

Tahoe snowboarders miss podium in superpipe

Lake Tahoe snowboarders didn't fare well in the superpipe at the Winter X Games in Aspen on Sunday.

Hannah Teter of Meyers was sixth with a 67.33, while Elena Hight of South Lake Tahoe was eighth with 59.66

Chloe Kim repeated her gold medal performance from a year ago, with a score of 95 on Jan. 31. The 15-year-old trains at Mammoth.

The riders had to contend with snowy conditions that slowed them down when it came to getting big air.

Arielle Gold of Breckenridge won the silver with a score of 86. Xuetong Cai of China took home the bronze with an 80.33.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Ranger finds trees have social networks

By Sally McGrane, New York Times

HÜMMEL, Germany – In the deep stillness of a forest in winter, the sound of footsteps on a carpet of leaves died away. Peter Wohlleben had found what he was looking for: a pair of towering beeches. “These trees are friends,” he said, craning his neck to look at the leafless crowns, black against a gray sky. “You see how the thick branches point away from each

other? That's so they don't block their buddy's light."

Before moving on to an elderly beech to show how trees, like people, wrinkle as they age, he added, "Sometimes, pairs like this are so interconnected at the roots that when one tree dies, the other one dies, too."

Wohlleben, 51, is a very tall career forest ranger who, with his ramrod posture and muted green uniform, looks a little like one of the sturdy beeches in the woods he cares for. Yet he is lately something of a sensation as a writer in Germany, a place where the forest has long played an outsized role in the cultural consciousness, in places like fairy tales, 20th-century philosophy, Nazi ideology and the birth of the modern environmental movement.

After the publication in May of Mr. Wohlleben's book, a surprise hit titled "The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate – Discoveries From a Secret World," the German forest is back in the spotlight. Since it first topped best-seller lists last year, Mr. Wohlleben has been spending more time on the media trail and less on the forest variety, making the case for a popular reimagination of trees, which, he says, contemporary society tends to look at as "organic robots" designed to produce oxygen and wood.

Read the whole story

Snow allows Great Ski Race to return

One of the Sierra's enduring traditions, the Great Ski Race, returns March 6 after being canceled due to lack of snow the

last two years.

It is billed as the West's largest cross country event.

The 30-kilometer race began in 1977 with 60 racers. Today more than 1,000 skiers of all abilities participate.

Racers depart in waves from the Tahoe Cross Country Ski Area in Tahoe City, traverse rolling hills, spacious meadows, and groomed trails before heading slightly downhill to the finish at Hilltop in Truckee.

The Great Ski Race is the primary fundraiser for the Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team, a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization.

Registration fees are \$60 through Feb. 20, \$70 from Feb. 21-March 5, and \$110 on race day. For more information, or to register for the race, go **online**.

Cyclists plot South Shore path improvements

By Kathryn Reed

The South Shore cycling community has big plans for this year that involve allocating money for trails and signage, as well getting jurisdictions to coordinate improvements to better leverage the limited dollars that are available.

Shay Navarro, head of the Bicycle Advisory Committee for the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Joint Powers Authority, on Jan. 29 presented her group's goals for the year to the board.

The three-member board is comprised of reps from South Lake Tahoe (Austin Sass), El Dorado County (Sue Novasel) and Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District (Victor Babbitt). The men are new to the board, with this being their first meeting. The board is tasked with overseeing the expenditure of Measure S/R funds.

Last year's pilot program to remove snow from the city's class 1 trails barely happened because of lack of white stuff, so the money is being used this season.

With \$22,000 left over from the Sawmill bridge decking project because the bid came in lower than expected, the bike committee is recommending that money be used to plow paths in the county that go from Viking Way to Meyers.

Novasel said the county's department of transportation has questions about whether that path meandering through the woods (paralleling Lake Tahoe Boulevard) could sustain a vehicle regularly on it without damaging the asphalt, as well as questioning the need for snow stakes. She said a resolution won't happen this winter.

It is estimated there will be \$65,000 from the measures for bike-related improvements this year. While the board agreed with the committee's priority list, final adoption will come in the summer when the exact figure is available. The preliminary list is necessary so committee members may work with city and county staff to get the projects on their calendars. Much of this will be ironed out between the committee members and staff from the city and county at the March meeting of the bike group.



El Dorado County officials have concerns about plowing the path that parallels Lake Tahoe Boulevard. Photo/LTN

The list in order of the bike committee's priorities include:

- Adding money to ensure completion of the class 1 segment along Rufus Allen Boulevard from the library to vector control and from Rufus Allen to the senior center. This includes the planned rehabilitation of paths between the bridge east of Meeks Lumber and Edgewood Circle and between Lakeview Commons and the Alta Mira site.
- To decrease user conflicts, painting a yellow line down the Linear Park and Harrison Avenue paths is recommended. Widening Linear Park is also a suggestion.
- Improve the pavement on paths at 15th Street, community playfields, and boardwalk by Lake Tahoe Golf Course.
- As the city does work on Sierra Boulevard, create an extension from there to the class 1 trail behind Scusa restaurant and Fitness Evolution. "This is perfect timing because they plan to rip out the entire parking lot after the

snow season,” Sass said.

