

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 2



All resorts but Kirkwood are open today. Read the Feature story on LTN to learn more about what is going on at Kirkwood. Read the Outdoor-Sports section to see how the skiing was at Sierra-at-Tahoe on New Year's Day. Here is the ski report brought to you by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Genoa driver returning to Daytona

Ron Levanduski, Star Gazette

Davy Jones is thankful he's in good health and has another opportunity to prove himself on the racetrack.

The former McGraw, N.Y.-resident, who won the world's two top 24 Hour sports car events at Le Mans and Daytona in the 1990s, will return to the Rolex 24 at Daytona for the first time in 17 years. He'll drive a top-line GT-class Corvette in next month's 48th running of the Grand-Am Rolex Series race.

Jones, 45, who lives near Lake Tahoe, is one of four drivers who will race the No. 07 Godstone Ranch Motorsports Corvette C6.R in the prestigious race on Jan. 30.

Read the whole story

U.S. Olympic halfpipe contenders ready to tackle Mammoth



By Lindsey Sine, USSA

MAMMOTH – Following an opening event that took halfpipe riding to new realms of creativity, Mammoth Mountain welcomes the 2010 Sprint U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix Jan. 6-10 for two full field halfpipe competitions. The event will help determine the roster of the U.S. Olympic halfpipe team.

Known for being the only resort in North America to offer three different-sized halfpipes, Mammoth's 22-foot super pipe will give athletes their last two competitions in which they can qualify for a spot in the reduced field at the final tour stop where the Olympic team will be named.

The men's field looks to again be stacked by all who can land double corks. The one and only Shaun White (Carlsbad, CA) won the first stop of the Grand Prix with a double double corked run, and Louie Vito (Sandy, UT) was right on the gold medalist's heels with his own variations of the trick.

Also looking to attach the phrase 2010 Olympian to their name will be hometown heros Greg Bretz and Luke Mitrani (both Mammoth Lakes, CA) and wildcard Zach Black (Breckenridge, CO) who took third at the first stop of the Grand Prix in Copper, CO.

In the women's field Kelly Clark (Mt. Snow, VT) is her usual dominating self this season. After taking the win in Copper Mountain, she is looking to throw down in Mammoth. Joining her

will be partners in crime Gretchen Bleiler (Aspen, CO), who was second at the tour's first stop, and reigning Olympic gold medalist Hannah Teter (South Lake Tahoe, CA).

Taking the competition up a notch in the women's field are Olympian Elena Hight (South Lake Tahoe, CA), Ellery Hollingsworth (Stratton, VT) and U.S. Snowboarding rookie Maddy Schaffrick (Steamboat Springs, CO).

The action in Mammoth goes down starting with men's and women's qualifications for the first halfpipe competition on Jan. 5. Finals for the first pipe competition take place on the sixth, then, after a little break, qualifications for the second pipe will take place on Jan. 8 with finals on the Jan. 9. Slopestyle will cap things off at Mammoth on Jan.10.

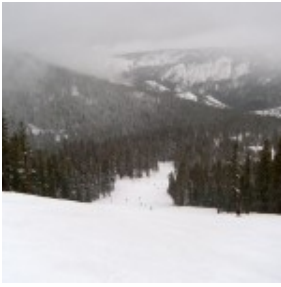
If you can't catch the action in person, look for the future of the U.S. Olympic team appearing in the U.S. Snowboarding Grand Prix show on a TV near you Jan. 10 on NBC at 10:30am.

New Year's Day on the slopes

By Kathryn Reed

TWIN BRIDGES – My iPhone greeted me with the message Sierra had 8 inches of fresh snow in the last 24 hours. A good omen since the New Year's Day activity was skiing.

But being the lazy threesome we can be, we didn't take our first run until 11:30am – and it had nothing to do with the hour we went to bed the night before. It was just nice to sleep in.



Winter weather
at Sierra-at-
Tahoe on Jan.
1.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

We missed the freshies, but more of it was coming down as we skied much of West Bowl, and a few runs off Grandview. All the bare spots Sue and I had seen four days earlier were covered up Friday.

The snow was great up top, a little sticky closer to the lift lines.

This being my sister Pam's first day on the slopes we didn't take her into the trees, but the whooping we heard from others made it sound like even the afternoon it was good. Tracks proved plenty of people had been enjoying the powder earlier in the day.

The crowds were thin by the time we arrived. Last year it was a waiting game on New Year's Day. Maybe the rain in South Lake Tahoe was keeping people away. All the better for us.

Mitch Ibsen and Jim Holm of Livermore beat us to the slopes. They had arrived about 9:30am.

"Any day is a good day to ski," Holm said as the two took a break for a bite to eat at Grandview Lodge.

The friends said the other 15 in their party back at the cabin are fair weather skiers – and that the previous night's fun

had nothing to do with why they weren't on the slopes.

Today is apt to be a much better day to ride – at least weather-wise.

Rob, the bartender, told Pam that the wet stuff coming down while we were there was perfect to fill in the spots needing filling in, and as the nighttime temperatures dropped the light, fluffy stuff would start to fall.

The National Weather Service is calling for partly sunny skies in the Tahoe area through Tuesday.

A cold \$6 beer is probably going to be bit more refreshing today since temps could hit the 40s.

Hunter changes sports to become avid bird counter

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Tim Fitzer is one busy bird counter.

During the Audubon Society's annual Christmas counts this year, Fitzer is doing eight all-day counts in locations ranging from the Suisun marshes to the Sierra and from Lincoln down to Stockton.

Some folks last only half a day on counts, said Ed Harper, another prominent local birder. Three is the upper limit for most.

Eight? "That's quite a few," Harper said.

A single count – especially in areas where waterfowl gather –

may turn up more than 80 species and tens of thousands of birds.

But Fitzer's relationship with birds started with shooting, not counting.

Fitzer, the duck hunter, was sitting in a blind in the early 1970s when a common yellowthroat flew up beside him.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, Jan. 1



Happy New Year! Here is the ski report for the first day of 2010 from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Guided snowshoe on South Shore

Explore Tahoe and Tahoe Rim Trail Association join forces for a guided snowshoe hike.

When: Jan. 8 at 9am

Where: Kingsbury North trailhead at the end of Andria Drive off Kingsbury Grade.

What: Easy to moderate 3-mile loop to Castle Rock lookout.

Who: Adults and children over 10 years (must be accompanied by an adult).

Cost: Free. Refreshments provided.

All participants must bring snowshoes.

Sign up: www.programs@tahoerimtrail.org or call Explore Tahoe at (530) 542.4637.

Winter camping skills class

Tahoe Rim Trail Association is hosting an overnight trip to learn winter camping skills. The weekends are Jan. 16-17 or Feb. 27-28, weather permitting.

The trip will teach winter travel methods and considerations, hazards and snow-camping techniques, specifically packing for snow travel, basic orientation skills and winter travel hazards.

Must be 21 or older. The group will be limited to 12 people.

For more information, call (775) 298-0238 or email programs@tahoerimtrail.org.

Supes consider BMX track in

Placerville

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

A Placerville skate park's growing popularity among bicyclists has spawned a move to create a separate BMX facility on El Dorado County's west slope.

BMX riders, however, said they're surprised and skeptical of the park idea, launched by skateboarders and El Dorado County officials.

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 31



It's the last day to ski this decade – so get out there. First, read the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.