle or carry tire chains/cables with them.

Officers of the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office will be present in the Stateline casino-core area throughout the evening, supplemented by officers and representatives of numerous other law enforcement agencies, including Nevada Highway Patrol, Carson City Sheriff’s Office, South Lake Tahoe Police Department, El Dorado County Sheriff’s Office, California Highway Patrol, Nevada Department of Prisons, Placer County Sheriff’s Office and the FBI. Supporting agencies include the Douglas County Communications Center, Tahoe-Douglas Fire Department, Douglas County Road Department, Caltrans and Nevada Department of Transportation.

Glass or metal containers, regardless of contents, are prohibited in the casino core area on New Year’s Eve. Any such containers, including their contents, will be confiscated for destruction by law enforcement. Alcohol or other liquids shall be in a plastic cup, paper cup or other similar vessel.

Parents must be mindful of their children’s whereabouts and activities, especially during the New Year’s Eve celebration. The crowd that gathers in the casino core for the event is not conducive or intended for participation by juveniles. Each year during the event, a large percentage of contacts and arrests are made of persons under the age of 21.

STHS boys basketball team 1-1 after two days of tournament play

By Chris Proctor

SAN PEDRO – The South Tahoe High boys basketball team is in Southern California for the third annual Pirate Shoot-out.

This is the third year South Tahoe has participated in this tournament. The varsity team opened on Monday night against Hamilton High School of Los Angeles. The Vikings got behind early against a talented and fast-paced Hamilton team. The Vikings rallied to make it a game in the fourth quarter when junior guard Rylan Tepper sparked a come-back attempt when scored six points in a row off of Hamilton turnovers.

Unfortunately, the Vikings could not sustain the comeback effort and fell 62-48.

Peter Pielaet-Strayer led the Vikings with 19 points and 13 rebounds. Sophomore Kyante Wilson also had a strong game with eight points.

The Vikings played against Community Harvest of Sherman Oaks today at noon. The Vikings got out to a quick start with tenacious defense going up 12-0. Community Harvest countered with solid play from two players who scored 35 points between them.

The Vikings continued to pour on the pressure with their press and converted on the forced turnovers winning 67-46.

Pielaet-Strayer again led the Vikings with 20 points and 13

rebounds. Junior guard Miltaye Vasquez had a great game with 14 points, four rebounds and five assists. Sophomores John Cefalu and Wilson played solid defense and rounded out the top scorers with six and seven points, respectively.

The Vikings will play Mary Star High School of San Pedro on Wednesday at 3pm.

Chris Proctor coaches the STHS boys' varsity basketball team.

Snowpack water content near Tahoe 158% of normal

By Kathryn Reed

PHILLIPS STATION – With snow coming down in a flurry, the water content was likely changing Tuesday during the first snow survey of the year near Echo Summit.

What a difference a year makes. In 2009 the water content was 9 inches at Phillips Station, whereas this December it came in at 19 inches. Water content, not snow depth, is what matters.



Frank Gehrke and Maureen Stapleton measure the

water content
Dec. 28 near
Sierra.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

For this location at the base of Sierra-at-Tahoe off Highway 50 the water content is 158 percent of normal. Statewide, the mountain water content is 198 percent of normal.

“What is kind of surprising is having this much snow on the ground given the fact it’s a La Nina year,” said Frank Gehrke, chief of the California Cooperative Snow Survey Program. La Nina years tend to be drier, which Gehrke said could be the case in January and February.

But it’s also true Lake Tahoe sits on the cusp of these weather phenomena, so no matter how much people forecast El Nino and La Nina years, Tahoe may do its own thing.

The abundance of moisture this fall and early winter has reservoirs downstream filling up – with some already releasing water to make room for more wet stuff. That is not the case with Lake Oroville, which is the main body of water for the State Water Project. It was last full at 3.5 million acre-feet in summer 2003.

Location	Elevation	Snow Depth	Water Content	% of Long Term Average
Alpha	7,600 feet	62.4 inches	18.4 inches	140
Phillips Station	6,800 feet	55.9 inches	19 inches	158
Lyons Creek	6,700 feet	61.2 inches	22.3 inches	189

Source: Department of Water Resources

Before Tuesday’s readings the state Department of Water

Resources estimated it would deliver 50 percent of requested State Water Project water in 2011. Officials expect that percentage to rise. The last 100 percent allocation year was 1996 for 25 million residents and nearly 1 million acres of farmland that depend on the canals to bring them water.

