Skiing through Olympic history on Tahoe's West Shore

By Kathryn Reed

TAHOMA – People with guns on cross country skis. That certainly set the tone for a unique day in the woods.

Fortunately, they were shooting at electronic targets with laser rifles.

A sign saying "Olympic Heritage Event" made us wonder if we should turn around because we are nowhere near Olympic caliber cross country skiers. (Later I questioned going on the intermediate loop – that's how unsure I am free heeling it.)



Nathan Hoffman learns how to shoot the rifle for biathlon. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Unbeknownst to us until our arrival Saturday morning at Sugar Pine Point Campground the second annual Olympic Heritage Celebration Biathlon competition was going on. It was open to anyone – all ages, with the youngest being about 9 years old.

The first event a year ago at this course used for the 1960

Olympics was the same weekend of the Nordic Legends Dinner.

On Jan. 15 Bill Lindemann, who emceed the dinner in 2010, was on hand to make sure the nearly 20 participants were having a good time, and getting a bit of instruction as they raced against the clock and each other.

Competitors could do a 1K or 3K loop, shooting twice – once standing, once laying on their stomach. Miss your target and the penalty is to ski a short loop.

At the shooting range, Holly Beatie was dispensing a wealth of information. Nathan Hoffman looked at her quizzically when she said to place his thumb in a certain manner. This was his first time on a biathlon course, and to handle this type of gun that has the look and feel of a regular rifle.

But the state park, he said, is pretty much in his back yard so the terrain was familiar.

Beatie is well versed in the world of biathlon – which is the sport of cross country skiing and shooting. She moved to the North Shore in the 1970s, but no women's biathlon teams existed so she competed with the men. It wasn't until 1980 that the U.S. developed a women's team.

In 1984, Beatie was on the inaugural U.S. biathlon team at the Women's World Championships in Chamonix, which won the bronze.

We left the competitors behind to strike out on the myriad trails in this state park along Lake Tahoe's West Shore. Steeped in history, interpretive signs along the way point out facts about the Olympics hosted by Squaw Valley 51 years ago this month.

We didn't set any speed records. Instead, we glided through the groomed tracks at a fairly leisurely pace – all the better to stop for photos and admire the wonders of nature.

Fluorescent green lichen leaps off several trees.

A few charred trees along the way are a reminder of the August 2007 Washoe Fire that destroyed five houses and burned about 15 acres.

General Creek meanders between most of the trails, though it’s not visible most of the time. However, at a few junctures we crossed it via bridge. A couple who own a second home in the area regularly treks to this tranquil oasis. With sandwiches from the General Store in Tahoma and a waterproof blanket of sorts, they staked out a spot near the creek for lunch. We wished they had invited us to join them.

Instead, after we worked up an appetite doing the 2.1 mile beginner Blue Trail and 3.3 mile intermediate Red Trail, we headed north a short ways to Tahoma to grab a bite at the Old Tahoe Café. A pint of their pale ale is just $3.95, while the veggie sandwich with fries ($8.79) is big enough to split.

Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go north on Highway 89, around Emerald Bay and past Meeks Bay.

Before hitting Tahoma, on the right will be a sign for the Ehrman Mansion.

In less than one mile make the left turn into the Sugar Pine Point Campground. We didn’t see a sign for the turn, so we ended up making a U-turn.

There’s plenty of free parking even though it’s a state park.

Dogs are not allowed.

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Kashima 8th in World Cup freestyle competition

By Freddy Perryman, U.S. Ski Team

MONT GABRIEL, Quebec City – Jeremy Cota of Maine led the U.S. Freestyle Ski Team with a career best fourth place finish in Saturday's dual moguls World Cup at Mont Gabriel. Olympic champion Hannah Kearney of Vermont remains on top of the women's overall World Cup standings.

Cota, who qualified in fifth, won his first round before having to go head-to-head with teammate and reigning world champion Patrick Deneen of Washington in the quarterfinals.

Olympic bronze medalist Bryon Wilson ofButte, Mont., placed seventh and Sho Kashima of Stateline finished eighth.

World Cup freestyle skiing is heading stateside Jan. 22-23, where Lake Placid, N.Y., will play host the Nature Valley Freestyle Cup which includes two men's and women's moguls events.

Ski report: Sun and fun



It is Martin Luther King Jr. weekend and the Brotherhood of Skiers is in town.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Warm weather cancels GS World Cup in Slovenia

By Elizabeth Karam, U.S. Ski Team

MARIBOR, Slovenia – Poor course conditions due to warm weather forced race officials to cancel the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup giant slalom in Maribor after 25 racers.

