Real estate market impacts business of skiing

By Martin Griff, NJ.com

After reading that bankrupt Tamarack Resort in Idaho is suing its primary lender, accusing it of causing its demise, ski buddy Bob Dever, a semi-retired businessman from Philadelphia added some perspective for your reading pleasure:

While most of us, those interested in skiing, boarding, and other related winter sports, are primarily concerned with accessibility, weather, snow depth, and lift capacity, it is sometimes good to remember that our December through March destinations are businesses. These businesses have to deal with things like cash flow, financing, equity positions, and that endless mantra of grow, get bigger and better, or die.

Read the whole story

Farmers market cookbook to be published

Two women who love fresh food and cooking spent 2009 cooking up a fresh idea.

Joanne Neft and Laura Caballero cooked weekly dinners using fresh Placer County produce and meat for eight guests for 52 weeks. The fruit of their labor? A 300-page cookbook called “Placer County Real Food” will be coming out in April.

Neft and Caballero hosted their meals on Mondays using fresh,

homegrown ingredients produced by local farmers and ranchers sold at the Saturday Foothill Farmers’ Market.

A tasting workshop and food demonstration using menus from the new cookbook will be one of the highlights at the 15th annual PlacerGROWN Food and Farm Conference Jan. 30 at Lincoln High School.

Caballero will discuss the yearlong cooking project and the development of the cookbook.

Neft started the Foothill Farmers’ Market 20 years ago and formerly had the position as Placer County agriculture marketing director. She came up with the idea for the cookbook to let people know that great food is available at the Farmers Market in all seasons.

More storms on the way

Donâ€™t put away the snow blower just yet. The light snow forecast for Lake Tahoe is going to get heavier. After a brief respite, another in a series of storms is likely to dump at least a foot of white stuff in the mountains, according to the National Weather Service. A winter storm warning issued today calls for moderate to heavy snow and gusty winds Monday afternoon above 6500 feet, with snow dropping to lake level Monday night. This storm system is expected to last through Tuesday morning.

Tahoe’s talk of Vancouver, Jan. 24 pm edition

By Kathryn Reed

WHISTLER, British Columbia – People used to ski Whistler or Blackcomb, but seldom both in the same day. This is because it required a bus to get between the two resorts.



All of that changed on Dec. 12, 2008, when the 52 million Canadian dollar Peak2Peak Gondola opened.

Taking it across on Saturday I was a shutterbug. Todayâ€™s trip back from Whistler to Blackcomb the nearly full car was rather subdued. Apparently we had all skied rather hard and just took in the beauty without conversation or need to photograph it.

This is the quietest gondola I have been in â€“ and most comfortable. The cushy seats accommodate 22 people. Thereâ€™s room for six more to stand.

In 11 minutes riders are transported the 2.73 miles from one mountain to the other.

In this relatively short time span people are 1,427 feet above Fitzsimmons Creek at the high point.



Headed to Whistler, with Fitzsimmons Creek below the Peak2Peak Gondola. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The creek has the hydrological plat that provides enough power for Whistler-Blackcombâ€™s operations.

Twenty-eight cabins can haul 2,050 people per hour each way. Two of the cars have glass bottoms. Those are the silver cars, in case you want to wait for one.

â€œThe 3S ropeway is a new configuration of passenger ropeway to North America but there are four others in the world like it. The 3S stands for three ropes – two track ropes and one haul rope pulling in the middle. The 3S design incorporates reversible tramway technology with detachable grip technology in a new and novel configuration,â€ the gondolaâ€™s website says.

It has the longest unsupported span in the world at 1.88 miles.

What astounded me were the tracks on both mountains under the gondola. One passenger said how he and a buddy did the Blackcomb side over New Yearâ€™s weekend. I just shook my head. Not a chance these legs will experience that.



Looking toward Whistler Village.

The views from the gondola are stunning. Mountains are everywhere. Whistler Village is below. The creek looks like a river â€“ even that high up.

