World Cup tour begins this weekend

By USSA

SOELDEN, Austria – Olympic gold medalists Bode Miller (Franconia, N.H.), Lindsey Vonn (Vail), Julia Mancuso (Olympic Valley) and Ted Ligety (Park City) will be in the start gate when the 2011 Audi FIS Alpine World Cup tour kicks off this weekend in Soelden.

Action begins Saturday with women's giant slalom, followed by the men on Sunday. Also in the women's gate are four-time Olympian Sarah Schleper and 2010 Olympian Megan McJames (Park City).

Mancuso was on the 2007 opening podium with a second to kick off a record season that put her in contention for the overall title. She and Vonn have been preparing for the weekend in nearby Pitztal, with Schleper and McJames joining them for the last day of training before heading to Soelden.

"We had four good days on some hard ice at Pitztal," said women's Head Coach Alex Hoedlmoser. "Lindsey is unbelievably confident now on the ice and Julia is doing some great things with her new skis. We've done everything we needed to do to prepare for this weekend."

In addition to Miller and Ligety, men's starters also include Olympians Tim Jitloff (Reno), Tommy Ford (Bend, Ore.) and Nolan Kasper (Warren, VT) plus Warner Nickerson (Gilford, N.H.) and Will Gregorak (Longmont, Colo.).

Miller and Ligety have been on the Soelden podium with Miller winning the race in both 2003 and 2004. Ligety has started his season with a top-3 in Soelden each of the last three years. In 2008 and 2010 Soelden set the stage for Ligety to ascend to

the overall discipline title for GS.

“Bode has been over here for a solid month now and Ted came over a few days earlier than the rest of the guys, so they’re ready to go,” said men’s technical Head Coach Mike Day. “We’ve had two really good days of training so far in Stubai, but we’re going to head over to Pitztal to ski on some hard ice that they made over there.”

Nickerson, who is training with the U.S. Ski Team leading up to the race, earned his slot by landing four GS podiums during races in New Zealand this summer, including a pair of Australia New Zealand Cup wins.

It will be the first start in Soelden for Kasper and also for Gregorak, who will make his World Cup debut. Gregorak was fifth in GS at the 2010 World Junior Championships.

Meeting to decide where to spend money on North Shore forests

The Nevada/Placer County Resource Advisory Committee will meet Nov. 5 at the Placer County Water Agency (144 Ferguson Road, Auburn) beginning at 10am. The purpose of this meeting is to vote on which projects the RAC will recommend for funding.

The public is invited to attend.

The RAC has more than $390,000 to allocate for Round 2 project proposals.

These projects must benefit National Forest System land in

either Placer or Nevada county and can include: improving the maintenance of existing infrastructure; enhance forest ecosystems; restore and improve land health and water quality; road, trail and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration; soil productivity improvement; improvements in forest ecosystem health; watershed restoration and maintenance; control of noxious or exotic weeds; restoration, maintenance, and improvement of fish and wildlife habitat and the re-establishment of native species.

For additional information, contact Joanne Roubique, Truckee district ranger (530) 587.3558, Jennifer Montgomery, RAC chair (530) 889.4010 or Ann Westling, public affairs officer (530) 478.6205.

Skate battle benefits Heavenly Snowboard Foundation

The Heavenly Snowboard Foundation is hosting the Bijou Battle Skate Jam Oct. 23 at the Bijou Skate Park in South Lake Tahoe.

This event is a family event and all ages are welcome to register and participate. The event is a fundraiser for the Heavenly Snowboard Foundation, a nonprofit that helps youth in the community experience snowboarding.

Registration will begin at 8:30am with a rider’s meeting at 10:30am and event kick-off at 11am. Helmets are required.

Cost is $10 and includes an event T-shirt (supplies are limited). The competition will be a jam format, with each division allotted 10 minutes, only 10 riders will be allowed per session. Three judges will be judging on overall

impression, trick difficulty, landings and style.

Males and females will compete together. Divisions are: 9 and under, 10-13, 14-17, and 18 and over.

Prizes will be given to the top finishers in each division and include skate decks, trucks, wheels, backpacks, and tons of other donated items.

The Bijou Battle will feature a tent village with vendor tents from the Heavenly Snowboard Foundation, U.S.A.S.A., Shoreline, the Heavenly TPC and others. There will also be a bake sale, food vendors and a raffle.

If you have questions, contact Aimi Xistra-Rich at (530) 314.9285 or heavenlyssf@yahoo.com.

Sugar pine planting to honor former board member

By Tressa Gibbard

The Sugar Pine Foundation (SPF) is a local nonprofit working to save the sugar pines and other white pines from the threat of a nonnative, incurable fungus called “white pine blister rust.” The SPF is working to maintain Tahoe’s legendary environmental health and scenic beauty by finding sugar pine trees that are resistant to the blister rust fungus, collecting their cones and planting their progeny.

