

Limited hours at Cave Rock on Dec. 25

The boat launch facility at Cave Rock will be open from 6-11am on Christmas Day.

The hours are because of holiday staff reductions in the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's watercraft inspection program. Watercraft inspectors are provided by the Tahoe Resource Conservation District and are important in protecting Lake Tahoe from the threat of aquatic invasive species such as quagga and zebra mussels.

Boaters launching on this day must be off the water prior to 11am. For information, contact Jay Howard at (775) 831.0494, ext. 229.

Female ski jumpers lose battle to compete in Vancouver



Wendy Stueck, Globe and Mail

In the end, they couldn't fly far enough.

A group of determined female ski jumpers that launched a landmark legal battle for the right to compete in the 2010 Olympic Games yesterday landed short, their dreams ended by

the Supreme Court of Canada's refusal to hear an appeal of lower-court rulings that dismissed their case. For the group, comprising young women who long for nothing more than to soar through the air from an Olympic-sanctioned ramp, the decision came as a bitter, if not unexpected, disappointment.

"It's kind of hard to believe that it's the end. It's still settling in," Meaghan Reid, a 16-year-old who is one of the plaintiffs in the case, said yesterday from her home in Calgary. "We've worked for so long and so hard that we're not going to give up until we get into the Olympics. But legally, for 2010, we're done."

Read the whole story

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 23



Bundle up because the morning is starting off with single digits. Here is the ski report brought to you by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Olympics on the line today for mogul maestros

Tom Kelly, USSA

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS – There was a nervous air at the top of Voo Doo on Tuesday as some of the best moguls skiers in the world came to the start to try their stuff on the bump run that could determine the fate of the U.S. Olympic Team 24 hours later. It will be winner-take-all battle Wednesday afternoon with a single Olympic berth on the line.

Skiers had a two-hour block Tuesday to take practice runs, working on their air packages and getting used to the massive bumps.

“It’s a skier’s course,” said Coach Todd Schirman. “The bumps are big and beefy, and the transitions [to the jumps] really quick.”

The Olympic Trials will determine one team member per discipline and gender. The remainder of the Team, up to four in each event, will be announced January 26 after the remaining five World Cup events.

It was a nervous, pensive scene at the top of Voo Doo Tuesday. Just down from the top on skier’s right, Michelle Roark (Denver) focused and visualized before finally hitting the top air. World Champion Patrick Deneen (Cle Elum, WA) was in his own zone, thinking about what he needed to do to guarantee his spot on the 2010 Olympic Team. Despite a win and a third in her back pocket already, World Cup champion Hannah Kearney (Norwich, VT) was her typical intense self as she mapped out her run.

Skier after skier came to the top, checked in with coaches on the radio, and ripped runs down the massive bump run.

When the competition kicks off on Wednesday, all eyes will be on Bryon Wilson (Butte, MT), a relative unknown who was a late entry into the opening World Cups in Finland where he scored two second place finishes. While Wilson is the clear leader after the opening World Cup weekend, he would love to confirm his spot on Voo Doo.

"The course is rippin' today," said Wilson. The bumps are good, the jumps are good and we'll see what happens tomorrow."

What does the top-ranked American on the World Cup think it will take to win: "Go fast, go big and just lay down a smokin' run."

Wilson is just one member of a well-stacked men's moguls team with a dozen others ready to take the spot. Among the notables is Deneen, who took the worlds title last year in Japan but was shutout in the Finnish opener. Add to the mix 2005 World Champ Nate Roberts (Park City, UT), returning from an injury and striking the podium in Finland and ready to challenge for a first Olympic spot. And that's just the beginning. And don't count out the likes of Michael Morse (Duxbury, MA), Sho Kashima (S. Lake Tahoe, CA), David Babic (Washington, VT) and more.

It isn't any easier on the women's side, where Kearney has been the clear front-runner. But a host of others are waiting in the wings to take the spot including Roark, 2002 silver medalist Shannon Bahrke (S. Lake Tahoe, CA) local favorite Emiko Torito (Denver), veteran Shelly Robertson (Reno, NV) and Steamboat's own Eliza Outtrim who is off to a good start.