In Canada, everything is big.

Rahlves fourth at Lake Placid

By USSA

LAKE PLACID -â€“ It was a great Olympic sendoff for Daron Rahlves (Sugar Bowl, CA) as the X Games gold medalist finished fourth in the Nature Valley Freestyle Cup Sunday, the last skiercross World Cup before the 2010 Games.

“It was nice to make the final. I had some good heats. It was a great track with a lot of good opportunity,” Rahlves said.

Rahlves took the lead and finished first in the semifinal run, which he said was a boost to him heading in to the last round.

“For most of the day I got in a good position to make good moves,” Rahlves said. “It gave me confidence in the semifinal to get that draft in the straightaway and keep the rhythm on the terrain.”

According to Rahlves, while he was happy with the finish, a better gate choice in the final could have landed him on the podium.

“Unfortunately in the final I was in the last gate choice on the end and there was a little bit of a kicker and I lost a little bit of ground out of the start,” Rahlves said. “In the first turn I had some line taken away and was on the outside. I got trapped. I went down on my hand, but in the first and second turn you have to keep up your speed. I lost ground there”

But, in all, Rahlves was satisfied with the day, and hopefully some reflection on the races he can better himself in Vancouver.

“It’s great being in the final but fourth place is not a great place to be. But I didn’t crash and there was some good racing today,” Rahlves said. “In retrospect I could have slowed down a little bit, taken an inside line and paced it a little more.”

Canadian Chris Delbosco won, followed by Andreas Matt of Austria in second and David Duncan of Canada in third.

In the women’s race Kelsey Serwa of Canada took the win, followed in second by Fanny Smith of Canada and Ophellie David of France in third.

It was a hot finish for Langely McNeal (Ketchum, ID) who landed in 16th to mark her career best ski cross World Cup finish.

The skiercross athletes now break from competition before the Olympics. The 2010 Olympic Freestyle Team will be announced Jan. 26.

Lake Placid, Jan. 24, skiercross

Men

1. Chris Delbosco, Canada

2. Andreas Matt, Austria

3. David Duncan, Canada

4. Daron Rahlves, Sugar Bowl, CA

5. Michael Schmid, Switzerland

–

20. John Teller, Mammoth Lakes, CA

52. Patrick Duran, Fayson, VT

56. Cody Smith, Spokane, WA

57. Scott Horn, Truckee, CA

58. Victor Beckmann, Portland, OR

Women

1. Kelsey Serwa, Canada

2. Fanny Smith, Switzerland

3. Ophellie David, France

4. Ashleigh McIvor, Canada

5. Karin Huttary, Austria

–

16. Langely McNeal, Ketchum, ID

21. Caitlin Ciccone, Littleton, NH

Tahoe seaplane being used in Haiti relief efforts

Bill and Gina DaSilva of Carson City are providing airlift for medical teams to Haiti from Opa Locka, Fla., using their 1951 Grumman Albatross Amphibious Seaplane.

Zephyr Cove-based SeaPlane Operations LLC is providing personnel, logistical support and planning services for the operation as well as publicizing the effort and soliciting donations for fuel and other expenses.

The Albatross is uniquely suited to fly direct to the shores of Haiti, bypassing the crowded airport and avoiding the damaged roads that have delayed widespread aid distribution so far.

The first relief flight departed the airport in Opa Locka Jan. 24 at 10am carrying a team of doctors and nurses from Marquette, Mich. This first trip will deliver five medical personnel and several thousand pounds of supplies.

Able to carry 4000 pounds of material to the Haitian shore and return to the U.S. without refueling in Haiti, Bill and Gina DaSilvaâ€™s Albatross will continue to provide support for the medical team as well as other needs in Haiti as long funding for the fuel required is available. While the aircraft and crew services are all being donated, $6,000 of fuel must be purchased for each round trip.

