Rahlves skips France race; Truckee’s Horn places 77th

By USSA

LES CONTAMINES, France -â€“ A turn away from the first World Cup win of his career, Casey Puckett (Aspen, CO) had to settle for fourth when he crashed Sunday morning in Les Contamines.

Puckett led in his second final group of the 2010 ski cross season â€“ originally scheduled for Saturday but delayed due to heavy fog â€“ from the outset, and appeared to be home free when he lost control squatting into a turn and suffered the fluky fall.

Ski cross coach Tyler Shepherd said he wasn’t sure what happened, and he would look at the replay later.

â€œIt’s ski cross, sometimes that’s the way it goes,â€ he said.

France’s Xavier Kuhn skied past Puckett for the win.

Caitlin Ciccone (Littleton, NH) was 23rd in a woman’s race won by Canada’s Ashleigh McIvor, marking the best result of Ciccone’s career.

“We just need to figure out how to get her out of the start faster,” Shepherd said. â€œShe’s a fast skier, we just have to get her up in front.”

Daron Rahlves (Sugar Bowl, CA) skipped out on the chance to improve on a career-best second place in St. Johann, Austria, last week, opting instead to train at home before a return to the World Cup circuit in Lake Placid on Jan. 21.

The U.S. squad has one more event â€“ in Alpe d’Huez, France, on Wednesday â€“ before a return to North America for races in

Blue Mountain, ON, and Lake Placid.

Les Contamines, France, Jan. 10, skiercross

Men

1. Xavier Kuhn, France

2. Stanley Hayer, Canada

3. Tomas Kraus, Czech Republic

4. Casey Puckett, Aspen, CO

5. Michael Schmid, Switzerland

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56. Justin Johnson, Park City, UT

62. John Teller, Mammoth Lakes, CA

67. Jean Christophe Rudigoz, Sun Valley, ID

77. Scott Horn, Truckee, CA

DNF â€“ Patrick Duran, Fayston, VT

Women

1. Ashleigh McIvor, Canada

2. Julia Murray, Canada

3. Karin Huttary, Austria

4. Ophelie David, France

5. Katrin Mueller, Switzerland

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23. Caitlin Ciccone, Littleton, NH

Vonn wins 3 days in a row; Mancuso 10th

By Matthew Piper, USSA

HAUS IM ENNSTAL, Austria – Finally, third tryâ€™s a charm for Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO). After near misses in hat trick bids at Val dâ€™Isere, France (third in the super G), and Lake Louise, AB (second in the super G), the skier with a vice grip on the early World Cup points standings followed two consecutive downhill wins with a triumph in the super G on Sunday in Haus Im Ennstal, Austria, besting the field by more than a half second.

“Itâ€™s good to know that I can do it,” Vonn said. “There was definitely a little bit more pressure today because everybody was wanting me to do the three in a row, and I wanted to do it myself, so itâ€™s just good to know that I can ski well under pressure, and it just gives me more and more confidence going into Vancouver.”

Vonn becomes the first American â€“ man or woman â€“ ever to win on three straight days. The last time an international woman accomplished the feat was Dec. 4-6, 1997, when German Katja Seizinger won a speed trio in Lake Louise.

And as if thatâ€™s not reward enough, Vonnâ€™s picture will adorn three gondolas at the resort to commemorate her 26th, 27th and 28th World Cup wins.

“The course was awesome, I had so much fun,” Vonn said. “The snow was in perfect condition and I just let it go. I didnâ€™t concentrate too much on all the tactics, I just tried to really charge as much as I could.

“Everythingâ€™s fitting really well together â€“ my serviceman, my skis, my tactics, my coaches, everythingâ€™s going so well, and I couldnâ€™t be more thankful.”

Vonn, who trailed Swedenâ€™s Anja Paerson at the first interval but picked up steam through the middle section of the course and crossed the line 0.53 seconds ahead, said she just tried to keep it simple and ski a clean run.

“Itâ€™s an incredible performance,” said womenâ€™s speed coach Alex Hoedelmoser. “From the midway down it gets really technical and steep. She had a perfect line and was aggressive enough to master the final part.”

The victory also moved the two-time defending overall champion to second all time for Americans with her 28th win, passing Phil Mahre (Bode Miller has 31).