Historically, the Olympic Trials have produced winners from among the favorites. But this year's field is so packed with talent that it's truly anyone's ballgame. If a dark horse emerges and wins, it could change the complexion of Olympic qualifying in the remaining five World Cups, including January stops at Deer Valley Resort in Park City, UT and Lake Placid, NY.

Moguls kicks off with the introductory showcase of athletes at 12:45pm, followed by first run at 1pm. and second run at 2pm. Awards in Goldola Square begin at 3:30pm. followed by Big Head Todd and the Monsters.

Anderson out of Olympic contention

Lake Tahoe has one less Olympic hopeful.

Joanie Anderson, who skis for Sierra-at-Tahoe, will not be competing in the next three World Cup races, which are qualifiers for the Vancouver Winter Games.



Joanie
Anderson

"I'll be racing in X Games at the end of January, and that's about it for boardercross," Anderson said in an email to *Lake Tahoe News*.

Sugar Bowl's new lift opens Dec. 23

Sugar Bowl Resort, with the 4 feet of snow it got in early December and the 10 additional inches from the current storm, is opening the Summit Chair today.

Skiers and riders can access the new chairlift by riding the Mt. Judah Express lift, then skiing a short distance to the new lift's bottom terminal. The lift provides access to the expert-only runs of the Judah Bowl, improves lift service to Sugar Bowl's sidecountry terrain, with the new Backcountry Adventure Center taking skiers and riders on professionally-guided powder tours, teaching the skills needed for safe backcountry travel.

The resort plans an official celebration for the new Summit Chair on Jan. 30, part of Sugar Bowl's 70th anniversary festivities.

U.S. skiercross racers far from the top

Lindsey Sine, USSA

INNICHEN, Italy – Switzerland's Michael Schmid and Sweden's Anna Holmlund went two for two as they won their second skiercross World Cup in as many days on Tuesday in Italy. Casey Puckett (Aspen, CO) led the U.S., finishing 18th.

"It didn't start out as good as yesterday. We only had average qualifying results," U.S. Ski Cross Head Coach Tyler Shepherd said. "Casey made a mistake in the upper part of the course in qualifying and didn't get first lane choice. Getting first lane choice here is pretty critical."

Schmid was followed in second by Norway's Andun Groenvold and Switzerland's Conradin Netzer in third. Daron Rahlves (Sugarbowl, CA) followed Puckett for the U.S., finishing 21st. Neither Rahlves or Puckett made it past the first heat.

“Both Casey and Daron had second choice and both got pinched out at the start,” Shepherd said. “Both their starts were good, too, so it’s a little frustrating.”

In the women’s race Holmlund was again followed by France’s Ophelie David in second. Sanna Luedi of Switzerland was third. Caitlin Ciccone (Littleton, NH) led the way for U.S. women in 27th.

It was Ciccone’s second World Cup to gain points in the standings as she slowly emerges as the top woman in ski cross in the U.S.

World Cup skiercross racing now breaks for the holidays, but will be back in action Jan. 5 in Austria.

Innichen/San Candido, Italy, Dec. 22, Skiercross

Men

1. Michael Schmid, Switzerland
2. Audun Groenvold, Norway
3. Conradin Netzer, Switzerland
4. Richard Spalinger, Switzerland
5. Xavier Kuhn, France
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18. Casey Puckett, Aspen, CO
21. Daron Rahlves, Sugar Bowl, CA
47. Justin Johnson, Park City, UT
56. Jean Christophe Rudigoz, Sun Valley, ID
60. Patrick Duran, Fayston, VT

73. John Teller, Mammoth Lakes, CA

88. Scott Horn, Truckee, CA

Women

1. Anna Holmlund, Sweden

2. Ophelie David, France

3. Sanna Luedi, Switzerland

4. Julia Murray, Canada

5. Ashleigh McIvor, Canada

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27. Caitlin Ciccone, Littleton, NH

48. Langely McNeal, Ketchum, ID

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 23



It started to snow again about 7:30 this morning on the South Shore, just after 4 inches of white stuff got cleared from the driveway. This means it's a powder day on the slopes. Roads are apt to be slippery around the basin because it was raining a bit before the snow came. Here is the ski report brought to you by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Snowbomb card makes Tahoe affordable

Jeffrey Weidel, Roseville Press-Tribune

The original idea emerged from a simple, very basic need: How could a college student on a modest budget afford ski lift tickets?

