

Holland 7th in snowboardercross

Tom Kelly, USSA

TELLURIDE -â€” Ross Powers (Okemo, VT) rode to third at the Visa U.S. Snowboardcross World Cup at Telluride Resort in Colorado on Saturday afternoon, with the 2002 Olympic halfpipe gold medalistâ€™s finish leading a menâ€™s field crammed with American competitors.

Powers, owner of more halfpipe titles than any snowboarder in history, furthered his bid to medal in another discipline by making the podium in the second of five Olympic qualifications for the men.

“The first few rounds went great, I was getting good starts up top,” Powers said. “Final race, Iâ€™d been getting great starts all day, and got a bad start up top. I tried to catch up, landed flat on everything, but luckily the guys had a little mix-up on turn four and I came through and got on the podium.â€”

Powers was happy to prove that last yearâ€™s podium in Sunday River, Maine, was no fluke and that he was a viable contender for the Olympic Team.

He becomes the third U.S. rider to grab a top-four World Cup result in just two events, after Seth Wescott (Sugarloaf, ME) and Graham Watanabe (Sun Valley, ID) took second and third, respectively, in Argentina. A top four result is the lead qualifying criteria for the top spots on the Olympic Team.

The U.S. qualified 10 men and two women for Saturdayâ€™s finals on a challenging course designed by Olympic course builder Jeff Ihaksi.

Olympic gold medalist Wescott was sixth for the men, taking second in a small final that featured three Americans. Five-time X Games gold medalist Nate Holland (Squaw Valley, CA) finished seventh and Graham Watanabe (Hailey, ID) crashed early into eighth.

The knowledge that Watanabe was out and he had nothing to lose led to a nasty landing later in the race for Holland.

"That fifth was still pretty important to me, I really wanted that heat," Holland said. "So I made a pass in turn three on Wescott and just went into turn four with Xavier de la Rue just head-to-head. I know he's fast and in control, so I trusted him."

Holland touched de la Rue's board and lost balance before a jump on the fastest part of the course.

"It scared the crap out of me in the air," he said. "I had time to think about how bad it was going to hurt. Luckily I had time enough to squirm a little bit and get the feet down first and take some of the compression."

Torino silver medalist Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton, VT) had her board clipped on the final set of jumps by eventual women's winner Maelle Ricker (Canada), causing her to crash after a great start in her first heat.

Faye Gulini (Salt Lake City, UT) won the final qualifying spot for the women's race Friday and took a career best eighth after getting second in the first heat with Jacobellis.

Three World Cup events remain for Olympic Team qualifying, Jan. 10-21 in Austria, Switzerland and Quebec.

Action wraps up in the Visa Snowboardcross Sunday with a Team SBX event.

Visa U.S. Snowboardcross Cup Telluride Dec. 19 Finals

Men

1. Pierre Vaultier, France
2. Robert Fagan, Canada
3. Ross Powers, Okemo, VT
4. David Bakes, Czech Republic
5. Xavier de le Rue, France
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6. Seth Wescott, Sugarloaf, ME
7. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA
8. Graham Watanabe, Sun Valley, ID
9. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI
11. Alex Deibold, New Haven, CT
16. J.J. Tomlinson, Park City, UT
21. Shaun Palmer, South Lake Tahoe, CA
31. Robert Minghini, South Lake Tahoe, CA

Women

1. Maelle Ricker, Canada
2. Simona Meiler, Switzerland
3. Dominique Maltais, Canada
5. Mellie Francon, Switzerland
5. Helene Olafsen, Norway
-

8. Faye Gulini, Salt Lake City

11. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton, VT

Tahoe's Sullivan takes 12th in downhill

By Tom Kelly, USSA

VAL GARDENA, Italy – The men's speed team continued the U.S. Ski Team streak of packing the points Saturday as Bode Miller (Franconia, NH) led five Americans into the Audi FIS Alpine World Cup top 24 at the famed Saslong Classic downhill. Just one year ago, the U.S. placed five racers in the top 10 and seven in the top 30.

"I skied well," said Miller, who captured his fifth top 10 of the young season. "I didn't have any errors. I took some risks. It's tough to take risks on this course, because risk doesn't necessarily make you win, but a lot of times it makes a couple of little mistakes that make you lose."



Squaw's Marco Sullivan is interviewed Saturday after his race.

Photo/Doug
Haney

Charging into a temporary headwind, the seven-time World Cup downhill winner fell a half second behind the pace of winner Manuel Osborne Paradis of Canada at the first interval, but Miller held his form throughout the bumpy, winding Saslong course for a finish just 0.77 back.

