

Miller 3rd, Ganong 7th at Hahnenkamm downhill

By USSA

KITZBUEHEL, Austria -- Victory at the famed Hahnenkamm downhill eluded Bode Miller (Franconia, N.H.) yet again as the Olympic champion finished third in Kitzbuehel. Miller, who won the only training run, skied a tactically tight line for every ounce of speed but made a drastic mistake going into a flat section to drop 0.34 behind race winner Hannes Reichelt of Austria. It was Miller's career third podium on the legendary track after two previous second-place finishes.

Teammate Travis Ganong (Squaw Valley) matched his career-best finish in seventh, with Norwegian Aksel Lund Svindal in second.

It was the final downhill of the U.S. Olympic selection period, and official team nominations will be announced immediately following Sunday's super combined World Cup.

Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley) sneaked into the top 20 while Steven Nyman (Sundance, Utah) also finished within the points in 27th.

Due to warm temperatures, the traditional course was altered from its traditional finish pitch to go around the Hausberg jump and side hill traverse into the finish.

Upgrades taking root at Al Tahoe ball fields



South Lake Tahoe Ballfields South Lake Tahoe, California
Lake Tahoe Unified School District

DESIGNWORKSHOP

This is a rendering by Design Workshop of what the Al Tahoe ball fields are likely to look like.

By Kathryn Reed

Work will begin this spring on a multi-use softball and Little League field at the Al Tahoe complex in South Lake Tahoe.

Steve Noll, who is on the Fields Advisory Committee for the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Facilities Joint Powers Authority, explained Jan. 24 to the JPA board how the area will be reconfigured to allow more play to be going on at once.

The T-ball area will be moved almost due east of where it is now.

"The T-ball will be next to the play structures. I think it will be a better setting than where it was next to the road," Noll told the board.

Multi-use turf will be laid there.

The new diamond will not have grass, which will allow for the dual use. Plus, it will have a removable pitching mound.

With all of the changes will also come a realignment of how the soccer field is configured. That is still going to be decided by AYSO officials. But what soccer aficionados get out of this is more warm-up areas.

Lake Tahoe Unified School District's board approved the plans Jan. 14. The district owns the land where all of this is taking place.

Money for the project is coming from Measure R, the reworked Measure S recreation tax that property owners on the California side of the South Shore pay.

Without knowing what the bids will come in at, it's possible not everything will get done. For example, it would be easy to remove a second set of bleachers and have that added when the pot of money is replenished.

There is about \$276,000 in the bank for this project and that is what estimates have come in at to do the work.

Technically all of the work is three projects. One is the new field, the second is relocation of the T-ball fields and the third is upgrades to the existing two ball fields. The latter includes fencing on Rufus Allen Boulevard and bleachers. (Here is a PDF of the South Tahoe ball fields illustration.)

Bids for the project are likely to go out in April so construction could begin in May. Completion is expected in the fall.

Work could be in phases so baseball season is not interrupted.

Initial work will include removing existing asphalt and running irrigation lines. The asphalt coming out is at the two rarely used basketball courts at the old Al Tahoe Elementary School. It was noted when South Tahoe Middle School renovations were done that new basketball standards were put in there.

Noll said with previous irrigation systems being pieced together, that after work is done this summer the water lines will all make sense and flow more smoothly.

In other news:

- Shay Navarro with the Bicycle Advisory Committee told the JPA board that the bridges over the Upper Truckee River and Trout Creek would be replaced this year.
 - JPA board Chairwoman Norma Santiago said El Dorado County is looking into snow removal on bike trails.
 - Bike advisory member Chuck Nelson suggested the board consider another parcel tax to up the amount collected from property owners in order to better fund recreation projects.
 - Judy Clot, board member representing Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District, said at the July 25 meeting she will have a proposal for what that area needs to improve and will possibly ask for its \$50,000 annual allocation to be increased.
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Holland takes gold at X Games in snowboardcross

By USSA

ASPEN -- Olympians Nate Holland (Squaw Valley) and Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton Mountain, Vt.) took snowboardcross gold at X Games Aspen Friday, less than two weeks before heading to Sochi, Russia, for the 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

It was Holland's seventh X Games gold medal, and came after a serious shoulder injury earlier this season. Jacobellis also reeled in her eighth X Games gold, making her the winningest woman in X Games history after spending two seasons recovering from knee injuries.

U.S. Snowboarding teammate Alex Tuttle (Stratton, Maine) took silver with German Konstantin Schad bronze in the men's big final. The USA's Jonathan Cheever (Saugus, Mass.) finished eighth with Hagen Kearney (Telluride, Colo.) ninth.

Czech rider Eva Samkova took silver with Helene Olafsen taking bronze.

Northstar hosting ice sculpture competition

The second annual Carve Tahoe international snow sculpture event returns to Northstar Jan. 28-Feb. 2.

Three-member teams from Canada, Finland/Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, California/Netherlands, Tahoe/Truckee and Wisconsin will participate in the competition, creating sculptures from 20-ton blocks of snow using only hand tools, snow and water.

Snow sculpture events celebrate the science of working with an ever-changing medium to create intricate art with massive scale.

Free to all attendees, Carve Tahoe sculptures will be on display at and around the Village at Northstar. The best nights to view the sculptures are when they are nearing completion, Jan. 30-Feb. 2.

The sculptures will be illuminated with multicolored lights. Judging is Feb. 1.

Cook, Mancuso in top 10 at Cortina downhill

By USSA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy – With just two weeks to the 2014 Olympic Winter Games, two-time Olympian Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) posted her best Audi FIS Alpine World Cup finish of the season with fifth in the first of two downhills slated for Cortina.

Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) also showed her speed with ninth and young gun Jackie Wiles (Aurora, Ore) stormed from bib 41 to finish 15th for the first World Cup points of her career.

German Maria Hoefl-Riesch won for her third victory of the

season to boost her World Cup downhill and overall points lead.

Laurenne Ross (Bend, Ore.) was also a season best with 17th and Leanne Smith (N. Conway, N.H.) finished inside the downhill points with 25th.

No sure bet when it comes to Super Bowl

By Case Keefer, Las Vegas Sun

Odds are Las Vegas will never play host to a Super Bowl.

That's fine, because our city stages the game within the game on an annual basis. The NFL can try to deny the role gambling has played in making it the country's most popular sports league all it wants, but it's a futile exercise this time of year.

Prognosticating the Super Bowl through the lens of the betting line is as much of a tradition as debating quarterbacks and judging commercials. And the topic is most enveloping locally, where everyone seems to have an opinion.

Read the whole story

North Shore nonprofits compete for cash at Northstar

Representatives from 11 North Lake Tahoe environmental foundations and nonprofit organizations gathered at Northstar Jan. 16 to participate in the inaugural Northstar Ski Challenge.

Teams competed for a prize purse totaling more than \$23,000 in cash and in-kind donations.

Each organization's team received a Northstar Ski Challenge passport at the start of the day; skiers and riders toured the mountain to visit five locations to learn about the mountain's Habitat Management Plan and competed in other ways.

Participating were: Fives Foundation, Tahoe Rim Trail Association, Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe, Truckee River Watershed Council, Sugar Pine Foundation, Truckee Trails Foundation, Tahoe Institute of Natural Science, Tahoe Fund, Excellence in Education, Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe, and Truckee Donner Land Trust.

The winners were:

First place: Tahoe Fund – \$10,000

Second place: Truckee Donner Land Trust – \$3,000

Third place: High Fives Foundation – \$2,000

Best Epic Photo: Humane Society of Truckee Tahoe – \$1,000

Runner-up Epic Photo: Excellence in Education – \$1,000

Fastest Northstar Ambassador Epic Race Time: Excellence in Education – \$500.

Lake Tahoe loses winter X Games bid

By Jason Blevins, Denver Post

X Games owner ESPN and the Aspen Skiing Co. announced Wednesday a deal that would keep the winter carnival of now-Olympic athleticism at Aspen's Buttermilk ski area for another five years. The X Games launches its 13th year in Aspen this week. By 2019, the Roaring Fork Valley will have hosted the iconic contest for 18 years.

"It's amazing how X Games has seemingly become part of Aspen/Snowmass' identity over the years," said Aspen Skiing Co.'s John Rigney, who spent countless hours negotiating renewal contracts with ESPN in 2004, 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2013, in a statement released Wednesday. "There's a rich cultural history here and we're fortunate to host many world-class events, but I can't think of a single event that resonates so well with kids and young adults as X Games does – and that's a win for our resort, and more importantly the sports we love. Our community is proud to collaborate with ESPN and we look forward to five more great years together."

Aspen beat out several other bidders to host the snowy bacchanal. Park City in Utah initially expressed interest but wanted the event to reschedule to April. Two Lake Tahoe ski areas in California – Squaw Valley and Heavenly – submitted a joint bid that would have separated X Games events into two venues across the lake. Whistler in British Columbia pondered hosting, but local officials demurred at the idea of flipping, racing snowmobiles, a lucrative staple of the X Games. Quebec City in Canada also submitted a bid.

USFS pile burning near Luther Pass

U.S. Forest Service fuels management crews resumed prescribed fire operations Jan. 23 off Highway 89 near South Lake Tahoe.

Crews are burning piles in the Luther Pass campground and will continue operations through Jan. 24, weather and conditions permitting.

All prescribed fire projects are conducted in accordance with an approved prescribed fire burn plan. Burn plans describe specific conditions under which operations are conducted including the weather, number of personnel, opportunities to minimize smoke impacts, and available burn days. This information is used to decide when and where to burn.

Smoke from prescribed fire may continue for several days after the initial ignition. Smoke that settles in low lying areas in the morning usually lifts out of the area during normal daytime heating.

Forest Service staff post road signs around the areas affected by the prescribed fire, send email notifications, and update the local fire information line at (530) 5432600, ext. 6. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Mancuso, Cook have best super G races of season

By USSA

CORTINA d'AMPEZZO, Italy -- Julia Mancuso (Squaw Valley) continued to gain momentum toward Sochi with seventh place Thursday in an Audi FIS Alpine World Cup super G in Cortina for her best race of the season.

Stacey Cook (Mammoth Mountain) added to the U.S. momentum with ninth, her best super G finish since 2007. Austria's Elisabeth Goergl won the race, which was a replacement for the canceled super G race last weekend due to a powerful winter storm that sidelined the weekend's speed events.

The athletes take on downhill Friday, another replacement event, followed by a downhill and super G scheduled Saturday and Sunday in Cortina. The U.S. Olympic selection period ends on Sunday and official team nominations will be announced that afternoon. Leanne Smith (N. Conway, N.H.) was on track for a solid result when she was bumped wide while clearing a gate in the middle of the course and did not finish.

Julia Ford (Holderness, N.H.) and Jackie Wiles (Aurora, Ore.) just missed scoring points with 31st and 34th respectively. Laurene Ross (Bend, Ore.) finished 36th.