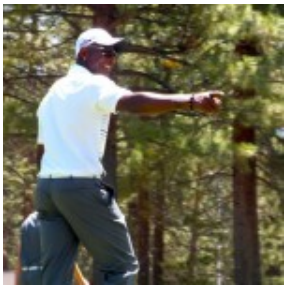
Mix of seriousness, playfulness during celeb tourney

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – While Billy Joe Tolliver was breaking a single-day course record, other players on the second day of the American Century Championship tournament were struggling.

As NBA all-star Wally Szczerbiak finished his round and was about to get a bite to eat, he was asked how he did. He shook his head sideways and said "unbelievable" – and not in a good way.



Jerry Rice interacts with the crowd July 17. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Stands and beaches were full, as well as the walkways as people gathered to watch their favorite athlete, comedian or actor. Boats filled the water, pulling right up on the beach. Lots of half naked bodies were frolicking about – some actually paying attention to what was happening on the green part of the grounds.

Thursday’s attendance at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course beat last year’s numbers by 10 percent. Last year the whole celebrity golf tournament drew record crowds.

A big smile came across former wide receiver Jerry Rice’s face when asked about the possibility of switching to baseball with his prowess at the mound on opening day for the Giants this year. He threw out the first pitch to his former QB Steve Young.



Jerry Rice throws out the first pitch at the Giants home opener in April 2010.

A spectator was quick to pipe in that Rice could do anything well.

Some guys admitted to having voted for Rice when he was on “Dancing with the Stars.” They said their wives were voting even more often.

Then there was the person who had to ask if Rice had played for the Forty-Niners. Yes, is the answer – and he has three Super Bowl rings.

For several years Jim Combs of Reno has been coming to Stateline to give Charles Barkley a few cigars. What kind, he wouldn’t say. But he did light one for Barkley as the basketball legend limped down the fairway.

The tournament wraps up today. Click here for tee times. The action starts at 8:15am at the Lake Tahoe golf course. NBC will be airing the tournament from noon-3pm.

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Tolliver leads ACC, sets single round record

By Emerson Marcus, Reno Gazette-Journal

STATELINE – Former Atlanta Falcons quarterback Billy Joe Tolliver admits his favorite hole at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course is the 19th, but he hasn't played too poorly on the first 18 either.

Tolliver shot a single-round American Century Championship record Saturday, with a 33.



Billie Joe Tolliver was in the lead most of Saturday. Photo/Kathryn Reed

He enters the final round of the 21st annual celebrity golf tournament as its leader.

Read the whole story

Nevada Beach improvements begin next week

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will begin a construction project to provide much needed improvements and BMP upgrades to Nevada Beach Day Use Area.

The project will begin on July 19 and continue through Oct. 15. Work will occur weekdays from 8am-6pm.

Two new restrooms and repaving of the north and center parking loops are planned for this construction season. The two old north and south restrooms will be decommissioned after the two new restrooms have been completed. Rental of the Pavilion picnic pad will not be available during construction and some noise from these activities will be heard in the campground and on the beach.

For more information and addition details about the project, contact Bob Becker at (530) 543.2688 or rabecker@fs.fed.us.

Tahoe ski resorts brag about second best season on record

The seven Ski Lake Tahoe resorts on Friday reported a 17 percent increase in skier visitation for the 2009-10 winter season, more than quadruple the national average reported this season by the National Ski Area Association.

The second busiest season on record, the 2009-10 winter season’s high snowfall totals and five-star Ritz-Carlton, coupled with the most affordable, quality ski packages, set the national standard for what a winter travel experience could be, according to Ski Lake Tahoe officials.

The seven resorts in Ski Lake Tahoe are Alpine Meadows, Heavenly, Kirkwood, Mt. Rose-Ski Tahoe, Northstar-at-Tahoe, Sierra-at-Tahoe and Squaw Valley.

Wagner, Roenick share lead after Day 1 of ACC

Jack Wagner, 2006 winner of the American Century Celebrity Golf Championship, shares the lead after the first day of this year’s tournament with former NHL star Jeremy Roenick.

In the modified Stableford scoring format, the two have 26 points. Wagner is the only non-athlete to win the tournament that is now in its 21st year at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course.



Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course

Trailing by one point to be among the leaders is former NFL quarterback Billy Joe Tolliver.

Not unique to the tournament, was the threat of thunder and lightning. Play was halted on Friday because of lightning strikes on the course. A little rain came down, too.

Click here to see Saturday's pairings. Gates open at 7am, with the first group teeing off at 8:10am.

– Compiled by Kathryn Reed

Truckee River rafting open in Tahoe City

The dam gates are open and the river is flowing, and rafting along North Shore's Truckee River is open.

Tahoe City-based Mountain Air Sports and the Truckee River Raft Company opened this week and are in full operation.

The companies offer self-guided, leisurely five-mile floats down the Truckee River.

Most trips take two to three hours to complete, with patrons

exiting at River Ranch Lodge near Alpine Meadows Road along Highway 89. Guests can park in Tahoe City and take free shuttles back to their vehicles after the float anytime before 6pm. Hours of operation are 8:30am to 3:30pm daily (weather permitting) and footwear is mandatory. Trips include parking, shuttle, paddles, life jackets and commercial rafts for two-20 people. Group rates are available.

According to Chad Blanchard, chief deputy water master, currently 200 cubic feet per second is being released from the Tahoe City Dam, Lake Tahoe's only water outlet, which may increase due to the drops in the natural flow and snowmelt.

Celebrities seem more important than the game of golf

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Autograph hounds were out Thursday at Edgewood Tahoe in hopes of securing a signature from one of the dozens of celebs on the golf course. Most were polite – but not all – which included fans and players.

