

European ski rental firm moves into Tahoe

Skiset has opened four stores in South Lake Tahoe. The France-based company expanded to North America this year.

The company plans to open stores in Truckee, Tahoe City, Kings Beach, Incline Village and Squaw.

“Skiset has unrivaled brand recognition in Europe. Skiers and riders know that they will receive quality equipment, value for money and great customer service. We only partner with ski shops in North America which operate to the same standards,” Tony Lyle, vice president of Skiset, emailed *Lake Tahoe News*. “In the current economic climate skiers can rent the latest and greatest equipment rather than purchase at a much higher cost. Also, they can eliminate excess baggage fees imposed by most airlines for ski carriage. It’s a good time for us to expand and give customers the service, value and quality they expect and deserve.”

Heavenly almost lives up to its name

By Kathryn Reed

Friendly – that is the word to sum up Heavenly Mountain Resort.

This hasn’t always been the case for this Lake Tahoe resort that straddles California and Nevada. Less flattering words were often associated with the resort in the past and still

linger with those who don't call this their home mountain.



Done with
their work,
reindeer take
to the slopes
at Heavenly on
Christmas Day.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

As an extremely infrequent skier at the South Shore resort, I was told by season passholders this friendliness wasn't just Christmas cheer being dispersed – it's the norm.

When Vail Resorts bought Heavenly in March 2002, one goal was to work on guest services. From the lifties to the food service workers to security to people dealing with less than patient media – everyone was great on Christmas Day.

Skiing Christmas Day is a present unto itself – usually it's less crowded. For two locals who got there at 8:30am, they had the mountain to themselves.

Cathy Donovan of Los Gatos was with her three sons – ages 24, 22 and 14 – taking in some runs.

"No one believes in Santa. Christmas is one of the less crowded days of this week," Donovan, a 1977 South Tahoe High grad, said of why she was on the slopes.

The Zarenba family has skied at Killington and Mammoth, with

this being their first trip to Tahoe. Living outside of London means they don't have the luxury of driving up to Tahoe every weekend.

Dad Stefan, 7-year-old Jay and 15-year-old Chelsea all said Heavenly was better than the other U.S. resorts they've been to.

"There is more night life, shops, skiing – the whole town is better," Stefan Zarenba said.

He also commented on the friendliness of the resort and how it's better organized than other places he's been to.

Being Jewish meant Beth Gelles didn't have to worry about what her family thought of skiing on Christmas Day – just another day on the calendar for them.

"With the economy, we didn't take a big trip this year," said Gelles, who lives in San Mateo. Deer Valley is usually where she and her husband and their children, ages 10, 8 and 4, like to ski.

Christmas was their third day of being on the slopes at Heavenly – "and the least crowded.

"The views are exceptional," Gelles said.

Heavenly has the best views of Lake Tahoe. Homewood, on the West Shore, makes you feel like you're descending into the icy water, but Heavenly has more expansive views than any Tahoe resort.

The calm water on this blue bird day was almost inviting – well, maybe to be on the paddle-wheelers that plied the waters in the distance.

It was a bit disconcerting, though, to read the resort's website about what's open – "We couldn't ask for any more this Christmas than being 100% open" – and finding this to not be

the case. The same posting was up hours after the resort was closed for the day.

The six of us were about to go down Canyon. Nope. Closed. Snowmaking in progress. Yes, the website says as much, but after reading the home page about 100 percent being open, why would one venture deeper into the site?

A bit more snowmaking (or Mother Nature) could be used on some of the trails. And the resort could improve marking the rocks and other obstacles.

Don't even get me started on the \$10 bland veggie burrito at East Peak Lodge, the \$9 beer or small hot cocoa for more than \$3. If the resort could spread the expertise in hospitality to quality of food and fair pricing, it would make for a more positive skiing experience.

Amanda Olson in the California Bar gets the employee of the day award for her exceptional service and friendliness. Maybe it has something to do with her hometown being Paradise.

One touch that was new since I was last at Heavenly is pulling down the security bar on the Canyon chair and finding a map of the resort. That sure beats taking off gloves and fiddling with a paper map, especially had it been snowing.

But when you have three women skiing together, it did seem a bit sexist for the advertisement for private lessons to say something like start the day as Bob, Bill and Walter and finish it as Hans, Franz and Werner. Why not start the day as Kae, Sue and Brenda and finish it as Hannah, Lindsey and Picabo?

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Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 25



Don't be surprised if you see Santa out there day. Thank him for delivering all that white stuff to the slopes. Here is the ski report for the day brought to you by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

N. Nevada athletes have more than wins on their wish list

By Jim Krajewski, Reno Gazette-Journal

We asked several prominent area athletes what is on their Christmas wish list this year. Answers ranged from the outrageous (a Porsche Panamera, which starts at \$90,000) to the sublime, but the over-riding theme was that gifts aren't necessarily what matters most. Many local sports types simply want to spend time with family and friends.

