Heavenly Mountain proves it's not just a one-season resort

By Kathryn Reed

I kept feeling like I was going backward even though I wasn't. And I was a bit disoriented, not to mention I felt small.

Such are the hazards of hiking up Skyline Trail at Heavenly Mountain Resort in the summer. Going to the top of Sky Chair via foot instead of the lift means going in the opposite direction I normally ski the trail. I knew where I was (because I could see Lake Tahoe), but at the same time I felt like I didn't know where I was. And the signs everywhere – they are so tall when there aren't several feet of snow on the ground. I had to crane my neck to read them – making me feel super short.

Heavenly has opened more hiking trails that are easily accessed from the gondola in the village near Stateline.



Hiking at Heavenly provides stunning views of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Photos/Kathryn Reed

I never get tired of that ride.

If only the windows let in more air. It was a bit stifling last weekend. I understand all the precautions to prevent people from flicking a cigarette out so there isn't a repeat of 2002 when more than 600 acres burned because of a smoker on the gondola, but it was uncomfortable.

When I'm skiing I don't take the time to get out at the midway station. But on this leisurely Saturday it was great to see that 360-degree view of the Lake Tahoe Basin from 9,123 feet. Signs point to the various sites – Emerald Bay, Cave Rock, Mount Tallac.

It's like a kids' playground at the top – and not just little kids.

Christine and Daniel Rock barely had time to answer a couple questions before dashing off to take the conveyer belt to the top of the tubing hill. This is what the Bay Area resident wanted to do to celebrate her 53rd birthday.

Instead of snow, the hill looks more like artificial turf. A Heavenly employee said this is just the second hill like this in the world.

For Susy Corriea, she was enjoying sitting in the shade watching her 10-year-old son, Brayden, scamper up the climbing wall.

Plenty of people were parked in the Adirondack chairs in front of the Tamarack Lodge that opened last ski season. It allows the resort to have a year-round on-mountain dining facility.

Before we kickback in one of the chairs we take the Tamarack Lift ($8).

While we knew we wanted to follow the map we had gotten in village that said we could hike to the top of Sky Express, for those who didn't think about it or are not familiar with ski

areas, they would be apt to follow the “ski” sign for Sky Express. That takes people to the “lift line” – not the top.

In other words, better signage for hikers is needed.

This 1.92-mile roundtrip is listed as “most difficult” by Heavenly because of its steepness. I’d say anyone who is used to this elevation and who is in good shape can make it without difficulty.

Of course, the end of the trail is at 10,040 feet. Bring water. The trail is exposed.

The nice thing about it in summer is it’s not crowded with people stopping at the gorgeous views of Lake Tahoe and the surrounding area. I’ll admit, though, I stopped more on that hike to gaze and take photos than I do in an entire ski season.

It’s always so weird to see a ski resort without snow – to know in three months I could be skiing above those rocks and logs; to know that dirt trail will be a wall of white.

More information about the Heavenly Gondola is online. Various ticket prices exist. And the activities at the top are individually priced.

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Community service detail to include ridding park of

noxious weeds

Washoe County Sheriff’s Office community service crews will help battle a noxious weed invasion at the county’s Crystal Peak Park next week by pulling poison hemlock and other weeds that are trying to establish a foothold in this riverside park.

Crystal Peak Park is located off Old Highway 40 in Verdi.Crews are scheduled to be at the park Aug. 29-30. The crews begin work from about 8:30am-1pm each day.

Funding for the crews’ equipment and supervision is provided by a grant from the Community Foundation of Western Nevada’s Truckee River Fund.

The Sheriff’s Community Work Program requires sentenced defendants to perform a specific number of hours or days of community service. Participants are typically low risk offenders with no violent felony charges, no current violent misdemeanor charges, no record of escape and no open charges.

Since 2008, the Truckee River Fund has awarded the Sheriff’s Office more than $90,000 in grants to fund projects that address local quality of life and public safety issues. These grants support the hiring of a work crew supervisor and the purchase of equipment needed for a number of river bank projects such as weeding invasive plant species, removing debris left along the river from homeless camps, and helping to protect trees from beaver damage.

Trail work for cyclists in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park

Volunteers are needed to help with a MTB designed and built trail on Sept. 2 in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park.

The Marlette Hobart link trail will be three miles of flowy singletrack from the Tahoe Rim Trail to the bottom of Sunflower Hill. It’s more than halfway done.

The completed upper section will be used by the Great Tahoe Flume Race on Sept. 10.

Meet at the Lakeview gate at 8am to carpool up to the work site. The Lakeview gate is at the end of Hobart Road off of Old 395 in Washoe Valley/Carson City.

Wear long pants, long sleeves, gloves, and bring water and a lunch.

Work will end about 3:30pm.

RSVP to patroldirector@tahoebikepatrol.org.

