Endurance swimmer to take on circumference of Lake Tahoe

Jamie Patrick, the 2011 World Open Water Male Swimmer of the Year, in August plans to swim the circumference of Lake Tahoe – 72 miles.

His team is calling his next swim The Tahoe 360 – a swim that has not been done before. It is estimated to take close to 40 hours.

Patrick, considered a bit of a maverick in the open water swimming world, last year swam 111 miles with a wetsuit down the Sacramento River.

Patrick has completed adventure swims that have taken him all over the globe.

In 2010, Patrick was the first person to complete a double crossing adventure swim of Lake Tahoe. This 44-mile nonstop swim took him 25 hours.

The summer adventure will begin at 7pm Aug. 3 and finish approximately 38 hours later. He will swim through two nights without sleep or exiting the water. He will be guided by a crew of 15 that will tend to his every need. It is estimated that Patrick will burn close to 27,000 calories on his journey. He is training up to 24 hours a week.

For more information, go online.

Winter storm blowing into Tahoe basin

Moisture in the form of snow is headed to Lake Tahoe.

The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm warning for the 24-hour period starting at 5pm Friday.

Beginning late Thursday night rain at lake level and snow in higher elevations will increase west of Highway 89. At lake level rain will continue much of Friday before it changes to snow in the evening.

Forecasters are calling for the heaviest snow from after midnight Friday night to midmorning Saturday. Expect 2 to 3 feet of snow above 7,000 feet, with amounts closer to 4 feet along the Sierra Crest. Below 7,000 feet 9 to 18 inches are possible.

— Lake Tahoe News staff report

White on top of podium at European X Games

By USSA

TIGNES, France -– With a first run score of 98.00, Shaun White who rides for Northstar, took European X Games halfpipe gold Wednesday night in Tignes. His nearly perfect score and huge run included a massive cab double cork 1080 that landed White

with his fourth win of the season.

Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix champion Louie Vito of Sandy, Utah, was second showing off his smooth style and big amplitude that put him on his fifth podium of the season.

This is White’s fourth first place podium position for this season and debut at European X Games.

Bear found in Incline Village killed by wildlife officials

By Anne Knowles

A male black bear identified by the Nevada Department of Wildlife as the animal who ripped siding off an Incline Village home last month was caught and euthanized on Wednesday.



The male bear captured and euthanized by NDOW on

March 14, according to the BEAR League. Photos/BEAR League

NDOW discovered the bear after responding to a call it received from an individual in Incline Village the morning of March 14. NDOW officials tranquilized the bear and then positively identified it based on distinctive markings and patterns of behavior gleaned from accounts of witnesses to the incident in February, according to Chris Healy, spokesman for NDOW in Reno.

He declined to say how many people saw the bear rip siding off a home last month, but Healy said the bear trapped and put down Wednesday was positively identified by several people, including an NDOW biologist and people living in the Incline Village neighborhood.

“We are totally confident we identified the bear,” said Healy.

Soon after the incident last month, NDOW trapped another male bear and released it because the agency believed the animal it was looking for was a female based on sightings of a mother with two cubs in the area.

Advocates for non-lethal handling of bears say the department trapped the wrong bear again, and killed it.

Ann Bryant, executive director of BEAR (Bear Education Aversion Response) League in Homewood says she believes the bear seen peeling siding off the house was a female. She says there have been sightings of a male bear rummaging through garbage in the area, but that bear has been chased into another location now and is not the bear captured by NDOW.

Bryant says the garbage-trawling bear is about 2 years old and

weighs about 150 pounds, while the bear captured yesterday by NDOW was about 3 years old and 250 pounds.



A male bear seen rummaging for garbage in Incline Village has been chased away, according to BEAR League.

“And the coloration is all different,” she said.

Bryant thinks the bear euthanized by NDOW was lulled out of hibernation by the traps set by the department.

NDOW’s Healy says the department is under fire for doing its job. He says that in 15 years NDOW has captured 900 bears and euthanized about 10 percent of them for public safety concerns.

“What do they want us to do if there is a wild bear?” Healy said. “These are dangerous situations made worse by amateurs.”