In October and November, the SPF will be conducting planting events throughout the Tahoe region. They hope to plant more than 5,000 sugar pine seedlings that will add to Tahoe’s healthy forests of the future – and they are looking for

community volunteers to help with this task.

Community planting events are planned for Nov. 6 in the Angora burn and Nov. 13 in Zephyr Cove. At 10am volunteers will receive instructions and materials for the planting that will last until noon. Some seedlings will also be available for people to take home.



Sierra Nevada Alliance AmeriCorps volunteers Reyna Yagi and Nick Santos plant a sugar pine at the Sugar Pine Foundation's April community planting in Zephyr Cove. Photo/Provided

The Nov. 6 planting is a special event dedicated to the memory of Susie Kaiser. Kaiser served on the SPF’s board of directors and was tragically killed in a kayaking accident in late August. Kaiser’s friends and family have helped sponsor a community planting in her name on a lot in the Angora burn that Kaiser identified for sugar pine restoration.

The planting on Nov. 13 will take place at the Whittell High School in Zephyr Cove. The purpose of this planting is to enhance forest health by adding sugar pines in an area where the Jeffrey pines are heavily infected with mistletoe.

Planting trees is fun for everyone, kids and adults alike. Maria Mircheva, executive director of SPF says, “Kids especially love to come back and visit their trees.” Mircheva conducts plantings in conjunction with teachers and students throughout the Tahoe region. This fall, the SPF will plant trees with Glenshire Elementary School fourth-graders, Whittell High School students, and the sixth-grade class at North Tahoe Middle School.

Support for these projects has been obtained primarily from local sources, which is a testament to the community’s commitment to the environment. The Foresight Fund at the Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation and the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation are funding the Whittell High School and Glenshire Elementary school plantings, respectively.

Sugar pines are renowned for their enormous cones and uniquely beautiful, octopussy shape, but less well known is the fact that they are the largest species of pine in the world. Historically, sugar pines accounted for 25 percent of Tahoe’s mixed-conifer forest composition at lake level. Today, due to heavy selective logging during the Comstock era of the late-1800s and the more recent introduction of the blister rust fungus, sugar pines account for only 5 percent of the trees in Tahoe’s forests.

Restoring Tahoe’s forest composition with sugar pines that can survive the presence of blister rust is highly beneficial for forest and watershed health, wildlife and fire safety. Maintaining Tahoe’s scenic beauty and recreational potential is also a key to sustaining tourism as the economic backbone of the region. Educating Tahoe’s youth about the importance of forest stewardship will ensure that this place is protected

and cared for properly for generations to come.

There are so many good reasons to come out and plant trees with the Sugar Pine Foundation, so mark your calendar, bring the whole family, and plant some sugar pines this fall.

Nov. 6, 10am-noon, Susie Kaiser Memorial Planting at 1045 Coyote Ridge Circle in South Lake Tahoe. Street parking available.

Nov. 13: 10am-noon, Whittell High School in Zephyr Cove. Park in the school parking lot.

Please bring a shovel or trowel if you can.

For more information, visit www.sugarpinefoundation.org or call Maria Mircheva at (650) 814.9565.

Tressa Gibbard is development coordinator for the Sugar Pine Foundation.

Cloud seeding money comes through for region

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Cloud seeding operations within the Lake Tahoe and Truckee River Basin can proceed this winter following action today by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority.

TMWA's board of directors approved $155,000 to go toward cloud seeding in the Tahoe-Truckee area. The action follows an earlier action by the Western Regional Water Commission to provide up to $100,000 for cloud seeding during the winter of

2010-2011.

The money will allow the Desert Research Institute to run five cloud seeding generators in the mountains west of Tahoe.

Read the whole story

Fenway Park – a step back in baseball lore

By Kathryn Reed

BOSTON – I would have never guessed visiting Fenway Park would be a bit disappointing. As part owner of San Francisco Giants season tickets, I had tickets to the last game of the season – the one where the orange and black clinched the division.

I was in Boston that Sunday.

Instead of watching the Giants send the Padres scurrying back to San Diego to watch the remainder of the season on TV, I saw the Red Sox triumph over the dreaded, hated, vile Yankees to give Tampa Bay the division title.



Fenway Park -- a must see for any baseball

fan.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

So, Oct. 3 was bittersweet for me in not being able to root for my men in person. Still, when they clinch the championship series, I'll be at one of the World Series games – so, it's all good.

Fenway – *wow*. Anyone who has seen the Green Monster (that 37-foot, 2-inch left field wall) knows what I'm talking about. It's impressive both in stature, historical significance, and visual prominence and dominance of the ballpark.

It's one of the last parks where the scoreboard is changed manually. It's such a sought after job that parents are told to put their newborn's name on the wait list.

On our tour before the first pitch we sat in the seats above the monster that have only been there since 2003.