Funds are being collected by Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation,

PO Box 687,Marquette, MI 49855. Write â€œHaiti Quake Relief Fuelâ€ in the memo line and you will receive a letter in return making that donation tax deductible. A website devoted to this mission is up at http://haiti.seaplaneops.com/Haiti

and donations will soon possible through that site.

Rahlves 6th in skiercross at N.Y.

Daron Rahlves of Sugar Bowl was sixth out of 60 competitors at Saturdayâ€™s World Cup skiercross at Whiteface Mountain, N.Y.

Michael Schmid of Switzerland won the event.

The sport makes its Olympic debut in February in Vancouver.

Errol Kerr, who is on the Jamaican team but trains at Alpine Meadows, went from a 34th qualifying slot to finish fifth.

DQ for Mancuso in Italy

By USSA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy – Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO) continued to lead the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup after finishing 19th in giant slalom Sunday, the final chance for U.S. women to earn a ticket to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. Teammate Megan McJames (Park City, UT) was also in the points in 21st, while Finland's Tanja Poutiainen claimed victory as first run leader Kathrin Zettel failed to finish.

Only Vonn and McJames made it to finals for the U.S. Ski Team, with McJames fighting her way in from bib 46. It was her

second time in the points in a GS this season

“She laid down a pretty decent run, and then backed it up with very smart skiing on the second run,” U.S. Women’s Head Coach Jim Tracy said of McJames.

Vonn, one day after getting her 30th career victory and sixth straight downhill win dating back to last season’s World Cup Finals now carries a 56 point overall lead into three connective speed races set for next weekend in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

“Her first run was a little bit on the conservative side, but she really attacked the second run and skied quite well,” said U.S. Women’s Head Coach Jim Tracy.

Tracy said course conditions were hampered by hardier, icier conditions at the bottom of the course, leaving skiers in a conundrum: Use the correct skis needed for man-made snow and risk sliding out later on the ice, or go with razor-sharp skis and struggle with the early portion of the race.

“We thought, after seeing five or six racers, it’s very hard to recover with a tactical mistake on that ice,” Tracy said. “We were prepared for it.”

The U.S. Olympic Alpine Ski Team will be named Monday, with coaches likely making the tough decisions into the wee hours of the morning.

“It’s going to be a long night for me,” Tracy said.

Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy, Jan. 24, Women’s Giant Slalom

1. Tanja Poutiainen, Finland, 2:26.51

2. Viktoria Rebensburg, Germany, 2:27.56

3. Kathrin Hoelzl, Germany, 2:27.96

4. Tina Maze, Slovenia, 2:28.27

5. Manuela Moelgg, Italy, 2:28.36

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19. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 2:29.73

21. Megan McJames, Park City, UT, 2:30.84

DNQ – Leanne Smith, Conway, NH; Julia Mancuso, Olympic Valley, CA

DNF 1 – Stacey Cook, Mammoth Mountain, CA; Sarah Schleper, Vail, CO

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 24



Expect light snow on and off today in the Lake Tahoe Basin. A series of storm systems is moving in, and will hang around through Tuesday. Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, delivers his ski report for the day.

Teter bound for Vancouver

By USSA

PARK CITY – Scotty Lago (Seabrook, NH) rode his way onto his first Olympic Team with a huge first run Saturday night at Park City Mountain Resort, putting down a score of 48.00 to win the spot. Shaun White (Carlsbad, CA) delighted fans with a

Vancouver-ready 49.50 and earning his second victory in two nights, while Kelly Clark (Mt. Snow, VT) matched that feat in the women's event.

One day after scoring a 49.00 and landing the first-ever competition double McTwist 12, White was rewarded with a Grand Prix record 49.50 for stomping the same run and used his victory lap to high five spectators in watching in the light snow alongside the 22-foot megapipe at the Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix.



"For me tonight to put that run together was unreal," White said. "It felt great.