Healy says Incline Village residents should be more concerned about stricter garbage collection ordinances since it is garbage that attracts the bears.

“Blaming us is like blaming the guy who cleans up after the

circus parade," said Healy.

BEAR League's Bryant concedes that garbage ordinances could be better enforced but says that is not the answer. The problem, said Bryant, are people who are afraid of the bears and interested only in killing them, not managing them.

"It's another notch in their belt," said Bryant. "And NDOW feeds into it and caters to them."

Vonn, Mancuso on top overall in super G points

By USSA

SCHLADMING, Austria -– Adding to her already historic season, Lindsey Vonn of Vail captured her 16th career Audi FIS Alpine World Cup title with a sixth place finish in Thursday's super G.

Teammate Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley was second on the day behind German Viktoria Rebensburg to lock the number two spot in the season-long super G standings and jump to fourth in the overall.

Leanne Smith of North Conway, N.H., was fifth for a career best super G as three Americans finished in the top six.

Vonn now has 1,948 World Cup points, edging her closer to the

single-season record of 2,000, held by Austrian Hermann Maier with two races remaining.

Vonn scrubbed a 1.22 second lead after her speed carried her too low into a turn near the bottom of the course.

German Viktoria Rebensburg won from bib five for the first super G victory of her career.

U.S. women win team downhill competition

By USSA

SCHLADMING, Austria -– After the points were tallied from Wednesday's season ending Audi FIS Alpine World Cup downhill, the women's U.S. Ski Team won the nations' downhill standings by a 636 point margin over Austria.

Lindsey Vonn of Vail, Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley, Stacey Cook of Mammoth Mountain, Alice McKennis of Glenwood Springs, Colo., Laurenne Ross of Bend, Ore., and Leanne Smith of North Conway, N.H., combined for 1,417 points to defend the title they had first secured in 2011.

It was the second consecutive season that the U.S. Ski Team had won the women's downhill standings.

Vonn won the individual downhill title for a record fifth straight season.

Mancuso was fifth in the standings, Cook 10th, McKennis 20,

Ross 22 and Smith 25.

All six athletes posted top 10 finishes this season with McKennis, Ross and Smith landing career bests in downhill.

Nevada State Parks accepting grant applications

Nevada Division of State Parks is accepting applications for the 2012 round of the Recreation Trails Program. Nevada's apportionment is approximately $589,488, but more funding may become available.

Federal, state, city and county governments, special governmental districts, trail organizations and private individuals are potentially eligible for the grants.

Eligible projects include motorized and non-motorized trail projects for new construction, maintenance and trail related facilities. Trail education projects are also eligible.

Past projects include the multi-use Jumbo Grade trailhead in Washoe Valley, Tahoe Meadows snowmobile area and interpretive trail, Tahoe Rim Trail, Bootleg Canyon mountain bike trail in Boulder and the Nevada Trails Training course.

The 2012 Grants Manual and Application packages are available on the Recreational Trails website. Applications are due April 6 by 5pm at 901 S. Stewart St., Ste. 5005, Carson City, NV 89701. Faxed or emailed copies are not accepted.

All National Environmental Policy Act requirements must be met

before the submitting a trails grant application.

For further information or questions, contact Jenny Scanland at (775) 684.2787 or email at jscanland@parks.nv.gov.

Ryan Shreve Memorial Ski Race coming to Sierra

The annual Ryan Shreve Memorial Ski Race is March 29 at Sierra-at-Tahoe.

The categories include skiing, snowboarding and the 3-inch hose relay. It’s open to firefighters, paramedics and their families. And the racers must be wearing their firefighter turnouts.

The fundraiser is at Sierra because this is where Shreve grew up skiing. He was on the Buddy Werner team in the mid-1980s and skied at Sierra while on the STHS ski team all four years.

Shreve was 24 when he died after a wakeboarding accident on Folsom Lake.

The Ryan Shreve Head Injury Awareness Foundation was created in the 1997 South Tahoe High School graduate’s name in hopes of limiting the number of deaths like his.

Registration is at 8:30am, with the race starting at 10am.

