Fans ride the wild orange and black ride called the Giants

By Kathryn Reed

SAN FRANCISCO – Torture never felt so good.

It’s stressful being a Giants fan.

For a game with two stellar pitchers – Tim Lincecum and Cliff Lee – it was touted to be a low scoring pitchers duel. Not exactly. The Giants rocked the Texas Rangers 11-7 Wednesday in the opening game of the World Series.



It's an emotional experience being a Giants fan. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Life as a Giants fan was a wild roller coaster of emotions for most of the 162 regular season games. It’s continued through the postseason. It doesn’t look like the World Series is going to provide any relief to fans.

Looking around the orange and black mass of more than 43,000 people gathered at AT&T Park on Oct. 27 the expressions throughout those nine innings ranged from pure ecstatic glee

(think three-run homer) to hands over the eyes (runs are scoring in the top of the ninth off closer Brian Wilson).

I really didn't think I was going to be back at the ballpark this season. Thank you Padres for imploding. Thank you Bruce Bochy for making pitching changes that manager Dusty Baker never seemed to be able to make. Thank you Buster Posey for becoming a catcher in college. Thank the beards.

Starting the season at the ballpark on opening day and being there for the first game of the World Series has made this a special season for this fractional owner of season tickets. A buzz is in the air for both events that just isn't replicated, at least any time during the regular season.

Fans are decked out in the favorite Giants garb. (One section of the third deck on the right field side was a sea of Texas red.) Military flyovers, the unfolding of a massive U.S. flag that covers most of the outfield – it's all a reminder this is America's pastime.

And with Tony Bennett with the mic, clearly this was San Francisco. At 84, what a voice he still has.

The crowd roared when on the Jumbotron a shot of Steve Perry from Journey appeared with him cupping his ear in one of the luxury boxes to better hear the crowd singing his former group's hit "Lights".

The City by the Bay was electric.

All those food vendors selling things usually not brought into the stands proved the powers that be knew people wanted to stay in their seats for this game. Good move.

Families were taking it all in. The same older couple that has been in the next row for all these many years is there again. And even though it's the World Series, they still leave early to beat the crowd. Men are in ties – it was a workday after

all for some people. Some people dyed their hair, others are wearing fake beards to fit in with the bullpen.

In the Public House, a group without tickets drove down from Sacramento to be surrounded by their brethren while watching the game next to the park. The streets surrounding the park are full of boisterous fans – before and after the game. It's one big party.

Inside it's much the same – only more so. The energy is intoxicating. This is it. It's what the players dream of as little boys. It's what the fans dream of each spring.

One down, three to go.

Go Giants!

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4 regional resorts make Ski's top 30 list

Each year *Ski* magazine publishes what it thinks are the best resorts in the country. It's divided by East and West. The 23rd annual edition is on newsstands now. Several Sierra Nevada resorts are mentioned in various categories.

On the last page of the compilation of stats are results for readers.

Here are the "local" **Overall top 30 Western Resorts** and what the magazine says about them:



Mammoth Mountain is known for its epic snowfall. Photo/Provided

• Mammoth, No. 12 – “Big and beautiful, underrated mountain. Not pretentious.”

• Heavenly, No. 13 – “Combo of Vegas nightlife and California weather rocks. Love the lake views.”

• Northstar, No. 15 – “Northstar has changed from a sleepy to a top-notch resort.”

• Squaw, No. 17 – “Best resort in Tahoe. Great mountain. Snow, sun and après fun.”

No regional resort made the Top 10 for lodging.

Terrain:

• No. 2 – Squaw

• No. 3 – Mammoth

• No. 10 – Kirkwood

Parks:

• No. 1 – Mammoth

• No. 3 – Northstar

Snow:

• No. 6 – Kirkwood

• No. 9 – Mammoth

Challenge:

• No. 3 – Squaw

• No. 9 – Mammoth

On-mountain food:

• No. 10 – Northstar

Grooming:

• No. 3 – Northstar

• No. 7 – Mammoth

Family programs:

• No. 4 – Northstar

In the reader survey no Tahoe area resort scored in the categories of Weather, On-mountain food, Lodging, or Dining.

Here is how the magazine’s readers scored the resorts:

Snow:

• No. 6 – Kirkwood

• No. 9 – Mammoth

Grooming:

• No. 3 – Northstar

• No. 7 – Mammoth

Terrain variety:

• No. 2 – Squaw

• No. 10 – Kirkwood

Challenge:

• No. 3 – Squaw

• No. 9 – Mammoth

Value:

• No. 7 – Kirkwood

Lifts:

• No. 1 – Mammoth

• No. 10 – Northstar

Service:

• No. 8 – Northstar

Access:

• No. 10 – Squaw

Après ski:

• No. 3 – Heavenly

Off-hill activities:

• No. 3 – Heavenly

Family programs:

• No. 4 Northstar

Scenery:

• No. 1 – Heavenly

Terrain parks:

• No. 1 – Mammoth

• No. 3 – Northstar

Overall satisfaction:

• No. 5 – Mammoth

Ski association working on skin cancer prevention program

The Far West Ski Association has received a grant from the California Skin Cancer Prevention Program to develop a program to inform young snow sports enthusiasts and their parents on the danger of skin cancer.