- Add green paint in the area of Eloise Avenue and Dunlap Street in the city when crews are striping the area to improve bike safety. This would be a pilot program. Green paint is a growing trend to help vehicles and bikes coexist on the same roads.

- Increase signage where appropriate. They could give directions and mileage to key areas, as is the case with other signs the committee has funded.

- While Measure R/S funds cannot be used to repave a street, the committee is urging the city to fix the dilapidated Eloise Avenue because it is a major route for cyclists and the surface is more suitable for a mountain bike than a road bike.

- The committee wants to ensure intersection improvements included in the Tahoe Valley Area Plan are sensitive to the needs of cyclists.

- The county is asked to realign the Pat Lowe trail for better access to Pioneer Trail and Highway 50 with funds from the On-Our-Way grant.

- It is suggested the city extend a path from Melba Drive to Lake Tahoe Airport so cyclists have an alternative to getting to that facility, which doubles as city hall, without having to ride on Highway 50.

- The group wants the city to apply for bike-friendly status, with the goal of getting a higher rating than bronze as has been awarded in the past.

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In other action:

- Babbitt brought up the likelihood the park in Meyers

will need more money than the \$50,000 it currently receives via the voter-approved measures. Bike committee member Chuck Nelson pointed out this is not what voters approved and believes it would be illegal to do so. Novasel said the matter can be further investigated and discussed at the next meeting.

Prescribed fires planned for Tahoe

Lake Valley and Tahoe Douglas fire protection districts, California State Parks and the U.S Forest Service may continue prescribed fire operations beginning Feb. 1.

To view a map with project locations and details, go **online**.

Residual smoke may be seen in locations where operations have taken place over the last several weeks.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size and environmental conditions. Agencies coordinate with state and local county air pollution control districts and monitor weather conditions closely prior to prescribed fire ignition. They wait for favorable conditions that will carry smoke up and out of the basin.

Before conducting prescribed fire operations, agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2816.

Ganong 6th in Garmisch downhill

By USSA

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany – A bruised and banged up Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) led five Americans into the top 30, with a sixth-place finish, in the Audi FIS Ski World Cup Saturday on the Kandahar downhill track.

“I wasn’t really sure I was going to be able to ski this week with my knee – I had a bone bruise after Kitzbuehel,” said Ganong, who skied to his best result ever on the Kandahar downhill track. “I’m just really happy that I pushed through and raced today because it’s an awesome result.”

Norway’s Aleksander Aamodt Kilde stepped in for injured teammate Aksel Lund Svindal, who blew his knee last week in Kitzbuehel, and came out of the 30th start position to win his first career World Cup downhill. Slovenia’s Bostjan Kline was second, and Switzerland’s Beat Feuz was third.

For the Americans, Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) was 10th; Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) tied for 17th; Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) was 20th; and Wiley Maple (Aspen, Colo.) cracked the top 30 in downhill for the first time this season in 23rd. Tommy Biesemeyer (Keene, N.Y.), Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) and Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley) all DNFed.

“Today (the Kandahar downhill track) surprised us,” Nyman said. “The first training run, it was really soft and warm, but it bound up and got frozen and was brutal. It’s an endurance track. Even though it’s only about two minutes, it’s bumpy and dark the whole way down. And it turns, a lot. It’s a

nonstop fight.”

Bowman snares gold at X Games

Maddie Bowman of Meyers won her fourth consecutive X Games gold medal in ski superpipe on Jan. 29.

She is the first woman to land a switch 900 in the superpipe during competition.

The 22-year-old said she learned how to take off backward with 900 degrees of rotation on Wednesday. Judges gave the Sierra-at-Tahoe skier a score of 87.33. This is her sixth X Games medal.

Taking second was Ayana Onozuka of Japan, with a score of 85; Annalisa Drew of Andover, Mass., took the bronze with 83 points.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Anderson grabs silver in X Games slopestyle

Jamie Anderson of Meyers duplicated her 2015 X Games accomplishment by taking home of the silver Friday in snowboard slopestyle.

This is her 11th X Games and her 11th medal.

Anderson, who rides for Sierra-at-Tahoe, scored a 89 Jan. 29, two points behind winner Spencer O'Brien of Canada. Taking third at the Aspen, Colo., competition was Hailey Langland of San Clemente with a score of 88.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Reno's Wise 8th at X Games

By Chris Murray, Reno Gazette-Journal

An injured shoulder kept Reno's David Wise from making a legitimate run at another X Games gold.

Wise, competing with a grade II AC joint sprain/separation in his shoulder that he suffered a week ago, wasn't able to get in his groove Thursday night in the Ski SuperPipe in Aspen. The three-time X Games gold medalist, who also won Olympic gold in 2014, finished eighth in this year's X Games out of 12 competitors, the biggest event of the year.

Wise lost his skis high on the pipe on his first run and scored a 13.66 (out of 100).

Read the whole story

Windy snowstorm on its way to

Tahoe

A winter storm warning has been issued for the greater Lake Tahoe area from Friday at 4pm through Saturday at 10am.

The National Weather Service in Reno is calling for 6-10 inches of snow at lake level, with 1-3 feet above 8,000 feet, and a couple inches down to 4,000 feet.

It will be a blustery storm that blows through, which will likely create whiteout conditions. Expect sustained gusts between 45 and 65 mph, and the ridges hitting 100-plus mph.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report