With temperatures reaching close to 60 degrees Fahrenheit, the snow softened causing challenging conditions. At the time of cancellation, Olympic champions Lindsey Vonn of Vail and Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley were in 12th and 19th with four-time Olympian Sarah Schleper of Vail in 25th. Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg was leading the race.

"We knew it was going to be a tough one with the temperature and weather conditions. We are hoping it will get colder so the snow freezes. As for right now everything is still on," said Head Coach Alex Hoedlmoser of the GS cancelation and Sunday's slalom race. "We just have to stay positive. Even if conditions aren't great we have to be ready when they say racers are off. We have to be up there and charge."

The women are scheduled to race slalom on Sunday. A decision about the slalom will be made shortly before the race.

Truckee’s Harvey second in snowboardcross

By Kade Krichko, U.S. Snowboarding

MT. HOOD MEADOWS, Ore. – The U.S. Revolution Tour wrapped up its competition at Mt. Hood Meadows, Ore., with the men’s and women’s snowboardcross and skicross. Hunter Murphy of Deephaven, Minn., and Celine Valentine of Simsbury, Conn., were able to win the men’s and women’s snowboardcross. Randy Detrick of Saylorsburg, Pa., and Tania Prymak of Goshen, N.Y., took home first place in the men’s and women’s skicross.

After a brief burst of sunshine in the morning practice runs, the rain returned to challenge all of Friday’s riders in the preliminary rounds and the finals.

On the women’s side Valentine took the snowboardcross crown. Finishing second was Kristen Harvey of Truckee, with Meghan Graham Minnetonka, Minn., in third.

The U.S. Revolution Tour’s next stop is Boreal Feb. 6-11.

Official Results, U.S. Revolution Tour, Mt. Hood Meadows, Ore.

Snowboardcross

Men

1. Hunter Murphy, Deephaven, MN

2. Michael Perle, Saddle River, NJ

3. Ryan Stassel, Anchorage

Women

1. Celine Valentin, Simsbury, CT

2. Kristen Harvey, Truckee, CA

3. Meghan Graham, Minnetonka, MN

Skicross

Men

(complete results delayed)

1. Randy Detrick, Salorsburg, PA

Women

1. Tania Prymark, Goshen, MA

2. Stephanie Lawee, Canada

Anderson's slopestyle win puts her atop leader board on TTR World Tour

LAAX, Switzerland – South Lake Tahoe's Jamie Anderson and Finland's Roope Tonteri were victorious in today's slopestyle finals at the 12th annual 6Star Burton European Open.

With her win today, earning 1,000 TTR ranking points, Anderson takes over the Swatch TTR World Tour lead and put herself in an excellent position to make a move for the 2010-11 TTR World Tour Champion title.

This was Tonteri's first 6Star title of his career, which bolstered his spot at World No. 8 in the TTR World Tour Rankings.

Both secured spots to compete in the 2012 World Snowboarding Championships taking place in Oslo, Norway, in February 2012.

Anderson rode with her signature smooth style stomping a backside tailslide on the down rail, a Millerflip on the steel ball, tailblunt to fakie on the mailbox and a switch boardslide to 5-0 on the kinked rail in the jib section then threw a backside alley-oop on the quarterpipe into a backside 360, frontside 360 and a huge backside 180 Japan on the kicker line.

Anderson, who skis for Sierra-at-Tahoe, said, “The win feels great. I would love to win the TTR World Tour title again. We’ll see if it’s meant to be. I’m going to do my best, ride strong and hope to do well.”

Ski report: Cloudy and warm



It’s going to be cloudy most of today, but temps will be in the 40s.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Ski report: No crowds on the slopes



The week before a long weekend is always a good time to be on the slopes.

Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Mt. Rose providing higher level of medical care on slopes

Mt. Rose ski resort is providing paramedic advanced life support through a cooperative agreement between the Regional Emergency Medical Service Authority and North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District.

Advanced Life Support (ALS) allows paramedics who work as ski patrollers to perform advanced skills and procedures on patients who normally could only have been done by paramedics on an ambulance or medical helicopter.

ALS involves the use of invasive and non-invasive procedures such as cardiac monitoring, pacing and defibrillation, pain management, advanced airway management for respiratory emergencies, intravenous access and the ability to administer

numerous emergency medications prior to the arrival of ground or air medical transport. These skills and procedures can prove to be the difference in the survival of critically injured or sick guests and many can be done while the skier is still on the ski slopes.

The Mt. Rose ALS service is not available at any other ski resort in the Sierra.

Winter soccer programs for South Tahoe youth

South Tahoe Soccer Association is hosting a Winter Training Program in February and March for children ages 4-11 at all of the elementary schools in Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

Flier will be given to students next week to bring home. Sessions will be after school in the multipurpose rooms at the schools.

For more information, go online or call 877.358.1207.