My niece Veronica, who graduated from Boston College in May and works in Beijing, was in town for the weekend and joined us on the tour. What a great bonus to the entire 11-day venture in New England.

We were lectured not to take any dirt as we walked onto the field. Watching the groundskeepers ready the damp field it took some self-restraint not to take a pinch of the red dirt. Of course, I didn't really know what I would do with it.

Just to walk where some of baseball's legends have stood – and even where some of today's greats were about to play – made me pause.

Ghosts of America's pastime seem to lurk everywhere. Think Cy Young, Babe Ruth, Jimmy Collins, Ted Williams, Jimmie Foxx and Carlton Fisk. They were all Red Sox.

Williams, the leftie who pulled the ball, was known for launching balls out of the park. To make it a bit easier for him to clear the bases, in 1940 the bullpen was built in right field – lessening the home run distance for the team's premier hitter by 23 feet.

Our tour guide gave us a trip through baseball and Red Sox history. With the first professional game played here April 20, 1912, it's the oldest active Major League ballpark. It wasn't front-page news at the time because the Titanic sank.

The feel of Fenway is a bit like a minor league or spring training park in the size and proximity of seats to the field. Concession stands are also old school – in design and food choices.

Tucked into an old neighborhood, the park was easily accessible by foot from our Back Bay hotel. Much like San Francisco's AT&T Park, bars and restaurants do a brisk business before and after games.

It can be hard to get tickets, though some go on sale prior to each game. I opted to ensure we'd have seats and paid well more than face value. Some things are worth it – like a once in a lifetime chance to watch the Red Sox beat the Yankees on the last day of the regular season at Fenway.

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Coldstream Canyon restoration project meeting

The Truckee River Watershed Council on Oct. 27 from 6-8pm at

the Truckee Donner PUD is having a public information meeting regarding the Coldstream Canyon restoration project design and implementation.

Coldstream Canyon, or Cold Creek, extends from the crest of the Sierra Nevada to just west of Truckee. There is a long history of human disturbances in the canyon, from construction of the Central Pacific Railroad to construction of Interstate-80. Such disturbances have and continue to cause increased size of peak floods, increased erosion of fine sediment, loss of riparian habitat and degraded aquatic habitat. Restoration will begin 2011 and consists of expanding the existing floodplain. By creating additional floodplain, fine sediment erosion will be significantly reduced, riparian vegetation will increase, and some flood protection will be afforded. The project will have water quality and habitat benefits.

To RSVP for the meeting, call the Truckee River Watershed Council at (530) 550.8760. Light snacks will be provided.

Upper Truckee River – a scenic mountain bike ride

By Kathryn Reed

Which way, now?

It's a constant thought and verbalized question every time we set out to ride along the Upper Truckee River behind Lake Tahoe Airport. With so many trails in the area, I would bet we've never done the exact route twice.

One of the things I love about mountain biking on the South Shore is the abundance of trails. And the scenery, well, I’m not sure it gets any better than Lake Tahoe.



Cycling along the Upper Truckee River is breathtaking. Photos/Kathryn Reed

As the seasons change, I always like to revisit some of my favorite places to pedal. The terrain doesn’t look the same from one season to the next. The difficulty of the ride changes depending on whether the ground is wet or soft dirt, like now.

Entering off the end of Lodi Avenue near where Caltrans dumps snow in the winter, we meander through thick pines until it opens into a meadow. Forks in the road have us wondering which way to go. I follow the sound of airplanes.

Tires get squirrelly in what feels like sand beneath me. Even in a super low gear I don’t seem to be going very far, very fast.

Up ahead is civilization. For a brief, albeit uphill ride, we go up Jicarilla Drive. We take the bikes into the forest at the dead-end. We know there is a trail here. She just isn’t making herself readily known.

Left. There she is.

Oh, no. A more distinct trail goes left, but veering right is clearly the direction we want to go. Sue convinces me right is the correct way to head.

I'm not sure I'd recommend this trail to the person who isn't familiar with the area. For those who know the lay of the land, just head to where you think the airport is. I can't be more definitive on how to get there from this side because we zigged and zagged quite a bit.

Multiple meadows captivate us. At times the trail is wide and flat enough to ride side-by-side and have a conversation. Other times I seem to have a death grip on the handlebars, not knowing what's around the bend. And at the far end of the river on this section is a single-track route that has more rivets and jarring bumps than Venice Drive.

Taking the low route we get as close to the Upper Truckee River as we can. The airport is across the way. The wind beacon is flat. It's a warm September day when a slight breeze would be nice.

The water seems still, as though it's not even moving. And, yet, it must be – that's what rivers do.

A dad is teaching his son and daughter how to bait a hook and cast a fishing line. Tiny fish are in the water, but nothing one could call dinner. A crawdad, though, now that was catching the youngsters' attention.

