Rock Tahoe Half Marathon coming to South Shore

A new race is coming to Lake Tahoe – the Rock Tahoe Half Marathon.

Epic Tahoe Adventures and Hard Rock Lake Tahoe are putting on the June 20 event.

The Rock Tahoe Half Marathon starts at Spooner Summit and drops more than 1,000 feet as it winds its way down Highway 50 along the East Shore of Lake Tahoe to a finish line directly in front of Hard Rock Lake Tahoe. The course will also take runners off the highway along the newly completed forest path from Round Hill Pines to Rabe Meadow.

Other weekend activities include a pre-race dinner on that Friday night, runners expo and athletes village, pool party for runners and their guests following the race, and awards for not only the top male and female age group finishers, but for "most ridiculous running outfit" and other fun categories.

Register .

Truckee plowing trails for first time

This winter Truckee will be plowing all trails that are owned or maintained by the town.

This new service is funded by voter approved Measure R.

Residents and visitors will be able to walk or ride throughout the winter on eight miles of paved trails, including the Legacy Trail, the Brockway Road Trail, all trails located along the exterior of the roundabouts and the trails connecting Donner Pass Road to the Alder Creek Middle School.

Jitloff 12th in GS, Ligety on podium

By USSA

ALTA BADIA, Italy – Ted Ligety (Park City,) had a phenomenal second run of giant slalom, skiing from seventh place to second in the Audi FIS Ski World Cup in Alta Badia. Tim Jitloff (Reno) took 12.

It was a rough track, with the men tackling nasty ruts and icy bumps. If the racers didn't stay on their line and on the outside ski, the course spit them out. But those types of courses are perfect for Ligety, who – after a disappointing seventh place on the first run – used his classic angles to shred the hill, coming down second run ahead of the field by over a second.

The only one who could beat Ligety was Marcel Hirscher of Austria. After winning both tech races in Are, Sweden, Hirscher of Austria was hungry for another victory. He took the Alta Badia win by almost a second and a half. Just off Ligety's pace by 0.03 seconds, Thomas Fanara of France was in third.

Brennan Rubie (Salt Lake City), Mark Engel (Truckee) and David Chodounsky (Crested Butte, Colo.) did not qualify for a second

run.

Mancuso top U.S. woman in super G

By USSA

VAL D'ISERE, France – Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) capped the speed weekend in Val d'Isere finishing sixth Dec. 21 in an Audi FIS Ski World Cup super G.

Austria's Elisabeth Goergl took the win, while Lindsey Vonn (Vail) saw her hopes of matching the all-time win record dashed when she crashed near the top of the course.

Four Americans cracked into the points.

Soft snow continued to be an issue over the weekend – ironically after so little had fallen in the weeks leading into the races.

Mancuso continued to ski consistently and was pleased with where she's heading.

"I decided to go with my instinct," she said. "It was a step in the right direction. I'm happy with my finish and I know where I can make up that half second."

Vonn skied well out of the start, but found herself caught short and went out, crashing but walking away relatively unscathed.

"I skied pretty well on the top section, but I hit some softer snow and lost a little elevation and couldn't make the gate,"

she said. “I’m still happy with today. I skied well and aggressively. The most important thing is my knees are good. I love being on the World Cup again and pushing myself every day. Today wasn’t as good as yesterday, but I’m skiing well.”

Her quest to match the record 62 women’s World Cup wins held by Annemarie Moser-Proell will have to wait. Vonn earned No. 61 on Saturday.

In addition to Mancuso, Laurenne Ross (Bend, Ore.) was 13, Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) 22nd and Jackie Wiles 30.

Ganong top U.S. skier in super G at 26th

By USSA

VAL GARDENA, Italy – On a snow-hungry super G course in Val Gardena resembling a luge track, the U.S. men on Dec. 20 could not rival the women’s Val d’Isere results. Andrew Weibrecht (Lake Placid, N.Y.) was the top U.S. athlete in 19th place, while Ted Ligety (Park City) and Friday’s downhill winner Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) did not finish.

Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) rounded out the top 30, in 26.

Kjetil Jansrud of Norway took his third win of the season – nailing the line so many men missed, and beating the field by almost half a second. He earned another 100 World Cup points to grab the overall lead. Dominik Paris of Italy took second and Birds of Prey SG winner Hannes Reichelt of Austria was third.

It was a tough course, causing men to pinball over the famed

camel bumps, before sending them directly into the gates after it. There, they were getting late, sending many off the course – including Ligety, who skied out on an icy spot near the finish.

To round out the field, Jared Goldberg (Holladay, Utah) took 38, Bryce Bennett (Squaw Valley) 41, Tommy Biesemeyer (Keene, N.Y.) 42, Tim Jitloff (Reno) 51 and Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley) 55.

Bridges add beauty, recreation to cities



The old and new Bay Bridge linking Oakland and San Francisco. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Bridges aren’t just about getting people from point A to point B, they can be an architectural wonder – no matter when they were built.

This is true for two iconic bridges in the United States. The new San Francisco Bay Bridge, while it will always take a backseat to the Golden Gate Bridge, is more aesthetically pleasing than what was there. The Brooklyn Bridge, built in 1883, remains a visual beauty.

I had the opportunity to walk across both bridges this year. Doing so provides a more intimate experience with the structures compared to driving.



The foot path adjacent to the new section of the Bay Bridge.

Replacing the Bay Bridge became necessary after the 1989 earthquake saw the upper deck collapse onto the lower deck. But it has been one boondoggle after the next. Even to this day there are questions about how safe bolts are, as well as if and when the bike-pedestrian lane will be extended to Yerba Buena Island.