“Iâ€™m proud of myself,” Vonn said of achieving the trifecta. “Itâ€™s not easy to do. I was tired today, and itâ€™s hard to stay focused, but I did it, now Iâ€™m done – now Iâ€™m just going to try to recover for the slalom in two days.”

She now leads the overall World Cup by 192 points over Maria Riesch of Germany, the downhill by 164 over Riesch, the super G by 95 over Swiss Nadia Styger, and the super combined by 20 points â€“ also over Riesch.

As for the bone bruise on her left arm that has her in a cheetah brace, Hoedelmoser said it shouldnâ€™t be an issue outside of the slalom, where she brushes up against gates.

“It doesnâ€™t really bother her too much anymore at the start,” he said.

Julia Mancuso (Olympic Valley, CA) was 10th for the U.S., with Chelsea Marshall (Pittsfield, VT) also finishing in the points at 21st.

Next up for the U.S. women is a slalom in Flachau, Austria on

Tuesday.

Haus Im Ennstal, Austria, Jan. 10, Womenâ€™s Super G

1. Lindsey Vonn, Vail, CO, 1:26.69

2. Anja Paerson, Sweden, 1:27.22

3T. Nadia Fanchini, Italy, 1:27.54

3T. Martina Schild, Switzerland, 1:27.54

5. Andrea Fischbacher, Austria, 1:27.86

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10. Julia Mancuso, Olympic Valley, CA, 1:28.45

21. Chelsea Marshall, Pittsfield, VT, 1:29.10

32. Leanne Smith, North Conway, NH, 1:30.06

35. Stacey Cook, Mammoth Mountain, CA, 1:30.36

37. Keely Kelleher, Big Sky, MT, 1:30.53

46. Alice McKennis, Glenwood Springs, CO, 1:31.33

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 10



Don’t let the yucky weather in the Lake Tahoe Basin scare you from the slopes. While South Lake had fog on Saturday, Sierra-at-Tahoe had some sun. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Hotdogger Wong captures Olympic spirit

Reno resident and legendary freestyle skier Wayne Wong will be the athlete of honor at the Olympic Heritage mogul competition Jan. 12 at Alpine Meadows Ski Resort.

As part of a series of this winterâ€™s Olympic Heritage events which celebrate the 50th anniversary as Lake Tahoeâ€™s Olympics, the Olympic Heritage Mogul Competition gets back to the roots of ski competition during the 1960s.



Hotdogger Wayne Wong in his prime. Photo/Alpine Meadows

Event registration is from 8-10am in the Alpine Meadows base lodge near



Wayne Wong

the fireplace, and is $25. The registration fee includes lunch; a beer or soda; a commemorative T-shirt; live concert; access to the post-competitions festivities and awards ceremony at the Alpine Meadows Mid Mountain Chalet (adjacent to the competition course); and a chance to ski with Wong.

The competition will take place on Yellow Trail from 11am-2pm, and competitors receive points for both 1960s ski style – and more important, 1960s fashion.

Fashion was all the rage during this era, so competitors who dig out their 1960s (and 1970s) ski duds have as much opportunity to take the gold as any legendary ski great.

For more information about the Olympic Heritage Mogul Competition at Alpine Meadows, visit SkiAlpine.com or call the Alpine Meadows events department at (530) 581.8332.

Wayne Wong, the skiing legend

In 2006, *Powder* magazine named Wong one of the greatest skiers of our time for his influence over the evolution of freestyle skiing, widely known as â€œhotdoggingâ€ during the 1960s. Hotdoggingâ€™s emerging and unorthodox ski style infused traditional skiing with fun, creative tricks; and Wongâ€™s ability to hotdog better than the entire freestyle field was evident from the get-go.

Because of his talent, the style caught like wildfire and became the popular way to be cool on the slopes throughout the 1960s and well into the 1970s – so much so that in 1979, the

International Ski Federation recognized hotdogging as an official winter ski discipline, and a new World Cup and Olympic sport was born.

The term hotdogging eventually became known as freestyle skiing, paving the way for Olympic athletes such as Jonny Moseley and Shannon Bahrke.

Fast forward to 2010, and Wongâ€™s style on the slopes is unmistakable – and can be spotted in every freestyle skier on the slopes. To this day, he is one of the best skiers on the mountain. Wayne invites all skiers to celebrate the genesis of todayâ€™s mogul and freestyle skiing in this fun flashback competition on Jan. 12.