The Slip, Slop, Slide & Slither program featuring informative brochures, decals, and a sunscreen partner is being developed and administered by Fran Long, Trustee and Youth & Family Involvement chair. The program will be presented at the major ski shows in Los Angeles, San Jose, San Diego, and San Francisco this fall.

In addition, FWSA will distribute the materials at Mammoth Mountain and Lake Tahoe during school holiday periods in order to reach more children and their families.

The Far West Ski Association, founded in 1930, is a volunteer, nonprofit organization representing 180 affiliated ski clubs located throughout 11 regional councils in the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, South Dakota, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Players, coach sought for girls basketball leagues

There are 18 girls signed up from third to fifth grade 3-on-3 girls basketball league at Kahle Community Cente in Stateline. One more volunteer coach is needed to make this league work. If you can coach (or know someone who can), call Traci Dill at (775) 586.7271.

Sign-ups are under way for sixth- to eighth-grade girls.

Sign ups go through Kahle Community Center. Call (775) 586.7271 for more info.

Head-to-post soccer injury raises safety questions

By Emerson Marcus, Reno Gazette-Journal

Kevin Rivera cut a four-inch gash in his head and sustained a concussion during a soccer game Sept. 18.

The McQueen senior only remembers going for the ball before slowly regaining consciousness as he was escorted to a hospital by an ambulance.

“It was scary,” said Rivera, who will return to the soccer field Wednesday against Reed.

What makes Rivera's injury different than most soccer injuries is his wasn't caused by body-to-body contact or the turf – Rivera collided with the goal post.

Nevada's high school soccer goal posts, unlike football goal posts and the edges of basketball backboards, aren't padded.

"It's a very isolated injury," McQueen athletic director Eric Borja said. "But football posts have pads and maybe this is something soccer should look into for the future."

Read the whole story

California parks feeling burden of funding cuts

By Marjie Lundstrom and Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

They were left to the people of California, gifts of natural beauty and magnificence to be passed through the generations.

For California's 278 state parks, that heritage is becoming an iffy proposition.

Amid a sagging economy and chronic state budget deficit, California's parks – like other state park systems across the nation – are at a critical financial crossroads.



Grover Hot Springs in Markleeville is part of the State Parks system. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Years of budget cuts have produced a $1 billion backlog of crumbling buildings and eroding trails, according to a five-month examination by McClatchy newspapers in California. The vacancy rate among California park rangers stands at 30 percent. Reported crimes in state parks tripled over the past decade as the state added more parks – but not park rangers – a data analysis shows.

“We’re on the wrong end of a 30-year downward trend,” said California State Parks Director Ruth Coleman.

Read the whole story

EDC seeks easement from Forest Service on Rubicon Trail

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

El Dorado County supervisors voted 5-0 Tuesday to approve a plan to apply for a U.S. Forest Service easement along the Rubicon Trail offroad vehicle route.

The county has had a road along the route for more than 100 years, but the U.S. Forest Service has demanded the easement request before allowing the county to build a bridge along the route.

The county has balked at the request, saying it already had legal claim to the road as a so-called RS2477 road – a road under a long-standing federal statute.

Read the whole story

Giants win the pennant!

The San Francisco Giants won game six of the NLCS 3-2 tonight to send them to the World Series for the first time since 2002.

The first game against the Texas Rangers is Oct. 27 in San Francisco.

Mancuso begins ski season in Austria with 12th-place finish

Julia Mancuso of Squaw Valley Tweets that she finished 12th today in Soelden, Austria, is more than satisfied with her race, and that it’s a great gondola ride.

Check out the video of her run.

GPS keeps skiers inbounds

By Colin Nicholson, Independent

As we drove through the desert state of Nevada, it seemed both practical and reassuring that our car's global positioning system (GPS) could find its way to a ski resort in this arid landscape of cacti and rolling tumbleweed. Sure enough, turning a corner, I caught sight of the snowy peaks and green pines surrounding Lake Tahoe. But what is perhaps more impressive is that I could also use GPS to direct myself around the slopes of the resort I had arrived at: Heavenly.



Yes, just as satellite navigation technology has become a must-have accessory in cars, sat-navs are beginning to make themselves useful on the slopes. The market leader is Satsports (satsportsgps.com), which reproduces the artist's rendition of the mountains you see on paper piste maps on your iPhone, BlackBerry or other smart phone, with a little yellow circle to indicate where you are.

I was skeptical at first, but its position-finding was largely spot-on. Occasionally, it would place me on a piste when I was on a lift more or less above it, only to correct itself. I could zoom in and out and just had to drag my finger across the screen to scroll around the map. And I could replay where I had been.

Read the whole story