Minden's Karen Stoffer, a pro stock motorcycle racer on NHRA circuit, gave some perspective on how her family gets at the meaning of the holiday.

Read the whole story

Sierra's Jamie Anderson wins slopestyle at Breckenridge

By Jen Watkins, Park Record

More than 50 elite snowboarders from around the world took to the slopes in Breckenridge, Colo., in the Slopestyle Mens Finals at the Winter Dew Tour, but it was a pair of teens who secured the top spots on the podium.

Tyler Flanagan (Mammoth Lakes, Calif.) and Sage Kotsenburg (Park City), both 16, landed the first and second spots respectively Dec. 20 at the first of three Dew Tour events. Twenty-one-year-old Eric Willett (Breckenridge, Colo.) finished third.

"It was kind of crazy," Kotsenburg said. "My two almost-best friends were all on the podium."

The teens beat out elite snowboarders including the top two qualifiers, Torstein Horgmo and Mikkel Bang. Kotsenburg described Horgmo and Bang as "Norwegian snowboarding gods" and said even he was surprised at the final results.

[Read the whole story](#)

Tahoe City's Bahrke 5th in aerals

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS – It was a Christmas come early for Jeret

“Speedy” Peterson (Boise, ID) and Lacy Schnoor (Draper, UT) as they flipped and twisted their way to a nomination for the U.S. Olympic Team in aerials at Olympic Trials in Steamboat on Christmas Eve.

“I can’t believe that I’m going to go to the Olympics and I can’t wait to represent our country. I hope I go out there and do well,” Schnoor said.

Schnoor laid out a double-full, full, which is two flips with two twists on her first flip and one on her second, and full, double-full, which is a full twist on her first flip and two twists on her second. The double full full, however, happened to be a jump she had only first landed on snow a day prior.

“That was my fifth one on snow ever, so I am so glad I landed it,” Schnoor said. “The first one yesterday – I was nervous, but I’m actually more comfortable doing that trick than full double full, so I’m glad I did it and I’ll be happy to continue doing it.”

Backing up Schnoor on the podium was second place finisher Ashley Caldwell (Lake Placid, NY) who only made the U.S. Team a week ago after her success at U.S. Selection events.

“It hasn’t really set in yet. I was surprised to be that far ahead, but I’m just excited to be here and hopefully later in the season I’ll make it to the Olympics,” Caldwell said. “I knew that I was maybe coming, but I found out officially three days ago.”

The young athlete grew up as a gymnast and has only been training aerials for the past three years, but says the sport is a good fit for her.

Following up Peterson in second was Dylan Ferguson (Amesbury, MA) who was totally satisfied with what were two spectacular competition jumps for him.

Fans can tune in to watch the excitement of Olympic Trials Dec. 26 on NBC at 11:30am Pacific time.

2010 Olympic Trials Steamboat Springs, Dec. 24, Aerials

Men

1. Jeret Peterson, Boise, ID, 258.21
2. Dylan Ferguson, Amesbury, MA, 231/23
3. Ryan St. Onge, Winter Park, CO, 206.74
4. Nevin Brown, Streetsboro, OH, 201.63
5. Scotty Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 196.05
6. Matt DePeters, Hamburg, NY, 166.94

Women

1. Lacy Schnoor, Draper, UT, 177.83
2. Ashley Caldwell, Lake Placid, NY, 174.57
3. Emily Cook, Belmont, MA, 168.14
4. Jaime Myers, Boise, ID, 141.91
5. Jana Lindsey, Black Hawk, SD, 128.38
6. Allison Treleaven, Fort Wayne, IN, 95.38

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec.



Last-minute shoppers might think about stuffing stockings with lift passes or season passes. Click [here](#) for today's ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Freestyle moguls all about Sho-time

Sho Kashima may have been born in El Paso, but he is clearly more comfortable in ski boots than cowboy boots.

The 23-year-old is vying for a spot on the U.S. mogul team.

Home resort: Heavenly Mountain Resort



Sho Kashima

Why did you choose this resort?: I moved to Tahoe when I was 4, and Heavenly was right in my backyard. My dad had a job there, and that's why we moved to Tahoe. Heavenly has been really supportive throughout my career on the U.S. Ski Team.

How often are you in Lake Tahoe?: 6-8 times a year now because

of competitions/training.

When you aren't training and competing where can we find you and what would you be doing?: There's not much downtime, I feel like I'm always going. I'll rarely have time to myself when I'm not doing anything. I like playing Xbox if I have nothing else going on.

