NCAA’s early seeds hold little sway at sports books

By Jesse Granger, Las Vegas Sun

On Saturday afternoon, for the first time ever, the NCAA men’s basketball committee released its current top 16 teams more than a month before the official bracket is announced on March 12.

Las Vegas sports books paid no attention.

“We have our own power rankings and we base our odds on those rankings and the money that we have already received during the course of the season,” said Jay Kornegay, vice president of the Westgate sports book. “These rankings are so early that it’s almost for entertainment purposes only. It’s not influencing any changes in the odds.”

Read the whole story

Alliance aims to make Nev. esports hub

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Review-Journal

A group of businesses, advocates and academics have formed an association focused on advancing the development of Nevada as a global hub for esports.

The Nevada Esports Alliance is a new non-profit organization that plans to boost the state as the center of the convergence

of video gaming and the casino industry.

Nevada regulators approved rules for skill-based gaming last year and that has led to growth in esports competitions and wagering on game outcomes. In addition, the first esports lab opened last year at UNLV's International Gaming Institute.

Read the whole story

Squaw's Bennett takes 11th in slalom

By USSA

ST. MORITZ, Switzerland – Standing 6-feet-7-inches tall, Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) is built more like a power forward than a power slalom skier. But competing in his first World Championships, Bennett hammered through a challenging slalom course to an 11th-place finish in Monday's alpine combined to lead the U.S. at the 2017 FIS Alpine World Ski Championships.

Switzerland's Luca Aerni surprised the best skiers in the world, winning his first major event in front of the roaring home country crowd. Prior to Monday's win, Aerni's best results were a couple Swiss national titles (slalom 2015, alpine combined 2012) and a handful of top 10 World Cup finishes. Austria's Marcel Hirscher, currently the best ski racer in the world, took the silver, followed by Aerni's Swiss teammate Mauro Caviezel taking the bronze.

Bennett, who towers over the slalom gates, finished 18th in the morning downhill, and then put down a solid slalom run to lead four Americans into the top 25, including Brennan Rubie

(Salt Lake City) in 15th, Ryan Cochran-Siegle (Starksboro, Vt.) in 19th and Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) on 21st.

“In slalom, I don’t know what it’s like to be short, so I just go out and do what I do best … make it work,” said Bennett, who also commented on the slalom course conditions. “The course workers are doing a pretty good job. They injected last night, which was a questionable call. It didn’t really sink in, so it broke through pretty quick. But for the most part it’s alright, doable.”

The injected portions of the slalom course caught a number of racers off-guard as the top finishers from the morning downhill ran into trouble on the first break-over on the slalom track. Aerni, who finished 30th in the downhill and ran first in the slalom, posted the time to beat on a clean track and then watch in disbelief as 29 more racers failed to knock him off the top step of the podium.

LTCC to host rail jam

The inaugural Coyote Country Rail Jam is March 10 from 5-10pm in and around Lake Tahoe Community College’s Physical Education building.

There’s no entry cost. All ages are welcome to participate!.

The event will include the rail jam, free sledding hill, food, music, games for the kids and more.

For more info, email booth@ltcc.edu.

Guided snowshoe at Spooner State Park

Park rangers will lead a two-mile snowshoe hike at Spooner Lake State Park on Feb. 25 from 10am-noon.

The hike is fairly easy and open to all skill levels, though snowshoes will not be provided. Dogs on a leash are welcome.

Meet in the parking lot to the right after the driveway splits.

The event is free, but park entrance fees apply. Entry is $7 per vehicle, Nevada residents receive a $2 discount.

For more info, email spooner.ranger@gmail.com.

Nev. hunters shoot down land transfer idea

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

A proposal that would unload millions of acres of federal public land in Nevada fell flat Friday in Carson City.

Dozens of hunters and anglers told the Nevada Wildlife Commission they oppose the proposal contained in Congressional bill by Rep. Mark Amodei, R-Nev.

The commission, a state body which oversees the Nevada Department of Wildlife, voted unanimously to summarize the hunters' concerns in a letter to Amodei.

Read the whole story

Squaw men not in top 10 in downhill

By USSA

ST. MORITZ, Switzerland – Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) led the Americans at the makeup day for the Audi FIS Alpine World Ski Championships downhill, taking 20th.

Beat Feuz of Switzerland, who won the downhill and super G test events at St. Moritz during the 2015-16 season, secured the gold medal in front of the hometown crowd. Canadian Erik Guay continued his dominant week in St. Moritz to take silver and Max Franz of Austria took bronze.

The day started out with similar weather to Saturday's postponed downhill—a thick layer of fog hovering in the middle of the course. But as the day went on, the cloud lifted, leaving brilliant sunshine sparkling on the World Championships track.

Due to the early weather, the downhill start was lowered, but that didn't restrict the men from catching huge air off the jumps.

Behind Goldberg, Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) was 25th, Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) 26th and Tommy Biesemeyer (Keene, N.Y.) 29th.

Holland just misses top 10 in snowboardcross

By USSA

FELDBERG, Germany – Three American women finished in the top 10 Saturday at the first of two FIS World Cup snowboardcross races at Feldberg. Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton Mountain, Vt.) had the top finish with a win in the small final for fifth place, Rosie Mancari (Anchorage, Alaska) was right behind her in sixth and Faye Gulini (Salt Lake City) was ninth.

It was a start-to-finish battle for the podium for the women. Italian rider Michela Moioli won that battle for the victory, World Cup leader Belle Brockhoff of Austria was second and Canadian Meryeta Odine earned her first World Cup podium in third.

Nate Holland (Squaw Valley) was the top finisher for the American men in 11th. In another thrilling big final, Pierre Vaultier of France was the winner, Spain's Lucas Eguibar was second and Omar Visintin of Italy was third.

A machine considered punishment now a $1.4B

industry

By Mike Plunkett, New York Times

As the weather turns colder, Jen Forman will do what she's always done to get her runs in: She'll go to her treadmill in her home, press start and run until she's done.

And she will hate every moment of it.

"I will continue to press the speed button to get a treadmill workout done as quickly as possible," said Forman, 38, of Gaithersburg. "But I can't live without it, because if it's snowing outside or I have my kids at home, I can't leave and go for a run."

In its 2016 survey, the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) found that more than 50 million Americans said they used a treadmill at least once in the previous year. Yet if the monotonous motion feels like torture, well, that shouldn't come as a surprise. The tread wheel, a variation of what we know as the modern treadmill, was used in the 1800s to keep British prisoners from idleness but more so for hard labor.

Read the whole story

EDC cyclist climbs 1 million feet in 1 year

By Blair Anthony Robertson, Sacramento Bee

Torey Philipp has been riding and racing his road bike since he was 14. Now, he trains on the roads throughout Northern

California, often leaving from his El Dorado Hills home and heading out into the foothills of the Sierra to go up and down all kinds of hills and mountains on quiet rural roads.

In cycling, it’s called climbing, and it’s not only the hardest part of the sport but the key to getting faster and stronger. This past year, Philipp did something extraordinary as part of his often grueling training schedule. With an extra push at the end of 2016, he racked up 1 million feet of elevation gain while riding his bike 14,248 miles.

Those numbers, along with maps of all of his routes, are all saved on Strava, the app and website used by many endurance athletes to keep track of their workouts and see how they stack up to others.

Read the whole story