Mancuso makes case to be on downhill team

By USSA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy – Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO) continued her ascension into the elite ranks of women's skiers Saturday, notching her eighth win of the season and career 30th Audi FIS Alpine World Cup victory – including a sweep of all five downhills this season.

"It's a phenomenal achievement," said U.S. Women's Head Coach Jim Tracy. "It's something that, when you start your career, you dream and you wonder if you can ever get to be that good. All of us are extremely proud of her."

German rival Maria Riesch was second, 0.42 seconds behind in a slightly closer affair than Vonn's 0.67-second super G win on Friday.

"You can't just cruise down and have a solid run and be in the lead," Vonn said. "You have to really risk something but also ski smart. I feel like I found that rhythm and know what to do. It's nice when you have the confidence in yourself to know exactly what you have to do every day. It helps so much."

In typical Vonn fashion, she started fast and ended faster, eclipsing Riesch's early pace as five U.S. women found themselves in the points.

Vonn's win knotted her with Croatian great Janica Kostelic at eighth on the women's all-time wins list. She has three wins and eight career podiums in Cortina.

"It's a pretty special place, and we're all involved with a pretty special athlete right now," Tracy said.

2006 gold medalist Julia Mancuso (Olympic Valley, CA) grabbed

her best finish this season in eighth place, just more than a second back of Vonn and 0.2 seconds behind third-place Anja Paerson of Sweden.

“I just wanted to be faster,” Mancuso said. “I think it was good. I was slowing down on the bottom. That’s where I lost all my time. If I didn’t lose so much on the bottom, I would have been in there.”

The eighth place finish was vital for team selection as it moved Mancuso one spot ahead of Stacey Cook’s (Mammoth Mountain, CA) ninth in Haus, Austria a week ago. It puts Mancuso into the top two for downhill selection. In addition to Cook’s ninth, Alice McKennis (Glenwood Springs, CO) also has a top 10 from Lake Louise, AB in the season openers.

After making a small error and taking 20th in the super G, Leanne Smith (Conway, NH) rocketed to a season-best 15th Friday and to hopefully keep herself in the running for the U.S. Olympic Ski Team, to be named Monday.

Cook also was in the points at 25th, McKennis was 28th, and Chelsea Marshall (Pittsfield, VT) tied with Slovenia’s Marusa Ferk for 30th despite going up on one ski on the difficult course.

Sunday is the final race before the Olympic Team is determined.

Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy, Jan. 23, Women’s Downhill

1. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 1:37.70

2. Maria Riesch, Germany, 1:38.12

T-3. Anja Paerson, Sweden, 1:38.56

T-3. Nadja Kamer, Switzerland, 1:38.56

T-5. Fabienne Suter, Switzerland, 1:38.58

T-5. Ingrid Jacquemod, France, 1:38.58

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8. Julia Mancuso, Olympic Valley, CA, 1:38.76

15 Leanne Smith, Conway, NH, 1:39.54

25. Stacey Cook, Mammoth Mountain, CA, 1:40.00

28. Alice McKennis, Glenwood Springs, CO, 1:40.14

T-30. Chelsea Marshall, Pittsfield, VT, 1:40.28

DNF – Keely Kelleher

Tahoe's talk of Vancouver, Jan. 23

Publisher's note: *First full day in Whistler is about to begin for Lake Tahoe News writers.*

It's morning and we're about to get some breakfast delivered before finding the Wizard – he's the lift we see from our slopeside room at the Fairmont Chateau Whistler.



Skiing, hot tubing,

drinking by fire pits -- Fairmont Chateau Whistler. Photo/Kathryn Reed

If this is what all things named “Chateau” can be, bring it on.

Yesterday’s massage by Robert hopefully has me loose enough to tackle that seven-mile run I keep hearing about. Sue is saying the same about her massage from Fanny.

The mountains are calling. We’ll start with Blackcomb today. The map for the resorts is so big they call it an atlas. We’ll see if we take the monster gondola between Blackcomb and Whistler today. There’s always tomorrow.

Douglas County deputies want your prescription drugs

The Douglas County Partnership of Community Resources and the Douglas County Sheriffâ€™s Office, in conjunction with local businesses, will be conducting a Prescription Drug Roundup this month.

The purpose of the roundup is to get unused and unwanted prescription medications out of medicine cabinets â€“ where they can be stolen or abused â€“ and safely dispose of them.

A majority of teens who abuse prescription medications

secretly obtain them from medicine cabinets of friends or relatives.

Additionally, many people are unsure of how to dispose of old prescription medications, so they dump them down the sink or flush them down the toilet. These substances then end up in the water table, where they contaminate the water supply and the environment.

The Prescription Drug Roundup takes place:

Jan. 27 from 8am-12:30 pm at the Senior Health Fair – Carson Valley Inn;

Jan. 30 from 10am-2pm at Safeway, 212 Elks Point Road, Round Hill; Smithâ€™s Supermarket, 1341 Highway 395, Gardnerville; Wal-Mart Supercenter, 3770 Topsy Lane, Carson City, TRE Volunteer Fire Station, 1476 Albite Road, Wellington; DCSO, 1281 Kimmerling Road, Gardnerville Ranchos.

Citizens can bring their unwanted or unused prescription medications to these locations and drop them off safely and confidentially, with no questions asked. Any identifying information on the pill bottle can be marked out.

Also available at the collection locations will be literature regarding the abuse of prescription medications, interaction dangers, suggestions on how to keep track of prescribed medications, and resources for additional help.

Court ruling may alter Taser

use by law enforcement



By Kathryn Reed

How and when an officer uses a Taser is about to change because of a federal appeals court ruling in San Francisco.