STHS grad clinging to dream to make it in the NFL

By Rich Cimini, ESPN

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. — South Lake Tahoe High grad Garrett McIntyre, 26, is still clinging to his NFL dream even though he has been tossed by three teams. In between tryouts, he has worked in construction, pouring cement foundations — and “that

really sucked," he said.

Josh Baker is a well-traveled rookie who lost nearly two full years because of injury and suspension. At his low point, he made $10 an hour at an office-supply store, unloading trucks to earn money for courses at a community college.

Michael Campbell also is a rookie, out of Edison, N.J., so serious and so determined – yet hoping that one momentary lapse in concentration doesn't cost him his dream.

They're the long shots, the bottom-of-the-roster guys – undrafted free agents. They've been overlooked and underappreciated, but now they have an invite to the big dance – an NFL training camp. McIntyre, Baker and Campbell are among about two dozen long shots on the New York Jets' roster, each hoping to make the final 53.

The Jets' roster is sprinkled with players who came up the hard way, including homegrown gems such as defensive tackle Mike DeVito and guard Brandon Moore. Maybe the best "Rudy" story of them all is ex-Jets player Danny Woodhead, who has achieved near iconic status with the New England Patriots.

These are the toughest days. The first mandatory cutdown is next Tuesday (80 players), followed by the final cutdown Sept. 4. Because of the lockout, rookies weren't able to sign until late July, making it harder to stick. They have one week – two more preseason games – to fulfill their lifelong dream. Or be crushed.

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McIntyre grew up in South Lake Tahoe, a play land for the rich and famous but not exactly a football hotbed. His high school team went 0-9 his senior year, and he didn't receive any scholarship offers. He walked on at Fresno State and – long story short – he was an All-WAC defensive end by the time he left.

He wasn’t drafted in 2006, beginning a free-agent journey that would take him from the Seattle Seahawks to the Arizona Cardinals to the Tennessee Titans. He didn’t make it to training camp in Seattle, and he lasted only a week in the Arizona and Tennessee camps. After getting cut by the Titans, he received a league suspension for testing positive for a banned substance.

“After you get cut the first time, it’s hard,” he said. “Words can’t really describe how it feels.”

Read the whole story

STHS football field ready for action under lights

Next week South Tahoe High School will be playing a night game on its new football field. With the blue and gold Viking emblem encircled at the 50-yard line and the word Vikings in gold on a Tahoe blue end zone, the field looks nothing like what it did at graduation in June.

It has a professional feel about it. Good thing because next near minor league football games will be played on that field.



STHS football games will be

played on a new field under lights. Photos/Heavenly Mountain Resort

Helping pull all of this off before the first home game on Sept. 2 was a $20,000 donation from Heavenly Mountain Resort and the South Tahoe Alliance of Resorts.

The organizations joined players, cheerleaders and other officials on the field Thursday to commemorate what is being called Friday Night Lights. Besides the field being overhauled, lights are the biggie. Last year rented light standards proved night games would be a draw.

South Tahoe Vikings Booster Club and South Tahoe High School are offering a season pass that includes all regular season Viking home athletic events. The fee directly benefits athletic programs at South Tahoe High School.

For more information about different plans, contact Debra Goodyear at (530) 544.4204 or sthsbclub@gmail.com.



Viking Stadium looks nothing like it did just two months ago.

A concern the district has is keeping the field in good

condition. At the Aug. 23 school board meeting, Superintendent Jim Tarwater said people have left evidence they've been walking their dog on the field.

Tarwater told the board a security fence will need to be erected. This is a look at the stadium fencing plan.

TRPA required a fence be installed on the hill.

Three entry-point gates will be open during school day, when events are going and will otherwise be locked.

Here is the 2011 STHS football schedule.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Day of events for kids at Tahoe City fish hatchery

UC Davis volunteer David Long has a variety of activities planned for kids ages 6 and up at the fish hatchery in Tahoe City on Aug. 27 from 10am-2pm.

Activities include:

• Learn fly-tying and casting

• Discuss Lake Tahoe Fisheries

• Discover native fauna and macroinvertebrates

UC Davis Tahoe City Field Station is at 2400 Lake Forest Road, Tahoe City, on the corner of Highway 28 and Lake Forest Road.

For more information, call (775) 881.7566.

Truckee’s dominance may be tested on gridiron with loss of starters

By Scott Oxarart, Reno Gazette-Journal

Truckee has been the most dominant team in the area, regardless of class, the past few years. The Wolverines have gone 24-0 the past two seasons and won the 3A state title in each of them.

This year, Truckee is out to maintain its winning streak – though it could be a tough task.

Truckee lost 20 of 22 starters from last year’s team and has competitions going on in summer camp for nearly every position.

“We’re a little rough and ragged around the edges,” coach Bob Shaffer said. “I think we’ve got a long ways to go.”

The team is relying on its system and continuity – Shaffer has been on campus since 1995 and players have played in the same system since they first put on pads as children.

Linebacker/fullback Cole Roberts is one of the two returning starters. The 5-foot-9, 195-pounder is the type Truckee has won championships with – a tough player who can contribute on every play.