Agencies and farmers dependent on the SWP received 40 percent of allocations in 2009, 35 percent in 2008, and 60 percent in 2007.

Gehrke said it’s like reading tea leaves to figure out what the season will end like. Last year it started off relatively dry and finished wet.

He said the rain earlier this month did not affect the water content, it just compacted the snow. So instead of the 55.9 inches at the site on Dec. 28, there may have been 70 inches had it not rained.

The snow content surveys are taken once a month for five months starting in December.

Usually Gehrke and whoever is helping him take seven readings in the snowfield near Sierra. With the creek about 50 feet into the meadow, only six could be taken on Tuesday.

Maureen Stapleton, general manager of the San Diego County Water Authority, was helping Gehrke on Tuesday. This was her first survey.

“I’m here to see the snow survey because of the runoff. Forecasts are so important to everyone in California,” Stapleton said.

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Mancuso just misses podium in giant slalom

By U.S. Ski Team

SEMMERING, Austria -– Three-time Olympic medalist Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley nearly returned to the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup giant slalom podium Tuesday after skiing an incredibly clean second run to finish fifth. Lindsey Vonn and Sarah Schleper of Vail continued the strong day for Americans in seventh and 15th, respectively.

Tessa Worley of France matched American Ted Ligety on the women's side winning her third consecutive GS this season with a wire-to-wire victory.

Germany went 2-3 with Maria Riesch regaining the overall lead from Vonn with second, while reigning World Cup GS champion Katrhin Hoezl was third. Megan McJames of Park City, the only other American starter, missed qualifying for a second run by just seven-hundreths.

"I've been skiing so good in training, so it's nice to put a run together," said Mancuso, who was just 0.39 off the podium. "First run I was getting knocked around a little and couldn't get back in my rhythm, so it was nice to start a little earlier in the second run. I knew I had a lot of opportunity to move up because it was so tight between the first group."

Mancuso, the 2006 Olympic GS champion, produced the second fastest second run to leap from the 18th position to fifth for her best GS finish since December 2007. Schleper followed suit and also made a move jumping from 20th in the first run to 15th, scoring World Cup points in her third GS race this season.

Despite letting the overall lead slip to Riesch, the race

continued Vonn’s resurgence in giant slalom as she matched her finish from St. Moritz two weeks ago to post her third GS point scoring race this season.

“There were already tons of people out today and tomorrow’s going to be crazy,” said Mancuso. “We’re so close to Vienna and they really love ski racing around here. it’s going to be a lot of fun.”

Official results, Audi FIS Alpine World Cup, Semmering, Austria, Giant Slalom

1. Tessa Worley, France, 2:09.66

2. Maria Riesch, Germany, 2:10.28

3. Katrhin Hoelzl, Germany, 2:10.44

4. Elisabeth, Goergl, Austria, 2:10.51

5. Julia Mancuso, Squaw Valley, CA, 2:10.83

—

7. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 2:11.06

15. Sarah Schleper, Vail, CO, 2.11.81

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Did not qualify first run: Megan McJames, Park City, UT

Ski report: It’s snowing



White stuff is gently falling from the sky this morning on the South Shore. The volume is expected to pick up as the day goes on. It might be a powder afternoon.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Geotourism, sustainable Tahoe talk

South Lake Tahoe AAUW will welcome members, guests and the public as the group examines geotourism and a sustainable Tahoe at the Jan. 8 meeting at 10am in the Aspen Room at Lake Tahoe Community College.

Two guest speakers will be featured. Susanne Stone, author of “Lake Tahoe, A Guidebook with a Point of View”, is a long time local who wrote her guidebook well before the word “geotourism” was popularized. Stone will talk about her book and why she wrote it.

Jacquie Chandler, executive director of Sustainable Tahoe, one of the pioneers of the geotourism movement, will speak on how this aspect of tourism can help build a durable economy and enhance local pride while also preserving authentic features of a special area.

At this meeting, a $4 optional brunch will be available as well as complimentary beverages. For more information or to reserve a spot, call (530) 541.2799 or email slocumsrus@msn.com by Jan. 6.