"I wanted to push the judges to boundaries that they can go to. I know they haven't handed out a full-on perfect score yet. I'll get them."

With pressure of Olympic qualification thick in the air, Lago gave the gold medalist a run for his money for a second straight competition.

"I'm still in shock right now," Lago said. "Obviously, it's been a huge goal of mine for the last couple seasons to make the team, and to realize that I just did it, so many things are going through my head."

The top three men and women from the Grand Prix, based on average of two best results, get a spot on the fourth-ever Olympic Team which will be formally named on Monday.

White led the men's standings, followed by Lago and Louie Vito (Sandy, UT). Clark, the 2002 gold medalist, took the women's title, followed by Gretchen Bleiler (Aspen, CO) and 2006 gold

medalist Hannah Teter (South Lake Tahoe), who was second twice in Park City and plans to donate all of her earnings to charity.

The six were announced to the crowd at a concert following the Grand Prix finale, where “I Ride For Pearce” stickers were abundant in honor of Kevin Pearce (Norwich, VT), still recovering in a Salt Lake City hospital from a severe head injury sustained in training three weeks ago.

“It was a hard-fought battle, obviously, getting on this team, but I feel like the best of the best are sitting right here, and we’re going to go into Vancouver with the strongest team ever,” said U.S. Snowboarding Halfpipe Head Coach Mike Jankowski.

Like White, fellow Grand Prix points leader Clark did enough in her first run to take a pressure-free final jaunt. She went front-side air, back-side 5, front-side 9, backside 5 and front-side 7 to cab 7.

Fans can watch the Saturday’s finals today on NBC Sports at noon.

The team will travel to Aspen for X Games events before going to Vancouver. The full 2010 Olympic Snowboarding Team will be announced Monday.

Park City, Jan. 23, Halfpipe

Men

1. Shaun White, Carlsbad, CA, 49.50

2. Scotty Lago, Seabrook, NH, 48.00

3. Luke Mitrani, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 45.30

4. Gregory Bretz, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 44.80

5. JJ Thomas, Golden, CO, 44.20

6. Jack Mitrani, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 42.30

7. Dylan Bidez, Minturn, CO, 41.30

8. Steve Fisher, Breckenridge, CO, 40.60

9. Zack Black, Breckenridge, CO, 38.50

10. Broc Waring, Edwards, CO, 38.20

Women

1. Kelly Clark, Mt. Snow, VT, 47.40

2. Hannah Teter, Belmont, VT, 43.90

3. Kaitlyn Farrington, Sun Valley, ID, 41.00

4. Maddy Schaffrick, Steamboat Springs, CO, 36.50

5. Elena Hight, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 36.20

6. Ellery Hollingsworth, Stratton, VT, 25.40

7. Gretchen Bleiler, Aspen, CO, 15.50

8. Kelly Marren, Hillsborough, CA, 12.60

DNS – Clair Bidez, Minturn, CO

Final Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix Standings

Men

1. Shaun White, Carlsbad, CA, 1000

2. Scotty Lago, Seabrook, NH, 800

3. Louie Vito, Sandy, UT, 800

4. Danny Davis, Detroit, MI, 645

5. Greg Bretz, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 550

6. JJ Thomas, Golden, CO, 550

7. Luke Mitrani, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 550

8. Zack Black, Breckenridge, CO, 525

9. Elijah Teter, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 475

10. Steve Fisher, Breckenridge, CO, 400

Women

1. Kelly Clark, Mt. Snow, VT, 1000

2. Gretchen Bleiler, Aspen, CO, 900

3. Hannah Teter, Belmont, VT, 800

4. Elena Hight, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 650

5. Ellery Hollingsworth, Stratton, VT, 600

6. Kaitlyn Farrington, Sun Valley, ID, 500

7. Maddy Schaffrick, Steamboat Springs, CO, 500

8. Clair Bidez, Minturn, CO, 425

9. Kelly Marren, Hillsborough, CA, 320

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