Returning starter Trevor Auldridge had seven interceptions and 11 pass deflections last year. Auldridge, 6-foot-1 and 185 pounds, is switching positions to free safety.

Read the whole story

S. Tahoe air show to introduce budding pilots to the sky

By Kathryn Reed

Soaring through the air at eye level with the mountains. Lake Tahoe seems so much bigger from the sky, the boats so much smaller. All those trees. The Lake Tahoe Basin really is a forest and not a concrete jungle.

For youths ages 8 to 17 they get to experience this for free on Sunday as part of the annual Young Eagles program. The catch is they must attend Saturday's air show at Lake Tahoe Airport to sign up.

"This is to expose the younger generation to all facets of aviation," explained Michael Golden, who runs Mountain West Aviation at the South Shore airport.



Expect all sorts of planes flying on Aug. 27 and

even more on the tarmac at Lake Tahoe Aiport. Photo/LTN file

He is also one of the pilots who donates his time and plane to take kids in the air. Most flights are about 20 minutes – going from the airport, over the casino corridor, to Cave Rock, before turning around and following the shoreline back to the airport.

“Some have never been in a plane before, so it’s really an experience for them,” Golden said.

Many of the planes are single engine, with some pilots having a twin engine.

Sometimes a youngster even gets to take over the controls to get the feel for what it’s like to be a pilot and not just a passenger.

Young Eagles started in 1992 as a way to introduce young people to aviation. Each year it seems more critical because the number of people wanting to become pilots is dwindling. And this comes at a time when the demand is increasing.

In June, *USA Today* reported, “After nearly a four-year drought of job openings, the airline industry is on the brink of what’s predicted to be the biggest surge in pilot hiring in history. Aircraft maker Boeing has forecast a need for 466,650 more commercial pilots by 2029 – an average of 23,300 new pilots a year. Nearly 40 percent of the openings will be to meet the soaring travel market in the Asia-Pacific region, Boeing predicts, but more than 97,000 will be in North America.”

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association reported a high of 827,000 pilots in the United States in 1980, while in 2009

there were 594,285.

Besides the lack of desire to get in the cockpit, the number of flight schools in the U.S. and Canada went from about 2,400 to 1,700 after Sept. 11, 2001. Though, the FAA reports the number of student pilots was dropping before then, with 129,000 in the system in 1990 and 72,000 students in 2009.

Air show

This marks the 22nd year for the Lake in the Sky air show at the South Lake Tahoe airport. Each year it's a little different depending on what planes are available and who is in the sky doing acrobatic maneuvers.

"You are going to see a lot of newer general aviation aircraft and lot of military transport aircraft," Golden said of the Aug. 27 event. "An Air Force C5 Galaxy will be doing an aerial fly-by over the airport. This thing is gigantic."

Part of the opening ceremonies is having the plane fly close to the ground more than once.

Golden said another change is more demonstrations this year.

It costs $5 per person or $15 per car to attend the air show.

More information about Young Eagles is online.

The schedule for Saturday's air show is also online.

Space available to cycle in

annual Tour de Tahoe

Imagine the scenic beauty of Lake Tahoe with its crystal clear blue waters surrounded by towering majestic peaks. Imagine being able to ride a bicycle around its 72-mile shoreline. On Sept. 11, more than 1,800 cycling enthusiasts from all over the country will participate in the 9th annual Tour de Tahoe – Bike Big Blue.



This marks the second year the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation is using this race as its National Team Fundraiser “Ride to Cure Diabetes”.

Bicyclists will ride 35 miles or the full route. The shorter ride is limited to 120 participants and includes starting with a ride on the Tahoe Queen to Tahoe City.

All ride options between 6:30-7:30am, with staggered 15-minute start windows.

Online registration will remain open until Sept. 2. After that date, only late registration will take place on Sept. 10 from noon-5pm Tahoe Sports Ltd. in South Lake Tahoe or on Sept. 11 from 5:30-7:30amat the Horizon Casino back parking lot C in Stateline.

Minor league football games coming to South Lake Tahoe

Saturday will be the first of several Minor League Football games to be played in South Lake Tahoe.

A multi-year agreement reached Aug. 18 that was announced this week between South Tahoe Sports Commission and South Tahoe High School with Minor League Football Ventures establishes the Tahoe Bowl Champions Series.

The Tahoe Bowl on Aug. 27 will be played at the South Tahoe Community Field on Al Tahoe Boulevard, with games moving to the South Tahoe High School in future years. The first game kick-off is at 1pm and will feature the River City Gators against the Billingham Blitz of upper Washington. The 4pm game will pit the top two teams in the nation, Pacifica Islanders (No. 1) and the Kitsap County (Wash.) Bears (No. 2.)

Tickets are $10 for adults, $8 for those older than 60, students with ID, and fee for those 12 and younger.

The agreement should bring in about $30,000 to LTUSD in the first 18 months, according to a district official.