Mancuso unable to finish GS in Sweden

By USSA

ARE, Sweden – Tina Maza continued her quest for the overall Audi FIS Ski World Cup title with her third win in three disciplines this season, taking the giant slalom in Are on Dec. 12.

Mikaela Shiffrin (Eagle-Vail, Colo.) placed 10 in the opening race of the weekend, originally scheduled for snow-starved Courchevel, France. Rising Swedish star Sara Hector skied from 25 into second while first-run-leading Eva-Maria Brem of Austria was third.

Shiffrin skied solid but not as aggressively as she wanted in the first run, going out second and finishing the run in eighth, one spot behind Maze and 0.78 from the leader Brem in a tightly packed field. In the second run, Shiffrin dropped to 10 while Maze charged up to take the lead and the victory.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) just made the flip at 30, but went out in the second run. Megan McJames (Park City) missed the top 30.

Multiple agencies to pile

burn in Tahoe

The Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, California State Parks, Nevada Division of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service will continue prescribed fire operations near Sugar Pine Point State Park, Pioneer Trail and Washoan Boulevard, Ski Run Boulevard near Heavenly, Van Sickle Bi-State Park, Luther Pass, Spooner Summit, and Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park in Slaughterhouse Canyon. Operations will last through the next several weeks as conditions allow.

Fall and winter bring cooler temperatures and precipitation, which favor prescribed burning. Each operation follows a prescribed fire burn plan, which considers temperature, humidity, wind, moisture of the vegetation, and conditions for the dispersal of smoke.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size. Agencies coordinate with state and local county air pollution control districts and monitors weather conditions closely prior to prescribed fire ignition.

The Forest Service updates the local fire information line at 530.543.2600, ext. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Storm dumps on Sierra-at-Tahoe, resort opens



Powder conditions for opening day Dec. 12 at Sierra-at-Tahoe. Photo/Provided

Sierra-at-Tahoe opened today at noon.

While the South Shore received only a dusting of snow out of this storm, the Echo Summit area ski resort received 15 inches overnight.

Grandview and Easy Rider chairlifts are running, servicing seven runs. With the limited terrain, come discounted prices.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Youngsters dive into special classroom



Larry Phippen teaches Bijou fourth-graders how to be better swimmers. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Holding on to the side of the pool the youngsters kick as hard as they can, causing Larry Phippen to close his eyes with all that water headed in his direction.

He's telling them to turn their heads and breath. Later they grab kickboards to make their way across the width of the pool. Other times they are going after rings at the bottom of the pool.

The noise from all of these kids at the South Lake Tahoe pool is deafening under the dome.

"I think this is a great opportunity. It doesn't matter who the person is. If they are going to a public school, it's important for a city when they have a facility like this to offer something back to the community where it doesn't cost anything," Phippen told *Lake Tahoe News*. He is the instructor for this swim program and is also a coach with the private Tahoe Swim Club.



Jasmine Perez kicks along the wall.

Since the mid-1980s the city and Lake Tahoe Unified School District have had a partnership where every fourth-grader has the opportunity to learn to swim at no cost to the student.

The kids are divided into beginner, intermediate and advanced groups. Each class receives one week of instruction for about an hour a day.

“A lot of families have never been to the swim center. And a lot of kids have never been swimming before today,” Rebecca Musalo, Bijou Community School teacher, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Hugo Perez is in the beginner group, which is staying in the shallow end where everyone can touch the bottom. Some in this group, like Hugo, have swum before but are not proficient, while others are new to the sport.

Hugo likes floating on his back the best.

“I feel like I’m in a bed on the water,” Hugo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The hardest part was learning to turn his head in the water to breathe.



Hugo Perez practices floating on his back.

His dad, Hugo Perez Sr., was on the pool deck watching with admiration. This is how he chose to spend his day off – watching his son become more adept at an activity that he likes.

Safety in and around water is the overriding lesson all levels are taught. This includes being able to tread water and float on their back.

Everyone helping the kids is a certified safety water instructor. The program is nationally recognized by the American Red Cross Learn to Swim Program.

“What surprises me around here is you have a lot of public free access to beach areas, but not a lot of guards,” Phippen said, underlining the importance of being self-reliant. “We teach them how they can survive in water and feel comfortable.”

At the end of the week, each student is given a handout stating what level they are at and what program would be ideal for them if they chose to take more lessons at the recreation center. The city offers swim lessons throughout the year.

Sand Harbor offering weekend of winter events

Sand Harbor is offering a slew of holiday activities and special events Dec. 13-14.

The park restaurant will be open weekends for holiday drinks and snacks, with meal and sleigh-ride packages available.

Holiday ornament crafting is Dec. 13 from noon-3pm at the visitor center at Sand Harbor. All ages are welcome, children must be accompanied by an adult. The park will supply materials and work with children to help them create handmade ornaments. A $5 donation is suggested to help cover costs.

Holiday Heritage talk is both days from 10-11am. Park staff will give a presentation on the history and customs of this holiday season. All ages are welcome, children must be accompanied by an adult.

The Sand Point hike is Dec. 14 from 1-2:30pm. Meet at the visitor center. This is an easy three-quarter-mile hike around the Sand Park Boardwalk. Along the way, park rangers will point out facts about plants and animals in the area. All ages are welcome, children must be accompanied by an adult.