The goal of obtaining discounts was accomplished for this University of Colorado student and that pursuit eventually led to the rudiments of a business plan that took shape in Lake Tahoe a dozen years ago.

When Jim McAlpine established Snowbomb in 1997 he describes it as "one man and his relentless pursuit of a better (and cheaper) way to get on the hill." His first client was Sugar Bowl and payment was a mere six free lift tickets, which at the time seemed pretty "cool" to McAlpine.

[Read the whole story](#)

Rahlv's 13th in Italy skiercross

By Tom Kelly, USSA

INNICHEN/SAN CANDIDO, Italy – Casey Puckett (Aspen, CO) kicked off the ski cross World Cup season in a big way Monday, taking

third to mark the fourth skiercross podium of his career in northern Italy. Daron Rahlves (Sugar Bowl, CA) was 13th and newcomer Caitlin Ciccone (Littleton, NH) 28th in her finals debut.

Overall, it was a sensational day for Puckett and showed how much his hard work over the summer – both in conditioning and working on starts – could pay off this season. After qualifying third despite several mistakes, he battled his way to win his first three heats to make it to finals.

“Any time you’re on the podium you have to be happy,” said Puckett. “But I’m hungry for my first World Cup win.”

“Every time Casey qualifies fast he’s confident,” said U.S. Head Ski Cross Coach Tyler Shepherd. “And he has a lot of confidence coming through now.”

In his first heat (round of 32), Puckett won the start and had a clean course ahead of him. He made just one mistake – going long off a jump – but was able to hang on for the win.

“The course here is easy without a lot of terrain or passing points,” said Shepherd. “So the start is critical and skiing a mistake-free run.”

In the quarter-finals (round of 16), he again won the start but the field was packed tighter. Puckett won the holeshot and stayed ahead for another win, boosting him into the semis.

Puckett’s teammate Rahlves looked to have the semi-finals made with a strategic mid-course pass, but was passed back going into the finish and didn’t move on. Rahlves finished 13th.

“There’s no reason he shouldn’t have been in the semis,” said Shepherd. “What would have been great is he would have then skied the heat with Casey and they could have worked together to make the finals. But watch for Daron tomorrow. He’s cleaned up a few things with his line and I would expect him to

qualify higher and be a factor.”

While Schmid rode a clean course to the win, Puckett battled French skier Xavier Kuhn all the way. Puckett nearly got by the Frenchman on the second turn, but had to adjust his line so they didn’t cross tips.

“There’s really no passing possibilities on this course,” said Shepherd, “so Casey was just hoping for a little mistake to find the window in the finals.”

In addition to strong performances by the workhorses Puckett and Rahlves, Shepherd was thrilled with the women’s finish, which saw former U.S. Alpine Ski Team racer Ciccone crack into the finals for the first time, finishing 28th.

“This was a great confidence builder for Caitlin,” said Shepherd. “While she’s been racing for a while, today was the first time she ever qualified into heats to race against other skiers. She was nervous and went out in the opening round of finals. But she also gained some experience and confidence which she can take into tomorrow.”

Shepherd has been actively recruiting women to the newest Olympic sport. Ciccone, along with fellow skier Langely McNeal (Ketchum, ID), who was 44th, are on the World Cup looking for Olympic quota spots.

The skiers are back in action Tuesday with another World Cup in the northern Italian resort.

Innichen/San Candido, Italy, Dec. 21, skicross

Men

1. Michael Schmid, Switzerland
2. Xavier Kuhn, France
3. Casey Puckett, Aspen, CO

4. Audunm Groenvold, Norway

5. Tomas Kraus, Czech Republic

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13. Daron Rahlves, Sugar Bowl, CA

52. Justin Johnson, Park City, UT

53. Jean Christophe Rudigoz, Sun Valley, ID

81. Scott Horn, Truckee, CA

Women

1. Anna Holmlund, Sweden

2. Ashleigh McIvor, Canada

3. Ophelie David, France

4. Sophie Fjellvang-Soelling, Denmark

5. Emilie Serain, Switzerland

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28. Caitlin Ciccone, Littleton, NH

44. Langely McNeal, Ketchum, ID