After you win gold in Vancouver, what is your next goal? Hopefully, that's the case! I'm actually not sure what I'll be doing in the future. I'd like to finish up school and hopefully some opportunities open up so I can have a nice career after my career in skiing.

How long have you been participating in your sport? I've been skiing since I was 4 years old. I started skiing competitively in moguls when I was 11.

Who inspires you most and why? My family and friends. They give me so much support, and I'd love to make them proud by having a lot of success. I owe my community so much, they've been awesome.

Your life is devoted to an event that is over in minutes, how do you prepare for that thrill of victory or agony of defeat? It's hard to think about. I know my event is over in about 20 seconds, but I've been training most of my life to be where I am now. I'm really only prepared for the thrill of victory in my head, I never want to be prepared to fail. All I can do is keep training and competing hard, and ski my best runs, and keep improving my skiing no matter what I'm ranked in the world. Even if I become the best skier in the world, I will have room to improve somewhere.

Anything else you would like to add? My twitter: shotime2010, I usually update that once a day.

Caution: Sierra lakes not solid ice

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

El Dorado Irrigation District officials caution wintertime visitors to be careful if they venture onto the ice at Echo, Silver or Caples lakes.

The district's winter drawdown of the lakes is in effect, which means water levels under the ice will fluctuate, creating potentially dangerous conditions.

Read the whole story

Tahoe's Bahrke 3rd, Kashima 5th at Olympic Trials

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS – The snow falling on Steamboat's Voo Doo run couldn't hold back World Champion Patrick Deneen (Cle Elum, WA) and World Cup moguls champion Hannah Kearney (Norwich, VT) on Wednesday as each won Olympic Trials, securing a nomination to the U.S. Olympic Team in the moguls discipline.

"This is the only golden ticket, and to have it means the world to me," Kearney said. "It felt like a winning run when I

crossed the finish line.”

Though it was nearly whiteout conditions into the final run of competition, Kearney nailed a back layout and flat helicopter, combined with an extremely clean run for the win.

“It may have been slower than some of the other competitors, but it was clean and I still skied aggressively,” Kearney said. “There was no way I was going to lose by skiing too conservatively. I pushed it and I am really pleased.”

According to the World Championship bronze medalist, having secured a spot on the Olympic team will enable her to relax, as well as push herself further in the sport to get to where she wants to be in Vancouver – the top of the podium.

“It’s going to make the rest of the year less stressful, and to go into the Olympics as un-stressed as possible is going to give me an advantage,” Kearney said. “I’m going there to win a gold medal. I’m not going there to ‘experience it.’ I already did experience it and there’s a lot of things I’m going to do differently for a much better result.”

Kearney was followed in second by Colorado native Emiko Torito (Denver) who, although disappointed in not winning, was happy with her progress and where she is headed this season.

Like Kearney, Deneen also noted that the weight off his shoulders thanks to the win will be beneficial to him in the coming months.

Right on Deneen’s tail was U.S. Ski Team newcomer Jeremy Cota (Carrabassett Valley, ME) who had the crowd on their toes for a darkhorse victory as he sat in the lead until Deneen’s final run.

“That’s freestyle skiing for you, a lot of close calls. I skied as well as I could and I am definitely happy with that,” Cota said. It’s a little heartbreaking, but I’ll get over it.

I was happy to be there. I skied really well and I was obviously in there somewhere and I'm happy with that."

With three of the five Olympic team spots already nominated, two more remain to be given out Thursday when men's and women's aerials take over the action on Voo Doo run.

Steamboat Springs, CO – Dec. 23, Moguls

Men

1. Patrick Deneen, Cle Elum, WA, 26.68
2. Jeremy Cota, Cle Elum, WA, 26.11
3. Holt Haga, Boise, ID, 26.06
4. Shane Cordeau, Sun Valley, ID, 25.92
5. Sho Kashima, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 25.90
6. Jimmy Discoe, Ridgway, CO, 25.81
7. Dave DiGravio, Farmington, ME, 25.53
8. Michael Morse, Duxbury, MA, 25.39
9. David Babic, Washington, VT, 24.88
10. Joe Discoe, Ridgway, CO, 24.86

Women

1. Hannah Kearney, Norwich, VT, 26.30
2. Emiko Torito, Denver, 25.96
3. Shannon Bahrke, Tahoe City, CA, 25.37
4. Michelle Roark, Denver, 25.34
5. Shelley Robertson, Reno, NV, 24.58

6. Heather McPhie, Park City, UT, 24.09
7. Eliza Outtrim, Steamboat Springs, CO, 23.56
8. Heidi Kloser, Vail, CO, 23.28
9. Laurel Shanley, Squaw Valley, CA, 23.15
10. Mikaela Matthews, Frisco, CO, 13.11