Entry to Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park Sand Harbor is $7 per vehicle with a $2 discount for Nevada residents.

TRTA offering wilderness

first aid class

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association is hosting a two-day wilderness first aid course in January taught by the Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS.

This course will provide individuals with a foundation of important first aid concepts critical to responding effectively to emergencies in a remote backcountry environment.

The WFA course will help participants prepare for the unexpected. This fast paced, hands-on training is designed to meet the needs of trip leaders, camp staff, outdoor enthusiasts and individuals working in remote locations. It will introduce caring for people who become ill or injured far from definitive medical care. Classroom lectures and demonstrations are combined with realistic scenarios where mock patients will challenge participants to integrate their learning.

Learning takes place both in the classroom and in outdoor settings regardless of weather conditions. Dates are Jan. 24-25 from 8am-5pm, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency office in Stateline.

No previous first aid training is required. Participants must be 16 or older.

Successful course completion earns participants a WMI Wilderness First Aid certification. This certification is good for two years.

Register online.

STHS football field scoring upgrades

By Kathryn Reed

By next football season Viking fans will be watching games from a new seating area.

At a January Lake Tahoe Unified School District meeting the board is expected to approve a contract for new bleachers at South Tahoe High School that will seat approximately 1,000 people. A press room and coaches box will be at the top of the structure.

“It includes emergency lighting for the field and seating areas. The back up lighting system is in the event of a power failure we have about 45 minutes of light to evacuate the facility,” Steve Morales, LTUSD director of facilities, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The $400,000 project is being funded by Measure G, the $65 million school facilities bond voters approved in 2008.

The current home stands were built in 1966. They don’t allow disabled access or meet federal regulations.

The new structure will meet the American with Disabilities Act, which includes a spot for a wheelchair and companion seating.

Today people in wheelchairs must watch the action from the end zone.

While both structures are bleachers, a difference with the new ones is the flooring is enclosed. This means no legs to dangle through the air, and no kids or personal items falling to the ground.

Officials also believe it will be easier to clean up any discarded trash.

“It will be weather dependent, but our hope is to have it installed prior to graduation,” Morales said. Graduation is June 5.

The current stands have a capacity of less than 800. The visitor seating is about a decade old and has room for about 300 people. It is not being replaced.

The added capacity could also be a boon for organizations wanting to rent the field. The high school football and soccer teams use it today. Plus, it’s where graduation takes place. The Come Up for Air Soccer tournament each June also uses this field.

Restrooms and a concession stand are still on the drawing board, but won’t be part of this project. Porta-potties are brought in to accommodate ADA issues. The bathrooms at Mount Tallac High are open during games, but the road to get to them is not ADA approved. Next football season the district plans to bring in higher-end temporary restrooms; the ones that come on a trailer.

A donor wall was going to be installed by the concession stand, but with no date in sight for that building the district is going to use the bricks in next spring’s project. There will be a permanent wall honoring the 118 people who donated to the field upgrades – which included the lights that were installed in 2011.

Vail’s $50 mil. plan to combine Park City and Canyons

By Reid Singer, Outside

On Monday, Vail Resorts unveiled a $50 million capital plan for upgrades to Park City Mountain Resort for the 2015-16 ski season.

Subject to approval by both Summit County and the City of Park City, the upgrades would include combining the ski area with nearby Canyons Resort. Visitors would ride a high-speed, two-way gondola between the two resorts to access the largest single ski area in the United States, with more than 7,300 acres of skiable terrain.

Efforts to combine the two adjacent ski areas will coincide with other major infrastructural improvements at PCMR, which Vail Resorts acquired only a few months ago following a three-year dispute that began when the ski areas’ previous operator neglected to file the necessary paperwork to renew its lease with its landlord.

Read the whole story

Significant storm heading toward Lake Tahoe

A storm coming from the Gulf of Alaska is expected to wallop the Sierra midweek.

Rain and snow will arrive in eastern California-western Nevada late Wednesday-early Thursday.

Forecasters with the National Weather Service are not putting a snow total amount out yet. It will depend how the system moves as to how much snow falls above or below the 7,000-foot mark. Snow is expected to start at 7,500 feel and then drop.

The warning for now is to be prepared. Travel over the mountain passes will be affected. Check the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News* for current road conditions.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Backcountry enthusiasts plow through the pow



Making turns in fresh powder near Mt. Rose on Dec. 6. Photos/Chris Bartkowski

We had a pretty fun backcountry day Dec. 6. It seemed like everyone was out enjoying the fresh snow in high elevation.



Backcountry boarding in Lake Tahoe.

We snowmobiled into the Mt. Rose OHV area and up to the ridgeline there. Then we dropped in on a north facing aspect and used our split-boards to skin back out. We took a few runs

that day, and the snow was phenomenal. We didn’t see a single person on that pitch either.



Lake Tahoe from Mt. Rose.

We were a group of three, Joe S. with the red pack, Kevin M. in the brown/black and myself in the blue jacket. All backcountry prepped with beacons, avi gear, food/water etc.

– Chris Bartkowski