Winning on the road important for Incline’s football team

By Brian Nordli, Reno Gazette-Journal

Incline will need to learn how to win on the road if it wants to make the playoffs this season.

The Highlanders lost every road game last season and finished 4-4, just short of the playoffs. They are more experienced this year behind four-year starting quarterback Patrick Murray and more accustomed to third-year coach Mike Evans’ spread offense. Incline’s schedule also allows the team to play what Evans called the “Big Four” perennial playoff teams (Yerington, Rite of Passage, Battle Mountain and Pershing County) at home where they went undefeated last season.

“Road games killed us last year; we couldn’t win one,” said Bobby Thoms, a senior middle linebacker and center. “To make the playoffs, we need to make sure we play well on the road and take some at home.”

On the road the defense allowed big plays and failed to make stops. In a game against Yerington they allowed three touchdowns in the first five possessions. Thoms said playing the “Big Four” at home will give them a chance to make the playoffs.

The Highlanders also will have to overcome a small and inexperienced offensive line. Evans said he will keep his plays simple for the offensive line and quick passes.

Read the whole story

New Jeeps put to the test on Tahoe’s Rubicon

By Allyson Harwood, Motor Trend

You can’t tell by looking at it, but the Jeep Wrangler has undergone a transformation. The iconic shape remains – seven-slot grille, round headlights, short wheelbase, soft or hard top – but Jeep has made huge improvements to the off-roader for 2012. Jeep invited us to drive the 2012 Wrangler on the Rubicon, one of the hardest 4×4 trails around, used almost exclusively by modified vehicles. We also got to drive on the two-lane asphalt roads that wind around Lake Tahoe.



Consider this the second part of a major overhaul to the Wrangler and four-door Wrangler Unlimited. Part one happened for the 2011 model year, when the JK (the current generation’s code name) received a new interior, plus, on the Sahara, a body-color hard top and fender flares. The hard top is of the same composite material as it was before, but what sounds like a minor change actually has a major effect on the Wrangler’s appearance. In addition, the rear windows are larger as of 2011, improving visibility. For 2012, the body-color hard top and fender flares are optional on the Rubicon, too.

Read the whole story

Whittell High football

players need to stay healthy to contend

By Brain Nordli, Reno Gazette-Journal

Whittell’s season might come down to staying healthy.

Like many 2A schools, Whittell struggles with depth, but this season it only has 18 players and many that are playing football for the first time. In coach Jeff Jones’ first season as coach in 2010, the team struggled with injuries and mistakes finishing 2-7. Jones said the team has a few more returners this year that could make them more competitive.

“If we stay healthy and don’t have mental mistakes that we had last year, I think we can be 4-4 at least,” Jones said.

The Warriors have three returning offensive linemen, including fourth-year player Hunter Morgan. Morgan tore his anterior cruciate ligament last season causing him to miss four games. Instead an inexperienced safety stepped into his role, which he said could have been the difference between winning three more games. Jones said the lack of players has also forced him to start freshman or other inexperienced players.

“We have a good 10-11 football players, and after that, we’re hurting a little bit,” Jones said.

Read the whole story

Mandatory boat inspections to expand to Truckee area

By Katherine E. Hill

TRUCKEE – Truckee-area waterways will implement a regional mandatory boat inspection program in summer 2012, with public meetings being conducted to gather input before the program is crafted by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District.

The next meeting will be Aug. 25 at the Truckee Donner Public Utility District office at 5:30pm. The final meeting will be on Sept. 29.

The first meeting on July 28 drew only about a dozen people, and the majority were local officials already invested in the boat inspection program. Tahoe RCD, which also manages the inspection program on Lake Tahoe and Echo and Fallen Leaf lakes for the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, is developing the Truckee regional program. The Truckee program will include Donner Lake, and Prosser Creek, Boca and Stampede reservoirs. The Tahoe RCD is conducting voluntary inspections at these waterways, but mandatory inspections are needed to keep invasive species, like the destructive quagga and zebra mussels, out of local lakes and reservoirs, officials say.



