Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 16



Welcome to the start of Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Reno rodeo impacting Truckee River

By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Every June, up to 1,000 horses and cattle crowd onto the grounds of Renoâ€™s Livestock Events Center as the popular Reno Rodeo spurs into action.

Also every June, operators of a water treatment plant just downstream on the Truckee River notice a sudden spike of pollutants believed to be associated with animal waste.

Several agencies are joining to make changes that will allow the rodeo to occur without dirtying a river everyone is trying to keep pristine.

Read the whole story

Forest Service plans to cut discounts to seniors, disabled

By Barbara Barte Osborn, Modesto Bee

A proposed policy change by the U.S. Forest Service would reduce some long-standing benefits for senior citizens and permanently disabled people but at the same time expand benefits for holders of other national passes.

The changes to the agency's national pass discount policy could affect many of the facilities in the national forests closest to the Sacramento region.

The Forest Service has not publicly explained the reasons it is changing its policy on pass-related discounts, but is accepting comment on the proposal through Feb. 1.

Read the whole story

Holland 15th in snowboardercross

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

VEYSONNAZ, Switzerland – The race to make the snowboardcross roster for the 2010 Olympics just got a lot tighter as Nick Baumgartner threw it on the line Friday to notch a third-place finish during a SBX World Cup in Switzerland.

In addition to marking himself a contender for the Olympics, the shining light in Baumgartner's day were his starts.

"The course was great and my starts were awesome," Baumgartner said. "In the first heat where I kind of just missed stepping up the main feature in the straightaway in one heat, but other than that I won every holeshot so that was really good."

However, despite the podium finish, Baumgartner was left wanting to have gone further.

"Under different circumstances I'd be more stoked. I was in the lead for the top half and even second would have been alright, but I blew it right at the end," Baumgartner said. "I just knuckled something and got passed in the finish stretch. But, third is better than fourth."

In a competition where France's Pierre Vaultier took the win, Baumgartner said that be could have been more aggressive with the victor, but didn't want to risk them both losing it all.

Joining Baumgartner in the top 10 were teammates Graham Watanabe (Sun Valley, ID) who was ninth, and last week's World Cup winner Nate Holland (Squaw Valley, CA) who was 10th.

With the strong men's field, even U.S. Snowboarding Head Coach Peter Foley is uncertain who will assume the Olympic spots with just one competition left to qualify.

In the battle for up to four Olympic starting spots, Holland – who has now mathematically clinched a spot – leads the selection criteria with his win last weekend in Austria. Reigning Olympic champ Seth Wescott (Sugarloaf, ME) is next with a second place finish in the season opener in Argentina. Three riders now have a third, including Baumgartner, Watanabe and 2002 Olympic halfpipe champ Ross Powers (Okemo, VT). Baumgartner and Watanabe are tied in the first two tiebreakers (next best result).

In the women’s race, Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton, VT) was running fast when, in the semifinal round, she was landed on coming down off a feature and then run into by Switzerland’s Simona Meiler to finish eighth. With just one event remaining, Jacobellis, with a win last weekend, has clinched an Olympic spot.

Helene Olafsen of Norway won, followed by Canadians Dominique Maltais in second and Maelle Ricker in third.

Callan Chythlook-Sifsof (Girdwood, AK) was next for U.S. women, finishing 14th.

The World Cup tour now moves on to Stoneham in Quebec Jan. 21. It will be the final stop before the U.S. Olympic team for snowboarding will be named.