To register or for more information, email bwarren@edhfire.com or mshreve@edhfire.com or smwtao@gmail.com or Rshreve4@gmail.com.

Increase in backcountry skiing leads to more avalanches, deaths

By Denis Cuff, Contra Costa Times

Christopher Rudolph was skiing his mountain turf with other expert skiers. It was a route he knew well on an ungroomed slope near the Washington ski resort where he worked.

They had avalanche rescue gear, avalanche safety training, and their group included a professional ski racer, a former ski patrol member and a judge for two international extreme skiing organizations.

Their preparation for last month's outing fell tragically short, though, when their skis broke loose a 3-foot-thick slab of snow, killing Rudolph, a 30-year-old former Lafayette resident, and two others in the nation's deadliest avalanche of the winter.

It was a tragic reminder of America's struggle with avalanches, killers of an average of 25 people per winter over the past decade – about triple the total of the 1960s – as more people ski backcountry areas away from the safety of groomed resort slopes.

This year's odd snow patterns may have increased avalanche dangers, experts say; and more snow is expected across the West this week.

Already, 27 people have been killed in avalanches this season.

Improvements in ski and snowmobile equipment have made it

easier for skiers to climb higher and descend more sharply in their quest for untouched snow.

“The new equipment is opening up more access to the backcountry to more people,” said Andy Anderson, an avalanche forecaster at Sierra Avalanche Center in Truckee. “You have some very good skiers being able

to operate in more challenging terrains, but I’m concerned the ability to evaluate the risk is not keeping up with people’s ability to go to these places.”

Many novices haven’t had avalanche safety training to help them recognize warning signs of unstable snow, such as changes in temperature and wind, experts said.

“Snow conditions can change rapidly,” said Randall Osterhuber, an avalanche safety instructor and hydrology researcher at UC Berkeley’s Central Sierra snow laboratory. “And every day the snow is different.”

Neither Osterhuber nor Anderson investigated last month’s triple tragedy in Washington. Anderson, however, noted research suggests even experienced skiers can become complacent about risks.

“Avalanches don’t care who you are or how much training you have,” he said. “They strike with awesome force.”

Avalanche rescue gear has improved, but it’s aimed at finding buried victims faster — not preventing them from being caught in a slide.

Rudolph had talked with his dad about the risk of backcountry skiing about two weeks before the Feb. 19 tragedy near the Stevens Pass Ski Area, where Rudolph worked as marketing director.

Rudolph had learned to ski before he was 3 and was known for his love of the outdoors and loyalty to friends. He became an

Eagle Scout with Troop 204 in Lafayette.

A year ago, he was shaken by the avalanche death of a close friend and skiing companion.

“We talked about his friend’s death,” his father, Bill Rudolph, said in a recent phone interview from his South Lake Tahoe home. “Chris felt he had it under control. He told me, ‘Dad, that will never happen to me.’ ”

Read the whole story

Learn how to respond to wilderness medical emergencies

This spring, the Tahoe Rim Trail Association is partnering with the American Red Cross, Wilderness Medicine Institute, Lake Tahoe School and Crested Butte Outdoors for a series of wilderness medicine courses. Whether you’re a crew leader, a wilderness guide, an outdoor enthusiast or you work in a remote environment, these courses are designed to give you the skills you need to respond to a backcountry emergency when help is delayed.

Crested Butte Outdoors (Wilderness Medical Associates) courses:

Location: Lake Tahoe School, 995 Tahoe Blvd., Incline Village.

Dates: April 5–7: Wilderness First Responder Recertification.

April 9–13: Wilderness First Responder.

American Red Cross courses:

Location: 948 Incline Way, Incline Village.

Dates: May 4: Adult CPR & AED.

May 5–6: Wilderness and Remote First Aid.

May: 4–6: Wilderness and Remote First Aid & Adult CPR/AED.

Wilderness Medicine Institute of NOLS courses:

Location: 948 Incline Way, Incline Village.

Dates: May 16–17: Wilderness First Aid.

For program fees, online registration and other details about these courses, visit the website and search under “Medical Trainings”.