Quagga mussels like these on a boat prop leaving Lake

Mead are what officials want to keep out of uncontaminated lakes.
Photo/TRPA

“The zebra and quagga mussels are the scariest of the invasive species,” said Kimberly Boyd, Tahoe RCD invasive species program manager, at the July 28 forum.

Zebra and quagga mussels would be the priority for the boat inspection program, but the program also would address other aquatic invasive species such as New Zealand mudsnails, Asian clams and Eurasian milfoil. While mussels have not been detected in local waterways, Eurasian milfoil is in Lake Tahoe, Martis Creek Reservoir and the Truckee River, and Asian clams have been found in Lake Tahoe and Donner Lake, said Dave Roberts, Tahoe RCD district manager.

Tahoe RCD officials said during the forum that the need to keep aquatic invasive species out of local waterways is broad reaching. AIS affect the food supply of native species and the health of local waterways, including Lake Tahoe’s famed clarity. For the Truckee region, AIS in local waterways also will affect the water supply for the Reno-Sparks area, which gets 80 percent of its drinking water from the Truckee River. While the river originates in Lake Tahoe, Donner, Boca, Prosser Creek, Stampede, Martis Creek and Independence Lake are all part of the river’s watershed. Any AIS in local waterways will mean infected drinking water supplies.

Locals will be the most affected by the mandatory program, as about 55 percent of boaters using the waters within the Truckee River watershed also live within it, according to a survey conducted by UNR, for the Tahoe RCD. Of those boaters, about 61 percent are anglers and 17 percent are water skiers and wake boarders.

No fees were discussed at the meeting. Fees will depend on how the program is crafted and any outside funding sources that could be used to offset the cost to boaters, Boyd said.



Mandatory boat inspections are coming to Donner Lake in 2012. Photo/Katherine E. Hill

Boaters can now found inspectors at the Donner Lake boat launch, as well as roving the east side of Boca and Stampede Reservoirs educating boaters about AIS and conducting voluntary inspections through Sept. 30. Free decontaminations also are offered.

The challenge, once a mandatory inspection program is in place, will be where to have them. Unlike Donner Lake, which has only one public boat launch, boaters using local reservoirs can launch from the shore. Officials will be looking at where to conduct the inspections next summer to catch all boaters, with the Hirshdale exit off Interstate 80 cited as one possible location.

“The Truckee area has enormous shoreline launching with uncontrolled launch sites,” Boyd said.

The public forum, which lasted about 1½ hours, focused on educating the audience about AIS, the voluntary inspection program and boating in the Truckee region. What it did not do

is outline a mandatory boat inspection program. Instead, officials want the public to tell them what a boat program should include and then the Tahoe RCD will craft a program around those needs.

The Tahoe RCD wants public input on the use of a banding and/or sticker program like the one being used at Lake Tahoe, where boaters receive a sticker after passing an inspection before launching and the boats are banded to the trailer when it comes out of the lake. The seal is required to remain intact before the next launch, or an inspection must be performed again.

Other topics open for discussion include possible locations for inspection stations, fines for non-compliance, restricting access to local waterways, decontamination of infected boats, inspections of fishing equipment, education and outreach, and fees.

Once the forums are finished, Boyd said the Tahoe RCD would form a plan and then seek funding to operate the mandatory inspection program. The district also would have to get approval from myriad public agencies that control the different waterways, like the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, Town of Truckee, California State Parks, U.S. Forest Service and others. This process could take months, she said, noting that it would be next summer before a mandatory program could be implemented.

The Truckee River Fund has been funding the voluntary boat inspection program, as well as efforts to establish a mandatory program. The fund was established by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, which oversees the drinking water for the Reno-Sparks area.

A look at AIS

Quagga and zebra mussels are at the center of Lake Tahoe’s inspection program.

These mussels, which are hitching rides on boats and trailers and in ballast tanks, bladders and live wells, are spreading across the West. Quagga and zebra mussels will spread rapidly once they are introduced to a lake and will gorge on the food supply, kill fish and pollute the clarity of the lake. They will clog cooling system water intakes, causing motors to overheat. As well, they have been found in pipes in municipal water systems.

The mussels can also be found on kayaks, water toys, wetsuits and any equipment exposed to infected waters.