Veysonnaz, Switzerland, Jan. 15, Snowboardcross

Men

1. Pierre Vaultier, France

2. David Speiser, Germany

3. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI

4. Francois Boivin, Canada

5. Alex Pullin, Australia

—

9. Graham Watanabe, Sun Valley, ID

10. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

15. Shaun Palmer, South Lake Tahoe, CA

16. Pat Holland, Squaw Valley, CA

17. Seth Wescott, Sugarloaf, ME

23. Ross Powers, Okemo, VT

35. Jonathan Cheever, Saugus, MA

43. Mick Dierdorff, Steamboat Springs, CO

45. Jason Smith, Basalt, CO

Women

1. Helene Olafsen, Norway

2. Dominique Maltais, Canada

3. Maelle Ricker, Canada

4. Alexandra Jekova, Bulgaria

5. Tanja Frieden, Switzerland

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8. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton, VT

14. Callan Chythlook-Sifsof, Girdwood, AK

21. Faye Gulini, Salt Lake City

National Safety Awareness Week on the slopes

National Safety Awareness Week for skiers and boarders is Jan. 16-22.

Several resorts in the Lake Tahoe Basin have special events.

Know the code:

Skiing and snowboarding can be enjoyed in many ways. At ski areas you may see people using alpine, snowboard, telemark, cross country and other specialized ski equipment, such as that used by disabled or other skiers. Regardless of how you decide to enjoy the slopes, always show courtesy to others and be aware that there are elements of risk in skiing that common sense and personal awareness can help reduce. Observe the code listed below and share with other skiers the responsibility for a great skiing experience.

1. Always stay in control.

2. People ahead of you have the right of way.

3. Stop in a safe place for you and others.

4. Whenever starting downhill or merging, look uphill and yield.

5. Use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.

6. Observe signs and warnings, and keep off closed trails.

7. Know how to use the lifts safely.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 15

Snow – it could be the word for the next several days as the storms are lining up off the coast. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Snowshoe with Tahoe Rim Trail guides



Tahoe Rim Trail Association is sponsoring free guided snowshoe treks every Saturday through the end of March. Great for all abilities and children older than 10.

Dates for January are:

Jan. 16

Where: Page Meadows

Distance: 3 miles

Level: Easy

Hours: 2-3

Page Meadows 10am

Jan. 23

Where: Castle Rock

Distance: 4 miles

Level: Easy

Hours: 2-3

Kingsbury North Trailhead off of Kingsbury Grade 10am

Jan. 30

Where: Martis Peak

Distance: 8 miles

Level: Moderate- Advanced

Hours: 4-6

Martis Peak Road 10am

Jan. 30 Full Moon Snowshoe Trek

Where: Tahoe Meadows

Distance: 2-3 miles

Level: Easy

Hours: 2

Tahoe Meadows 6:30pm

You must sign up in advance for these treks by calling the TRTA office at (775) 298.0012 or email programs@tahoerimtrail.org.

Elijah Teter conquers superpipe prelim

By Alliance Action Sport

Halfway through the Wendy's Invitational Men's Superpipe Prelim Elijah Teter of Meyers sat comfortably in first, and he wanted it to stay that way, "I want to go to finals bad. I want to clean up this second run and definitely go bigger." Teter's wish was granted after a blow out victory, "I'm

feeling great man, I’m looking forward to going as big as I can in Saturday’s Final.”

Danny Davis and JJ Thomas will meet Teter in the Final. They both are pre-qualified in Snowbasin after their smooth performances in Breckenridge.

Read the whole story

Bahrke returns to podium at Deer Valley

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

PARK CITY – It was all smiles and tears for Heather McPhie (Park City) and Shannon Bahrke (Tahoe City) who finished first and third, during the Nature Valley Freestyle Challenge at Deer Valley Resort in Park City, putting them at the top of Olympic selection with two events remaining.

Beneath clear, cold skies, skier after skier took to the hillside of snowy bumps at Deer Valley, throwing out the best tricks they could in an attempt to boost their chances of making the 2010 Olympic Team.

Tying for her win, McPhie was overwhelmed with the joy that came with her first World Cup victory and fought back tears when she explained what the moment meant to her.

“I’ve believed in myself for a long time, but you never know – there are so many variables. I just wanted to give it everything I had and I did,” McPhie said. “My parents are here to see my first podium, and my family and friends. I have so much support.”

According to McPhie, being able to overcome such a strong field in her hometown means a lot to her, and potentially her future as an Olympian.

