South Tahoe, Whittell, Truckee volleyball teams headed to State

South Tahoe, Whittell and Truckee high school volleyball teams are head to the state championships in Las Vegas next weekend.

South Tahoe will be up against Truckee in the Class 3A division at 6:20pm on Nov. 11 at Silverado High in Vegas. Whichever team wins will play for the championship at 4pm Nov. 12.

Whittell, in the Class 2A division, as the No. 2 ranked school from the north will take on Calvary Chapel, the No. 1 ranked school from the south. They play at Silverado High in Vegas to 4:40pm Nov. 11.

If Whittell prevails, the championship round is at Chaparral High at 10am Nov. 12.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Backcountry ski swap at LTCC

Time to find some outdoor gear or sell what you are done using.

The Nov. 19 Backcountry Ski and Gear Swap is being put on by Hope Valley Outdoors and Future Business Leaders of Lake Tahoe.

The swap is located at Lake Tahoe Community College from

9am-3pm that Saturday. Gear can be dropped off on Nov. 18 from 5-8pm and Nov. 19 from 7-9am.

Unsold gear must be picked up from 3-5pm Nov. 19.

Organizers are looking for: Alpine touring skis, boots and bindings; telemark skis, boots and bindings; cross country skis, boots and bindings; splitboards; skins; collapsible poles; snowshoes; snow safety gear, avalanche probes, shovels, study kits, backpacks and newer transceivers; clean and modern clothing; winter camping gear. .

For more information, contact Geoff at (530) 307.0225.

Sierra eliminates the hike to resort’s extreme terrain

By Kathryn Reed

Adrenaline junkies will want to head to Sierra-at-Tahoe this winter because of the exclusive snowcat-guide provided trek to and through Huckleberry Canyon.

These 320 acres of expert terrain first became patrolled with avalanche prevention measures put in place for the 2008-09 season. Now, three years later, the resort near Echo Summit is making it a bit more accessible.



Huckleberry Canyon at Sierra will be easier to get to this season. Photo/Provided

Gate 5 is about a 1½-mile hike for the more intrepid skier or boarder. Paying $79 (not including lift ticket) will get riders to the starting point via snowcat. The 10am-2pm Friday-Sunday excursions include lunch, avalanche beacon, probe and a guide for seven people. One cat will go out each of those days when conditions permit.

“The idea behind it is to get people out to the backcountry for the joy of floating through powder,” Steve Hemphill, spokesman for the resort, told *Lake Tahoe News*. “Some people are not sure they want to hike for their turns.”

Cliff drops, shoots, gladed trees – Huckleberry’s terrain runs the gamut.

On the other spectrum of the industry, Sierra is creating a snowboarding program for ages 3 to 6. Riglet Park, which will be operated in conjunction with Burton, will be near the base of the Grandview chair.

Hemphill said there has been a void in the industry in regards to getting the younger kids on snowboards.

The Burton Riglet Wheel looks like a hockey puck on the front of the snowboard. Instructors use it to pull the their

charges.

“It gives them the feel for sliding on snow while the instructor does most of the work. It teaches them balance control and movement of what it is like to snowboard,” Hemphill said.

Robert Alward has taken over as director of the school.

With little snowmaking at the resort, Sierra depends on Mother Nature to set the opening date. Usually it’s as close to Thanksgiving as possible.

To spur things along, the annual Pray for Snow Party is Nov. 10 at MontBleu in Stateline. The free event is open to passholders at 6pm, and to everyone else at 7pm.

A variety of season passes exist, but just to Sierra. This is the first time in decades the resort is flying solo. With Northstar being acquired by Vail Resorts a year ago, the Double Whammy pass is a thing of the past. But Sierra still has its three-pack of tickets that through Dec. 16 are $51 per ticket – which can be used any day. Then they go up to $54/day. This compares to the regular lift ticket of $74 a day – $77 during peak times.

Sierra has a slew of events planned for the 2011-12 season. Details are online.

Don’t be surprised to see snowboarder Jaime Anderson cutting it up at the resort. Sierra remains her home resort. She often Tweets when she’s at her home mountain.

Sierra is negotiating with snowboarder Hannah Teeter as to whether the Vermont native will keep training at the South Shore resort.

For those who aren’t into strapping a plank or two to their feet, Blizzard Mountain is a snow play-tubing area at Sierra that has been expanded to include a bounce house, snack bar,

fire pits, picnic tables and sledding.

Officials keeping eye on high water levels in region

By Paul Nelson, Channel 2 News

We’re still seeing the effects of last winter that kept our reservoirs full and the Truckee River moving fast for much of the summer.

But now officials tell us that water supply could be too much of a good thing as we move into what could be an unpredictable winter.