Young quagga mussels will feel like sandpaper to the touch, while adults usually have dark concentric rings on the shell. The mussels can grow up to 1.6 inches, making the young mussels hard to spot. Full grown mussels are usually smaller than a quarter.

Eurasian milfoil, a fast-growing invasive plant, is believed to have been intentionally introduced in the



Milfoil is throughout the Tahoe Keys. Photo/TRPA

South Lake Tahoe area, where it has proliferated. The milfoil is commonly found in aquariums and researchers believe that someone dumped out a fish tank into Lake Tahoe, thereby setting off an environmental nightmare. Simply breaking off a plant fragment will cause it to spread and reproduce, and it is choking parts of Lake Tahoe, including the Tahoe Keys,

where the milfoil has to be regularly removed to keep the waterway clear. The plants latch onto motor boats, causing it to spread across the lake, where it degrades water quality, decreases oxygen levels in the water, destroys native habitat and creates habitat for non-native species. Researchers are working on methods to eradicate the milfoil in Lake Tahoe.

Asian clams grow to only about 1½ inches, but rapidly reproduce and compete with native species for food. The clams also affect the clarity of Lake Tahoe. The clams likely arrived in Lake Tahoe on boat that came from infected waterways and from aquariums being dumped into Lake Tahoe. Researchers are working on methods to eradicate the clams in Lake Tahoe.

New Zealand mudsnails are about the size of a pencil lead when fully grown and are hard to spot. The mudsnails have been infesting rivers and streams across the Western United States, often found latching onto the gear and boots of fishermen; they can be hard to distinguish from boot laces. The mudsnails reduce the food supply for trout and have no natural predators in the United States.

Next meeting

Tahoe RCD will conduct the Aug. 25 public forum at the Truckee Donner Public Utility District office, 11570 Donner Pass Road, Truckee. For more information, go online or call (530) 587.4911.

BMX racing in South Lake

Tahoe

South Lake Tahoe BMX Track final race and barbecue is Aug. 25 at 5pm.

Race fee is $5. Awards will be given to all riders. All ages, abilities and mountain bikes are welcome.

The track is located at 1100 Lyons Ave. in South Lake Tahoe.

For more information, call (530) 542.9337.

STHS returning QB optimistic about gridiron season

By Brian Nordli, Reno Gazette-Journal

South Tahoe heads into the season with added excitement.

The Vikings will play on new turf and with lights for the first time in school history. They've played a couple night games with portable lights before, but this will be their first season with permanent lights. Third-year coach Kevin Hennessee said it has brought a lot of energy to the preseason as the team prepares for its first home game on Sept. 2. Returning quarterback Tyler Nesbitt thinks it will be a boost to the team for home games.

"I think just for the football team, it's going to be a whole new game because of the atmosphere," Nesbitt said. "To me, it's almost animal-like. You just have that boost of testosterone and want to hit."

Last season, the team finished 3-7 and one game out of the playoffs. The Vikings often struggled in the second half of games. Hennessee noted that they didn’t always play with the speed or confidence to be consistent.

Hennessee said he expects them to improve on the issues from last season with the development of Nesbitt. With a second year under center, Nesbitt said he has become more comfortable and is prepared to take on a leadership role.

Nesbitt noted an increased intensity this summer. The team has done more offseason workouts and practices, which it didn’t do in the past. Hennessee said the team should have finished with a better record last season, but fell short because of turnovers. He is expecting the team to play with more speed on offense with Nesbitt in his second season.

“We’ve put a lot of expectation on the kids, and we’ve grown immensely,” Hennessee said. “We’ve got a bigger commitment in the offseason out of lifting, and they understand the offense. It’s been an aggressive summer.”

Read the whole story

$4.5 mil. in federal money allocated for Tahoe bike trails

Lake Tahoe just received $4.5 million for two bike projects.

Tahoe Transportation District secured the money through the Nevada Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation. Development of a 3.2 mile segment between

Stateline and Round Hill is part of the eventual 43-mile route along Highway 50; and the other is for a route connecting East Shore Drive National Scenic Byway from Incline Village to Sand Harbor State Park.

Nevada received $11.5 million for projects, with $4.5 million for the two Tahoe Transportation District initiatives.