“This is so exciting! We’re at Deer Valley, and with six U.S. girls in the top 12, to end up on top is unreal,” McPhie said. “I hope and can’t wait to walk into Opening Ceremonies representing my country. There are still so many days and so much more training before that.”

The firey Bahrke, who famously won her silver medal in2002 on the same Deer Valley course, had a feeling about Thursday’s competition.

“I just felt like today was going to be my day. I was a little bummed because I went a little big and set it a little hard on my back flip, but I was so happy to be on the podium. With this good a team and it just really means the world to me.”

Bahrke was relieved to have a solid finish, but in what she says will be her last season of competition, she wants her shot at the gold.

“Until today I was one of the last in line, so for me to be on the podium is just incredible, I’m really excited,” Bahrke said. “I really hope I’m going to be there [Olympics] too. I’m going just keep plugging away and try to get a win like Heather.”

While Hannah Kearney (Norwich, VT) already has her Olympic spot locked in, the Vermonter is still in the hunt for wins, which she says are within her, despite her finishing eighth.

In the hunt for Olympic berths with just two more events to go, McPhie and Bahrke moved up to the top level of selection with their top threes. Up to four women will be named to the team on Jan. 26 at a press conference in Deer Valley.

In the men’s competition Patrick Deneen (Cle Elum, WA) led for

the U.S. men in fourth, while Australia’s Dale Begg-Smith won.

“Fourth place isn’t bad. I can think of 56 other guys that would love that place. I’m really happy with my run right now and I want to keep doing it,” Deneen said.

Night finals action begins at 8pm Friday for aerials and Saturday for moguls at Deer Valley Resort.

Park City, Jan. 14, Moguls

Men

1. Dale Begg Smith, Australia, 26.12

2. Guilbaut Colas, France, 25.48

3. Dmitriy Reiherd, Kazahkstan, 25.10

4. Patrick Deneen, Cle Elum, WA, 24.85

5. Jesper Bjoernlund, Sweden, 24.84

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6. Jeremy Cota, Carrabassett Valley, ME, 24.44

8. Michael Morse, Duxbury, MA, 23.76

9. David Babic, Washington, VT, 23.43

11. Dave DiGravio, Farmington, ME, 23.02

13. Shane Cordeau, Sun Valley, ID, 19.32

16. Bryon Wilson, Butte, MT,10.50

– (16 make finals)

21. Jimmy Discoe, Ridgway, CO, 22.44

38. Joe Discoe, Ridgway, CO, 20.09

57. Nate Roberts, Park City, UT, 8.38

Women

1-T. Heather McPhie, 24.59

1-T. Jennifer Heil, Canada, 24.59

3. Shannon Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 24.18

4. Margarita Marbler, Austria, 24.14

5. Aiko Uemura, Japan, 23.93

–

6. Michelle Roark, Denver, 23.88

7. Shelly Robertson, Reno, NV, 23.84

8. Hannah Kearney, Norwich, VT, 23.65

11. Laurel Shanley, Squaw Valley, CA, 22.00

13. Eliza Outtrim, Steamboat Springs, CO, 21.25

16. Heidi Kloser, Vail, CO, 14.82

– (16 make finals)

43. Emiko Torito, Denver, 2.58

Changes in men’s GS schedule

By USSA

WENGEN, Switzerland =â€“ The International Ski Federation confirmed Wednesday that the fog-canceled men’s Audi FIS

Alpine World Cup giant slalom from Adelboden, Switzerland will be rescheduled for Friday Jan. 29 in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia.

The weekend will now feature back-to-back giant slalom races before closing with slalom, the final World Cup race before the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. The new date will now fall outside the selection period for events being used to select the 2010 Olympic Team.

Despite the reschedule, the giant slalom will not count towards Olympic qualification and the U.S. Ski Team along with the U.S. Olympic Committee will name the 2010 U.S. Olympic Ski Team on Jan. 25.

Men’s World Cup action resumes Jan. 15 with a super combined in Wengen followed by the 80th running of the famed Lauberhorn downhill on Saturday and slalom on Sunday.