Real estate leaders say now is the time to eliminate greed

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – â€œReal estate was never intended to be an ATM machine.â€

Thatâ€™s what Jim Hamilton, 2005 president of the California Association of Realtors, told a group of nearly 90 people on Friday night during the annual South Tahoe Association of Realtors installation dinner.

Hamilton told those at Edgewood Tahoe, â€œThis country was not founded on owning a home and making millions of dollars. Real estate should be about home ownership.â€



Jim Hamilton gives the key note address Jan. 8 at the annual STAR installation dinner. Photo/Kathryn Reed

He talked about when he was president of the state organization five years ago it was a no brainer to be a leader with how the housing market was booming and how agents didnâ€™t have to do much to get an escrow.

Now he believes the market is on the edge of change â€“ with things looking better for 2010.

He also encouraged agents to get involved and not be afraid of disagreements, but to be able to shake hands at the end of the day no matter the differences.

â€œDisagreement creates awesome ideas,â€ he said.

Hamilton had high praise for outgoing President Barb Childs and incoming President Theresa Souers.

Souers, who was also president in 2006, carried on with some of Hamiltonâ€™s themes.

â€œThe negativity of greed and fear is weighing us down,â€ Souers said. â€œWe need to stop longing for the old days because they arenâ€™t coming back.â€

She also pointed out that the old days werenâ€™t always so great. Agents were afraid to miss a call, to the leave the office and come back to a stack of pink â€œwhile you were outâ€ notes.

Today cell phones allow agents to work in the field â€“ or on the slopes.

Souers said how the top performers have the same problems as everyone else â€œthe difference is how they tackle the problems.â€

Education is going to be her emphasis in 2010. She wants to enrich the nearly 300 members with information about how they can better use technology, time management, have more effective negotiating techniques and to tap into what the state and national organizations can provide the South Tahoe group.

Rahlves turns it up a notch in skiercross



Daron Rahlves left the world of downhill competition to start a second career in skiercross. The 36-year-old trains at Sugar Bowl.

Why did you choose this resort?: For the skiing and to work with the Sugar Bowl Ski Team and Academy. Sugar Bowl has an outstanding race arena for training and the team has full support from the resort. The terrain at the Bowl is awesome

and there is a ton of back country terrain waiting just out of the resort.

How often are you in Lake Tahoe?: I live in Truckee 9 months of the year and get in the lake during the summer to water ski, wake board, SUP and swim.

When you arenâ€™t training and competing where can we find you and what would you be doing?: Spending time with Michelle and our twins Miley and Dreyson at home riding bikes, walking in the woods, skiing, at the lake, going out to lunch at Moodyâ€™s and playing with our two huskies. I also like to ride my sled in the winter and in summer dirtbike and mountain bike.

After you win gold in Vancouver, what is your next goal?: To compete in the Silver Belt Banzai March 14-15 at the Bowl and film big mountain skiing around Tahoe and in Alaska.

How long have you been participating in your sport?: Iâ€™ve skied since I was 3. Raced DH, SG and GS for 13 years on the USST and now ski cross on a limited schedule for the last 3 years. I donâ€™t compete in many ski cross events due to the time it takes away from my family. Iâ€™ve been on the road most of the winter during my racing career so now itâ€™s all about days skiing in Tahoe.

Who inspires you most and why?: I get inspired by those who have confidence and a positive attitude.

Your life is devoted to an event that is over in minutes, how do you prepare for that thrill of victory or agony of defeat?: I never prepare for the outcome, but for the chance I get.

Anything else you would like to add?: Iâ€™d like to thank all the people who follow me in competitions and free ski films. Iâ€™d like to thank my sponsors Red Bull, Atomic, Spyder, Sugar Bowl Resort, Oakley, Swix, Giro, Start Haus, Le Chamois, the USST, my sister Shannon, Mom, Dad and most of all

Michelle, Miley and Dreyson.

Publisher's note: *On Jan. 11 read about what it was like for a Tahoe reporter to cover the 1960 Olympics.*

Ex-LT art gallery owner making news in Palm Springs

By Terria Smith, Desert Sun

The Palm Springs VillageFest Board lost a member after its meeting on Dec. 22.

Jill Beede, a Desert Hot Springs High School teacher and former Lake Tahoe art gallery owner, submitted a letter of resignation dated the same day as the meeting.