Marcus Allen seemed a bit annoyed being asked for his autograph by young and older fans. One day the Hall of Fame running back might long for someone to recognize him.

Instead, he told people he had spent 30 minutes signing autographs already and that they could come back today if they wanted to try again.



AJ Hawk of the Packers spends time signing autographs July 15. Photos/Kathryn Reed

Course marshals warned a guy on the ninth hole yelling toward Aaron Rodgers if he used that type of language anytime during the three-day tournament, he would be bounced.

Rodgers ignored that side of the fairway when it came to signing autographs. Leaving the area a big smile crossed Rodgers' face when someone yelled, "Go, Bears." That would be Cal, not those guys in Chicago.

Rodgers is the all-pro quarterback for the Green Bay Packers. Although some Bay Area athletes are among the 80-plus roster, he is almost a local, having been born in Chico, and playing at Butte College and Berkeley.

Actor Don Cheadle made one couple's day after they convinced him to jog over to the rope at the putting green to have a picture taken of the three of them.

Several of the celebs took time to have their pictures taken with fans. Mostly it was programs being signed, but fans offered up a few golf balls, T-shirts, and other memorabilia.

On Thursday it was mostly groups of five on the course – a foursome with a celeb. These four paid for the privilege to play a round of 18 at the Stateline golf course with a sports

or Hollywood star.

Volunteers from the Lake Tahoe Education Foundation were on the ninth hole to give plaques to the non-celebs that had a photo of them with their playing partner that had been taken earlier in the day.

Guy Fieri of Food Network fame is supposed to be cooking up a storm today. He was calling Thursday to find out if he could have access to Edgewood’s kitchen. An answer was not readily available.

This tournament, though serious for many of the players, is not the caliber of the British Open. For example, the ping of a golf ball against metal bleachers could be heard Thursday as someone completely missed the green. It can be dangerous to be a spectator – but a whole lot of fun, too.

AJ Hawk, burly linebacker for the Packers, almost seemed to blush when someone told him how good he looked in his blue shirt.

Actor Jack Wagoner and former Bronco QB John Elway were chatting it up at the driving range. As the 2006 winner of the American Century Championship, Wagner may have been giving Elway a bit of advice.

Today begins the three-day tournament – with a tinge more seriousness about to arrive at Edgewood Tahoe.

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Climber sets records at Yosemite

By Miranda Simon, Sacramento Bee

When Alex Honnold made it to the top of Yosemite's imperious Half Dome two years ago – rope-less but serene up to the last slab – tourists gathered to ask him if he was crazy.

Even the most hard-core climbers wonder how the 24-year-old Sacramento native can make it to the top without the protection of ropes and still manage to keep calm.

But June 24, the news was not about Honnold's insane gearless solo climbs but rather that he broke speed-climbing records on two notorious Yosemite rock formations. He climbed Half Dome in two hours and nine minutes, shaving 41 minutes off the old record, and then finished the day off with a six-hour climb of the majestic El Capitan with Swiss climber Ueli Steck.

Read the whole story

Jordan, Romo create popular pair to start ACC tourney

Basketball legend Michael Jordan and Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo will be paired together Friday during the opening round of the American Century Championship at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, forming the most recognizable pairing in the tournament's 21-year history. Adding to the threesome's celebrity firepower is Boston Celtics star Ray Allen.

The Jordan, Romo, Allen group will tee off at 10:10am Frida just before Charles Barkley and after the marquee threesome of Troy Aikman, John Elway and Aaron Rogers. The American Century Championship's nationally televised first round starts with an 8:1 am tee time for former champions and NFL quarterbacks Chris Chandler, Billy Joe Tollive, along with perennial contender Trent Dilfer.

"The Michael Jordan, Tony Romo, Ray Allen pairing should be our biggest and most popular pairing in the history of the American Century Championship," tournament director Mike Milthorpe said in a statement. "Michael Jordan has traditionally drawn the largest galleries through the years, but Tony Romo has attracted huge crowds the past three years."



Tony Romo and Michael Jordan

The 54-hole, $600,000 tournament features 82 sports and entertainment stars.

Romo has built a fanatic following during his four years at the event – among both celebrity seekers and serious golf fans. Romo finished third in 2008 and is currently a 5:2 choice at Harrah's Race and Sports Book.

Romo has been named the recipient of the 2010 Brodie Award, recognizing an individual's accomplishments in both a chosen profession and in the sport of golf.

The award is named for former National Football League Most Valuable Player (1970) John Brodie, the one-time San Francisco

49ers quarterback and Senior PGA Tour player. It is given each year by organizers of the American Century Championship. Previous winners include Mario Lemieux, Rick Rhoden, John Elway and last year's winner, Trent Dilfer.

The Friday telecast will be carried on ESPN3 from noon-3pm and will re-air on ESPN2 at 8pm. The Saturday and Sunday rounds will be carried on NBC Sports from noon-3pm.

Romo ready to challenge Rhoden at ACC

By Maggie Thach, Reno Gazette-Journal

STATELINE – Rick Rhoden can hear Tony Romo's footsteps coming up behind him.

Last summer at the American Century Championship, the Dallas Cowboys quarterback finished second to Rhoden, an eight-time winner at the South Lake Tahoe tournament. In 2008, Romo finished third.

This could be the year Romo, who has dabbled in PGA Tour qualification events, takes the top spot.



Tony Romo

“A lot of these guys don’t play as much competitive golf but Tony is a great player,” Rhoden said. “If he can manage his game a little more, he’ll start winning this thing.”

Read the whole story