Up ahead on the trail a different father and son are on bikes headed in the direction we came from.

Splashes of yellow twinkle in the sunlight – fall is here.

Bouncing along the trail we are looking left, right, left, right – it's all so beautiful.

Finally, we are at the end of the trail. We come out at the California Tahoe Conservancy land at Sawmill Road. Time to make it a road bike ride home.

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Alpine – It's all about the mountain

Publisher's note: ***Lake Tahoe News is providing a glimpse into what skiers and boarders can expect at Lake Tahoe area resorts for the 2010-11 season.***

Alpine Meadows: The mountain simply delivers.

• Projected opening date: TBA

• Daily adult lift ticket: TBA



• What's new?: JMA Ventures, the ski resort's parent company, has added the West Shore Café of Homewood to its list of properties; mountain facilities upgrades undisclosed as of press time.

• What's special about Alpine?: Alpine Meadows' No. 1 focus is on the mountain, offering the best on-snow experience possible. Guests attracted to Alpine enjoy the resort for its casual, genuine atmosphere – not for the shopping and not for the spa. They visit for the pure mountain experience, which happens to include a 6-minute ride from the base lodge to the top of the mountain. Take into account seven powder bowls, many tree descents and immaculately groomed trails. Then,

there’s the friendly vibe.

• Last year’s snow total: 443 inches

• Lift hours of operation: 9am to 4pp

• Skiable terrain: 2,400 acres

• Number of lifts: 14

• Vertical feet: 1802

• Directions: Take Highway 89 north past the River Ranch to the resort entrance.

• Website

– Compiled by Susan Wood

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3 skiers with ties to Tahoe selected for hall of fame

By USSA

World Champion ski racer Daron Rahlves of Truckee, one of the world’s most noted big mountain skiers, the late Shane McConkey (formerly of Squaw Valley), and iconic skiing legend Glen Plake of the South Shore are among a roster of six skiers and builders named as inductees to the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame’s Class of 2010.

They will be joined by Paralympic medalist and World Champion Muffy Davis, (Salt Lake City), U.S. champion from the 1960s and ’70s and 1972 Olympian Bobby Cochran (Surry, N.H.), and noted sport builder and Sun Valley owner Earl Holding (Salt

Lake City).



Daron Rahlves

The class will be inducted April 2 at Sun Valley as part of a week long celebration of skiing history including Sun Valley's 75th season as a major ski resort.

Rahlves retired from the U.S. Alpine Ski Team in 2006 as the single most decorated skier in the downhill with nine World Cup victories. Among his victories was his 2003 win at the historic and prestigious Hahnenkamm in Kitzbuhel Austria. Two years earlier he had stunned the highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic crowd at St Anton, Austria, by beating local heroes Stephan Eberharter and Hermann Maier for the World Championship gold medal in the super G.

He capped his World Championship resume with a bronze medal in the giant slalom in 2005. His career record includes four U.S. titles and 16 World Cup podiums.

He also holds the 1993 Expert World Championship title in jet skiing and has won many extreme skiing events. After leaving the alpine team Rahlves became one of the world's best ski cross athletes, leading the USA in the newest Olympic sport at the Vancouver Olympics, his fourth as a U.S. Olympian.

The late McConkey has been called the most influential skier of his generation for popularizing free skiing and encouraging the development of equipment so more skiers could enjoy back country and deep powder conditions. In 1993 he won the World Pro Mogul Tour and added the South American Freeskiing

championship in 1994. The next year he claimed the U.S. Freeskiing championship and twice won, in 1996 and 1998, the International Freeskier Association World Tour Championship.

He was a leader in bringing fat skis to the slopes. In 2002, he helped develop the first reverse camber and reverse side cut ski, the Volant Spatula, and four years later introduced the K2 Pontoon. During his career he was featured in 26 films about skiing and became a world leader in ski base jumping. He died in a ski base jumping accident on March 26, 2009.

With his signature multi-colored mohawk hairstyle and his unrelenting enthusiasm for skiing, Glen Plake is certainly the best-known and recognizable skier in the world. The three time World Hot Dog skiing champion has become the symbol of the fun, joy and spirit of skiing. His outstanding ability on skis and personality have made him a skiing film star and many of the films that he has appeared in are now classics in the industry including “The Blizzard of Aahhh’s,” “Fistful of Moguls,” “License to Thrill,” “The Edge of Never” and this year’s “Legend of Aahhh’s.”

His television and magazine appearances as well as commentary work is seemingly endless. He continues to promote skiing at all levels from his high altitude expeditions around the world to his “Down Home Tour” where Glen and his wife, Kimberly, ski at local areas around the United States.

The U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame is located in Ishpeming, Mich., the birthplace of organized skiing in America. Its mission is to provide respected, permanent national recognition for excellence in achievement in skiing and snowboarding.