With Beede's resignation and the absence of Sally McManus, who resigned for medical reasons last fall, the board now has two vacant positions. Five members remain.

Read the whole story

Sierra Avalanche Center ski days

Sierra Avalanche Center ski days are SAC's largest fund-raising events.

Each of the participating ski areas have donated a set number of lift tickets to SAC that are only valid on a specific day. SAC is selling these lift tickets at a discounted price. SAC retains the proceeds from each ticket sale. Fund raising from these events makes up the majority of SAC’s annual budget.

Upcoming SAC Events:

* Bear Valley Ski Day Jan. 15

* Northstar Ski Day Jan. 24

* Kirkwood Ski Day Feb. 20

* Mt. Rose Ski Day Feb. 21

For more information, go to www.sierraavalanchecenter.org.

Santiago to brief Dem Club

El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago will give the Lake Tahoe Democratic Club a state of the county report Jan. 13.

Club meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm in the loft above the Blue Angel CafÃ©, 1132 Ski Run Blvd., South Lake Tahoe.

Everyone is welcome.

Mixed results for Tahoe area mogulists

By USSA

CALGARY – The U.S. Freestyle Ski Team's women's moguls squad gave Calgary a Saturday-night encore with three skiers in the top six, led by Park City's Heather McPhie, who grabbed another all-important top five with her second consecutive fourth-place finish.

"I'm knocking at the door, repeatedly," said McPhie, who is in competition for the final Olympic spot, give her two top-5's. "I definitely don't feel my work is over."

McPhie was a discretionary choice to compete in Suomo, Finland, in December, finding out she'd be a part of the FIS World Cup circuit on Nov. 19, a date she said she won't forget.

"I get goosebumps talking about it," she said.

McPhie said she wasn't totally overwhelmed in her first action, but still had room to improve.

"I made some big gains mentally this week," she said. "You want to do so well, but at the same time you know that there's a lot to learn. I'll keep chipping away at both my strengths and my weaknesses until they're all strengths."

Shelly Robertson (Reno, NV) moved up to fifth from eighth Friday, and 2002 Olympic silver medalist Shannon Bahrke (Tahoe City, CA) followed a seventh-place performance with sixth.

Already assured a spot on the Olympic squad, U.S. Olympic Trial winner Hannah Kearney (Norwich, VT) crashed on her bottom air, missing finals.

U.S. Olympic Trial champion Patrick Deneen (Cle Elum, WA) was the top performer on the men?s side in ninth place.

“It was a very difficult course,” said moguls head coach Scott Rawles. “You had to be really super focused and on your game to do well with it.”

Canada’s Jennifer Heil won for the second consecutive day, moving to first place in the FIS World Cup standings over country mate Kristi Richards, and Australia’s Dale Begg-Smith also made it two-for-two in Calgary on the men?s side.

Three events remain for the moguls athletes to secure a desperately sought trip to Vancouver – two in Park City, Utah, at Deer Valley Resort and one in Lake Placid and there are a plethora of athletes vying for the honor on both sides.

“In a lot of ways, it’s a good problem to have,” Rawles said. “We’re psyched to get back to the States for three weeks.”

Calgary, Jan. 9, Moguls

Men

1. Dale Begg-Smith, Australia, 25.25

2. Alexandre Bilodeau, Canada, 24.70

3. Alexandr Smyshlyaev, Russia, 24.42

4. Dmitriy Reiherd, Kazakhstan, 23.68

5. Anthony Benna, France, 23.67

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9. Patrick Deneen, Cle Elum, WA, 23.14

11. Sho Kashima, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 22.40

16. Bryon Wilson, Butte, MT, 10.77

18. Michael Morse, Duxbury, MA, 21.32

30. David Babic, Washington, VT, 19.77

52. Nate Roberts, Park City, UT, 4.96

Women

1. Jennifer Heil, Canada, 24.94

2. Aiko Uemura, Japan, 24.03

3. Nikola Sudova, Czech Republic, 23.90

4. Heather McPhie, Park City, UT, 23.69

5. Shelly Robertson, Reno, NV, 23.30

6. Shannon Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 23.73

–

16. Emiko Torito, Denver, 4.56

20. Michelle Roark, Denver, 18.33

33. Eliza Outtrim, Steamboat Springs, CO,