It’s an out-and-back trek of about 7 miles depending on where

one starts. This is the first time people have been able to walk on the eastern span of the Bay Bridge.

The only thing that could have made it better is if the path were on the other side – where the Golden Gate is.

While you are parallel to traffic, the vehicles seem far enough away to feel safe. And it was not nearly as loud as any of us expected.

Markings on the path indicate a separation of walkers and cyclists, which helps avoid unpleasant collisions. There is a lane in each direction for two-wheelers; one lane of the 15.5-foot wide path is for pedestrians.

In order to continue the non-motorized path the old bridge has to be removed – which is happening.



The Brooklyn Bridge was built in the 1800s.

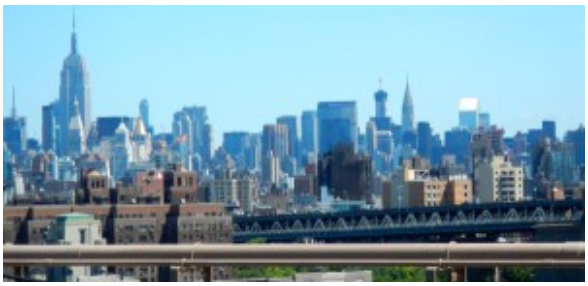
When the Brooklyn Bridge was built it was the longest suspension bridge.

We opted to take the subway to Brooklyn and then walk into Manhattan. According to the New York Department of Transportation, 4,000 pedestrians and 3,100 bicyclists cross the Brooklyn Bridge every day.

It is 4-miles long.

What is great about this old bridge is the wooden walking path is above where the vehicles are. You don't even know cars and trucks are whizzing by below you. Maybe it's because the skyline is so mesmerizing. At one point the Statue of Liberty is the focal point.

While the United States has an infrastructure problem, these bridges are testaments to why keeping up with maintenance is critical. These are not just tourist attractions, but means of transport for commuters and others.



New York City's skyline from the Brooklyn Bridge.

According to the 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure, "Over 200 million trips are taken daily across deficient bridges in the nation's 102 largest metropolitan regions. In total, one in nine of the nation's bridges are rated as structurally deficient, while the average age of the nation's 607,380 bridges is currently 42 years. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that to eliminate the nation's bridge deficient backlog by 2028, we would need to invest $20.5 billion annually, while only $12.8 billion is being spent currently. The challenge for federal, state, and local governments is to increase bridge investments by $8 billion annually to address the identified $76 billion in needs for deficient bridges across the United States."

Vonn on a winning streak; Mancuso 15th

By USSA

VAL D'ISERE, France – Lindsey Vonn (Vail) positioned herself on the doorstep to history Dec. 20, winning her 61 career Audi FIS Ski World Cup with a 0.19 second victory in the Val d'Isere downhill. It left her just one win away from matching the all-time win record held by the legendary Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell.

Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg and Austria's Elisabeth Goergl tied for second.

Starting 13, Goergl set the pace to beat. Vonn came down 20, skiing aggressively and making a few mistakes – but staying ahead of the Austrian the entire way down the Oreiller-Killy course. Rebensburg, coming down later, was the only one to challenge Vonn and settled for the second place tie.

It was only Vonn's fourth race back since a series of knee surgeries. She has won two of the three downhills she's skied, and moved out of a tie with Tina Maze to takeover the Audi FIS Ski World Cup downhill lead.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) was 15, with Alice McKennis (Glenwood Springs, Colo.) 18.

Nyman soars in Italy, Ganong

earns World Cup points

By USSA

VAL GARDENA, Italy – There are some downhill courses that suit certain athletes. And the fabled Saslong in Val Gardena is that downhill course with the U.S. Ski Team's Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah). On Dec. 19, Nyman etched his name once again into the annals of skiing history as he won his third career downhill in one of his sport's most challenging races.

Coming off a podium finish at the Audi Birds of Prey in Beaver Creek, Nyman ripped to a 1.51 second lead from the lucky seven start position, and hung on to take a 0.31 second margin over World Cup downhill leader Kjetil Jansrud of Norway.

Dominik Paris of Italy was third.

Val Gardena's Saslong downhill is the jewel of the Dolomites – a classic on the Audi FIS Ski World Cup. It's the December ritual for the men, offering a long and challenging piste with dark December shadows, nasty early season snow and the fabled camel bumps coming into the finish. It has taken its toll on many a ski racer over the years and few have mastered it like Nyman, who became only the fourth athlete to win three times.

Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) was the only other American in the points, finishing 13.

Land transfer good for N.

Shore bike trails

With the transfer of the Firestone property to Placer County, the county can move forward with construction of the 2.4 miles of the Dollar Creek Shared Use Trail.

The North Tahoe Public Utility District board this month agreed to the deal.

The county agreed to assume the district's full responsibility for the planning permit, construction, operations and maintenance for the trail that was assigned to the district in the 1988 agreement with the California Tahoe Conservancy for the purchase of the Firestone property.

The county plans to break ground next year with funding coming from a grant from the Federal Lands Access Program.

The trail on one end will link up to where the Tahoe City Public Utility District trail ends in Dollar Hill and end at Fulton Crescent.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Nevada launches parks passport program

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

You don't need a passport to go to a Nevada State Park. But it might make the experience more fun.

That’s what state officials, including Gov. Brian Sandoval, are hoping for with the launch of Nevada State Parks Passport program.

They gathered Wednesday at Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, Spooner Lake, to celebrate the launch with Sandoval being the first visitor to have his passport stamped.

Read the whole story