Children flocking to Tahoe Vista playground

North Tahoe Regional Park in Tahoe Vista opened earlier this summer. The playground includes a play structure for children 5–12, swings for tots and older children, and new "spring rider" toys for the younger children. The new play structure has many elements to keep the kids entertained; three slides, two small climbing walls, and platforms connected by walkways, to name just a few.



The $120,000 playground was constructed with funding from North Tahoe Public Utility District Recreation and Parks reserves, and major donations from the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, Lahontan Community Foundation, Tahoe Mountain Resorts Foundation, Tahoe City Rotary Club, Tahoe City Rotary Foundation, the Melanie Jackson Fund at the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, Mourelatos Lakeshore Resort, Thomas Fitzgerald and a donation of pavers by Sierra Summit Pavers.

However, it was truly a community effort with many community members donating in smaller amounts directly to the Friends of the Park Fund through the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundations,

at one of the fundraisers that was held or by putting money into donation buckets in the community.

Mountain bike from North Shore to South Shore

The inaugural Rose to Toads Mountain Bike Ride is Sept. 4 starting at 7:30am.

TAMBA is calling this self-supported event an epic ride from the North Shore to the South Shore.

There are spots to shorten the 60-plus mile ride.

Meet at the Mt. Rose Tahoe Rim Trail trailhead.

This ride encompasses the Tahoe Rim Trail, Flume, Freel Peak, Star Lake and Toads.

RSVP to info@mountainbiketahoe.org.

Event blends art and hiking in Lake Tahoe

Experience a unique blend of art and the natural world during the eighth annual Trails and Vistas art hike on Sept. 17-18.

The hike, modeled on the theme of “Reflections and Rhythms,” takes place at Spooner Lake in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park.

Expect to hear the beats of REMO Endorsed Drum Circle facilitator Norman Jones from the Rhythm Child Network, a group that helps children and adults connect with their inner rhythms through drumming. Also, new for Trails and Vistas are dancers from Marin-based Terpisicor D'Amour Dance and Lorna Danton, a visual artist from Reno.

Emmy-award winning Chris Spheeris, a musician and poet from Sedona will be returning to perform at Spooner Lake for this year's art hike. Enjoy the fluid movements and strength exhibited by acrobats and dancers from San Francisco-based Capacitor, an interdisciplinary dance company obsessed with the mechanics of the human body and machines that propel the body through space. These performers are known for the expertise in rigging systems, wearable sculpture, and engineers of large-scale props. Appreciate the sculpture, movement and mythology created by dancer Lesley Ehrenfeld Chapman. Delight in the exquisite painting by Cathee vanRossem-St.Clair, famous for her magnificent egg art – one of eggs, The California Thrasher was created for the Whitehouse Christmas Tree and is now in the National Archives. Another Tahoe-Truckee resident, Emily Tessmer of Orenda Blu Music, will share sacred chants. Dancers from InnerRhythms Dance Theatre will spark your imagination.

Additional artists are Truckee-based artist Caree Bragg, local poet Kira Yannetta who recruited her brother, Benjamin Hall, a musician from Southern California to participate in this year's event.

The list keeps going with an impressive group of creative minds and hearts including Angelika's Healing Music, Angelique Benicio and Deborah Kelly. Attend one of the Saturday hikes and hear Reno Taiko Drummers led by Rieko Shimbo. As a young girl in Japan, Shimbo saw taiko performed at many festivals. Her formal training began with a professional company based in Tokyo. Today she has her own group in Reno with 15 students who practice weekly and perform throughout the year.

There will be a variety of specialty hikes including family hikes designed for walking with children at 2pm Sept. 17 and 10 and 10:15am on Sept. 18; leisure hikes suitable for anyone not acclimated to high elevation at 4pm Sept. 17 and noon and 3:30pm on Sept. 18; and adult-only meditative hikes will be available at 3:30pm Sept. 17 and 2:30pm Sept 18.

The art hike is a collaboration between artists and nonprofit organizations including the main sponsor, Trails and Vistas, and the Truckee Donner Land Trust, InnerRhythms Dance Theatre and the KidZone Children’s Museum.

For more information and ticket prices, go online.