Trout Creek is higher in October than it has been in years. Photo/LTN

Water is still being released into the Truckee River from the Lake Tahoe Dam. That’s because Tahoe is still much higher than normal.

As we move deeper into fall, the lake levels are still at 73

percent of capacity.

“Any higher than this and we get a little nervous but we’re looking good as far as having a lot of storage in there but not being too high going into the winter,” says Chad Blanchard, chief deputy water master.

That’s because the lake and our reservoirs don’t just serve as storage – they also serve as flood control.

Read the whole story

South Tahoe sets record low; more snow coming

Not only do the shovels need to be ready based on the forecast, but warm clothing will also be needed this weekend.



South Lake Tahoe on Saturday set a record low at 13 degrees, breaking the previous record of 16 from 2002.

Tahoe City and Truckee are equally as cold, but not setting records. The National Weather Service in Reno said this is likely because the cloud cover is not letting the temps on the North Shore drop to record lows.

“South Lake Tahoe for the first four days (of November) has been running a tab cooler. (Friday) it was 15 degrees cooler than average,” Jessica Kielhorn, meteorologist technician in Reno, said.

Don’t expect the highs to be out of the 30s this weekend, with an overnight low of 12 degrees forecast for Sunday in South Lake Tahoe.

A winter weather advisory is in effect for the greater Lake Tahoe area from 5pm Saturday to 10am Sunday.

Snow accumulation is expected to be 4-8 inches at lake level and 6-12 inches above 7,000 feet.

With it already cold out, the snow should hit lower elevations – and will likely start falling before the advisory takes effect.

– Kathryn Reed

Bonanza Park expected to be built in 2012 in S. Lake

With bids coming in higher than expected, Edgewood Companies decided to rebid the Bonanza Park project in South Lake Tahoe.

People are expected to be using the Y area park in 2012. The plan is construction will start as close to May 1 as weather allows.



Bonanza Park

is expected to
be a reality
in 2012.

Brandon Hill with Edgewood Companies told *Lake Tahoe News* a decision should be made this month regarding who the contractor will be. Two finalists are in the running. Originally the company had expected to spend about $200,000 on the nearly 1 acre park.

Hill said, “The dog park was scraped by the community and the council. We were happy to accommodate the desires on the majority of stakeholders.”

Amenities will include:

• large turf area

• walking path

• children’s play area and equipment

• half court basketball

• horseshoe toss

• picnic pods

• native demonstration plantings

• programable LED lighting

• low flow irrigation

• permanent BMPs to handle storm flows.

The park replaces an old hotel that has been demolished. Edgewood is building the park partly in exchange for tourist accommodation units that can be used at the future Edgewood Lodge.

– Kathryn Reed

Tahoe covered in white, schools open

While stars are in the sky first thing this Friday morning, there is definitely plenty of snow to shovel in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Most highways in and around the basin have some restrictions. For details, click on the state icons on the home page of *Lake Tahoe News*.

However, the white stuff is not enough for schools to call it a snow day.



The seasons are changing in Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

For those wanting to make it a powder day, Boreal is resuming operations today. It will be a couple more weeks before other Tahoe area resorts power up the lifts.

The snow that fell Nov. 3 was preceded by wicked winds, with ridge tops recording 100mph gusts.

About 4 inches fell in South Lake Tahoe, while Sierra-at-Tahoe received a foot.

The National Weather Service in Reno is calling for a 60 percent chance of snow today, mostly sun Saturday, 80 percent likelihood of snow Saturday, and sun again Monday. It will be in the 30s and 40s during the day, with overnight temps in the teens.

– Kathryn Reed

Treetop adventure park in the works for South Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Monkeying around is being encouraged.

“I went through a Go Ape course in England. We went through it twice because we liked it so much,” Sherry Miller, who runs Lake Tahoe Airport, said. “It’s a high-rope course. It’s a fantastic outdoor activity for everybody.”

Such a course, which includes ziplines, is expected to open at the South Lake Tahoe airport next year. The city’s Airport Commission approved the idea at its Nov. 3 meeting. The City Council is expected to approve the contract at its Nov. 15 meeting.



A treetop adventure park is expected to open at Lake Tahoe Airport in 2012. Photo/Go Ape

It’s essentially a high-wire forest adventure course.

“Our first interest is to create an opportunity for our guests to enjoy something unique, something that supports and symbolizes the natural environment here,” City Manager Tony O’Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Officials from the Maryland-based company were not available for comment late Thursday. While they were not at the meeting this week, representatives have been at previous Airport Commission meetings touting how they could transform several acres of the airport into an eco-adventure for locals and tourists.

The tentative 15-year agreement has Go Ape leasing 12 acres of the airport starting near the tower. (That would mark the south end of the course.) The contract start date would be Nov. 15 if council approves it. Rent would likely start being collected April 1, 2012, in the amount of $2,000 a month, going up based on the Consumer Price Index. The city will also be paid a part of the gross revenues, with the plan calling for 2 percent in year one and maxing out at 11 percent in year six.