“The objective facts must indicate that the suspect poses an immediate threat to the officer or a member of the public,” Judge Kim Wardlaw of the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals wrote in the 3-0 ruling.

The case originated in San Diego from a traffic stop involving a Taser. Now that case will go to trial.

Officers in El Dorado County aren’t sure how the decision will affect them. South Lake Tahoe police officers and El Dorado sheriff’s deputies have been using Tasers for about five years.

Both departments said Tasers are just one tool they use – with batons, control holds and OC (pepper) spray being the non-lethal items on their belt.

Sheriff’s Sgt. Bruce Rosa knew all about the decision when questioned. He said the department will assess the decision like it does with all case law that is handed down.

“We make decisions in seconds. Judges and juries get to make decisions in days,” Rosa said. “It’s not that we don’t make mistakes. We are on the defensive usually all the time. They are on the offense. We want to go home at the end of the evening.”

Amnesty International reports that between 2001-08 334 people

died in the United States after being Tasered.

“You hear a lot of people expire after a Taser. A lot of times their heart exploded from cocaine use,” Rosa said.

Rosa said he was hit by a Taser in training and never wants to go through it again. It not only is painful, but also contracts the muscles.

Lt. David Stevenson at the SLTPD was not aware of the appeals court decision when *Lake Tahoe News* called. But he said Tasers have been an effective tool for his department and that work related injuries have gone done since

“Personally, I think this is one of the best tools to come around in a long time,” Rosa said. “It is just a tool. We try to use it only when necessary, like any of our tools. Where cops get hurt is with batons.”

Ruby Mountains a gem for heli-skiers

By Scott Willoughby, Denver Post

LAMOILLE, Nev. â€” Awaiting the return of the ship, it was time for our daily lesson in “Rubonics.”

“We’re looking for ‘porn’ snow,” Ruby Mountains Helicopter Skiing guide Tom Carter explained without a trace of irony. “But we’ll settle for some greasy powder.”

Over three days here last March, we had come to expect such titillating imagery. Here in this isolated alpine realm of the Ruby Mountains, it seems folks just talk that way. Colloquial

in the dialect of heli-skiing the American hinterlands. Proud, self-proclaimed, Rubonics.

Read the whole story

Guide to freestyle skiing



By Ron Judd, Seattle Times

Freestyle skiing venues are the most manmade of all sites for snow-sports events, with ski jumps constructed of wood and steel and then covered with snow, or deep moguls carved by machine and shovel into hillsides. But the results are spectacular, with enough big-air thrillsâ€”always set to rock musicâ€”to make the event a fan favorite at every Olympics.

Read the whole story

USDA food distribution dates for Douglas County

The 2010 USDA food distribution schedule at the Tahoe Douglas Senior Center, 885 Highway 50, Zephyr Cove is from 9-10am on Jan. 28, March 25, May 27, July 29, Sept. 30 and Nov. 18.

The eligibility requirements are: having Nevada ID, reading

the â€œself-declaration assurance” form and signing it to the certify that household income does not exceed 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

The types of commodities expected to be available are canned juices, canned fruits and vegetables, canned and frozen meats, dry beans, peanut butter, dry milk and pastas. There will be approximately eight commodities per distribution per person in household.

There are other Douglas County distribution locations as well as one in Carson City. The food distribution program is administered through the state â€“ (775) 688.2828.

Tahoe’s talk of Vancouver, Jan. 22

Publisher’s note: *Lake Tahoe News’ Opening Day at Whistler. Staff is at the site of the Winter Olympics to ski the mountains before Lake Tahoe athletes go after gold here in February.*

By Kathryn Reed

WHISTLER, British Columbia – Living in the mountains would make me think seeing other mountains would not make me giddy.

But they did.



Mountains and water surround Vancouver. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Driving the Sea to Sky Highway on Friday afternoon was incredible. This 1.5-hour span from Vancouver to Whistler is breathtaking.

Sitting with a couple guys in the hot tub just minutes ago we learned that itâ€™s even better now that the Olympics are about to arrive. This is because road crews have cleared out a number of trees to provide even more opportunities to see the spectacular views.

At times I was reminded of Patagonia, being along the fjords and seeing the mountains touch the water. At other times I was reminded of Switzerland with the jagged peaks seeming to scrape the partly cloudy sky.

Superlatives donâ€™t do this highway justice.

Leading up to this last leg of our car trip was the 2.5-hour journey from Seattle to Vancouver.

It was one of those fortuitous times when the road meanders through this city of about 3.5 million people (thatâ€™s what the hot tub guys said it is and they live there). The architecture runs the gamut of early English when it was settled to ugly 1970s to some Victorian to modern.

The views â€“ use your favorite superlative. Water is

everywhere. Mountains are here and beyond.

Itâ€™s time to finish the glass of Jackson-Triggs Esprit 2006 Merlot â€“ a BC wine that is going down smoothly with the house made chocolates from the pastry chef at the Fairmont â€“ time to go get some real nourishment before we get first chair in the morning.

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Rise hearing moved

Updated Jan. 25 10:35am

South Tahoe Public Utility District board President Dale Rise was to appear in El Dorado County Superior Court Friday for a preliminary hearing on a felony charge of obstructing a police officer. The hearing has been postponed until March 1, according to the office of William Cole, Rise's attorney.



Dale Rise

Rise was arrested at his home in September after officers responded to a domestic disturbance call. He faces up to three years in prison if found guilty.

SLT attempted abduction ruled otherwise

The reported would-be child abduction on Jan. 15 of a South Lake Tahoe boys looks like it was the result of him throwing a snowball at a truck, according to police.

As a result of the investigation, the police department could find no evidence to verify an attempted abduction. It appears the incident might have been a reaction to ice or snow thrown at the truck, a press release states.