Estimates are the city could make more than $100,000 a year off the adventure by the fifth year.

It would probably be open six to seven months, and not in the winter to begin with.

It takes six weeks to set up the course. They are considered semi-permanent, so they can be taken down if need be. Trees are protected so their growth is not stunted.

Platforms will be built into the trees. These launch pads are where people jump from or start their trek along wobbly ropes.

Miller was almost giddy describing the fun she has had on one of Go Ape's courses in the U.K. Wearing a harness and strapped to a cable, people are not going to fall no matter how sweaty their palms get.

Four to six sections are in each course. It's expected one course will be built in South Lake Tahoe. Each of Go Ape's courses occupies 6 to 9 acres.

With the company limiting the number of people who can use the course at any given time, it's not expected to add tremendously to traffic issues on Highway 50. At its other facilities, reservations are the norm.

Parking is not solidified. It will likely either be near the non-functioning control tower or in the main lot of the airport.

While Go Ape cannot fell any trees without the city's permission, this area is slated to be thinned. Miller said the Go Ape officials will be notified which trees are likely to removed so as its design team creates the course, they know which trees will be standing when it comes time to build the apparatus.

The airport tower, which has not been used in years by the FAA, could become Go Ape's offices and storage site.

The Federal Aviation Administration still has equipment there, so that would need to be removed. Plus, the FAA must sign off on the idea once the council gives its blessing.

“Typically the FAA doesn’t like park-type things on airport property, but this is land that cannot be used by aircraft,” Miller told *Lake Tahoe News*. “In our land use plans this is an approved use.”

Miller said Tahoe Regional Planning Agency staff has been part of discussions and is working with everyone to make this become a reality.

“We can’t wait until they get here. We’re fighting over who is the first one to go on course,” Miller said.

Nevada not alone in bear hunt controversy

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Hunters might be quietly stalking Nevada’s woods, but the policy decision that put them there was decidedly noisy.

It packed meeting rooms, led to candlelight vigils and marches on the governor’s mansion.

Nevada’s first black bear hunt, now under way and possibly nearing an end, is described as the state’s most contentious wildlife issue in recent memory.

“It’s been mega-controversial,” said Chris Healy, spokesman for the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Nevada’s inaugural bear hunt is one sow away from the end of the season after a fifth female was killed over the weekend. Regulations adopted by the state Wildlife Commission set a limit of 20 bears that can be killed; of those, no more than six can be female. Since the season opened Aug. 20, hunters have killed 12 bears – five females and seven males.

But Nevada is far from unique. The issue of bear hunting, now allowed in at least 33 states, has brought impassioned debate in plenty of places.

It happened in California, where a proposal to allow as many as 2,000 bears to be hunted quickly found opposition, forcing plans to be scaled back. It happened in Kentucky, where a proposal to allow harvest of only half the 20 allowed killed in Nevada still stirred up some folks.

It’s happened in New Jersey – like Nevada, a flash point for the debate.

The Garden State is now gearing up for its 2011 bear hunt after 592 bears were killed in December 2010, said Lawrence Hajna, spokesman for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe not chosen for 2012 Tour of California

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe will not be part of the 2012 Tour of California.

The 13 host cities for the prestigious bike race in May were announced early this morning. Santa Rosa, hometown of three-time Amgen Tour of California Champion Levi Leipheimer, long ago had been picked as the start city.



Amgen cyclists will not have to contend with Tahoe snow in 2012. Photo/Lisa J. Tolda

The route for next year is:

• Stage 1: May 13 – Santa Rosa

• Stage 2: May 14 – San Francisco to Santa Cruz County

• Stage 3: May 15 – San Jose to Livermore

• Stage 4: May 16 – Sonora (new for 2012) to Clovis

• Stage 5: May 17 – Bakersfield (Individual Time Trial)

• Stage 6: May 18 – Palmdale to Big Bear Lake

• Stage 7: May 19 – Ontario (new for 2012) to Mt. Baldy

• Stage 8: May 20 – Los Angeles/L.A. LIVE.

Lake Tahoe was one of the more than 100 places wanting to be part of the race in 2012.

Before today’s announcement, Carol Chaplin who heads LTVA, had told *Lake Tahoe News* she would not be surprised if Tahoe were not on the list of host cities for next year, but that would not preclude the area from trying to be on the map in the future.

This year the race was supposed to start on the South Shore, with the first day ending in Northstar. The second leg was to start in Squaw Valley.

Snow prevented the riders from doing either section. It came down to the last second before the race was called. The cyclists had been dressed on their bikes for the start.

Securing the event had been a joint endeavor by the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority and North Lake Tahoe Resort Association.