Marco Sullivan (Squaw Valley, CA) charged to an early lead as the fifth racer on the course, laying down a 2:02.16 that eventually landed him 12th to follow last-year's fourth-place result in the luminescent haze that covered the course.

"For the early guys, you get sun on the top, and the later guys get sun down in the ciaslat, so it's kind of a trade-off," Sullivan said.

Despite a return to snow little more than a month ago, Steven Nyman (Sundance, UT) scored 18th place for the U.S., with Erik Fisher (Middleton, ID) .12 seconds behind in 19th.

The World Cup circuit stays in Italy in Sunday's giant slalom and Monday's slalom in Alta Badia, Italy.

Ted Ligety will return to action trying to improve on last year's fourth-place finish.

Val Gardena, Italy – Dec. 19. Men's Downhill

1. Manuel Osborne-Paradis, Canada, 2:01.27
2. Mario Scheiber, Austria, 2:01.40
- 3T. Ambrosi Hoffmann, Switzerland, 2:01:52
- 3T. Johan Clarey, France, 2:01.52
5. Michael Walchhofer, Austria, 2:01.75

- 9. Bode Miller, Franconia, NH, 2:02.04
 - 12. Marco Sullivan, Squaw Valley, CA, 2:02.16
 - 18. Steven Nyman, Sundance, UT, 2:02.55
 - 19. Erik Fisher, Middleton, ID, 2:02.67
 - 23. Scott Macartney, Crystal Mountain, WA, 2:02.67
 - 24T. Andrew Weibrecht, Lake Placid, NY, 2:03.10
 - 49T. Jeremy Transue, Hunter, NY, 2:05.30
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Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 19



Partly cloudy skies are in the forecast for the day. Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe, says to dress in layers. Here is his ski report.

Women's downhill canceled; U.S. aerialists disappoint

USSA

VAL d'ISERE, France – After more than two hours delay due to low visibility on the Oreiller-Killy course in Val d'Isere, officials finally canceled today's women's downhill World Cup.

It was not immediately known if and when it would be rescheduled.

It was a tough break for the U.S. Ski Team's Lindsey Vonn (Vail, CO), who had dominated downhill training earlier in the week and had picked up a convincing win in Friday's super combined.

Frigid temperatures were the story of a disappointing day for the U.S. in the FIS Freestyle World Cup aerials opener in Changchun, China, today. Americans Emily Cook (Belmont, MA) and Jeret "Speedy" Peterson (Boise, ID) made finals, with Cook's eighth leading the way. Belarus skier Anton Kushnir took the win while the Chinese women swept the podium.

Temperatures dipping to minus 12 Fahrenheit greeted skiers for the opener. China dominated the competition, grabbing five of six podium positions, cracked only by Kushnir's second career win at 247.15. Xinxin Guo won for the women with 206.09.

Scotty Bahrke of Tahoe City placed 21st with a 89.38.

Tahoe fishermen tired of waiting to get on the lake

By Kathryn Reed

Fishing is often a waiting game. But it's usually done on the water, not in a parking lot.

Waiting on dry land has been the case lately for a number of fishermen trying to access Lake Tahoe at the Cave Rock boat ramp.



Locked gates
after 6am are
frustrating
fishermen.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

“It’s getting fairly irritating. (Friday) there were three boats waiting at 6 and (the inspectors) show up at 7:30,” Chuck Bartlett of South Lake Tahoe said.

The ramp is supposed to be open from 6am-4pm. The reason for the gate is so boats can be inspected for invasive species.

Cave Rock, on the South Shore in Nevada, is one of two public launches open this time of year. The other is on the North Shore in Tahoe City. The former is on Nevada State Parks land and the latter on Tahoe City Public Utility District property.

Nicole Cartwright with the Tahoe Resource Conservation District did not return a phone call. Her agency is responsible for the inspections and therefore locking and unlocking the gate.

It’s the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency that is mandating the inspections. Quagga and zebra mussels are the main threat. The worry is if these species enter Lake Tahoe, they will destroy the ecosystem, cause billions of dollars in damage and ruin this tourist destination. The Great Lakes and Lake Mead in Southern Nevada are two areas that have been devastated by these mussels.

“We need those inspectors present at the time they are

supposed to be there," Dennis Oliver, spokesman for TRPA, said. "There is a full contingent of folks who want to and need to get out on the lake for sport fishing. The inspectors are definitely supposed to be there during the posted hours."

Blue Ribbon Charters out of South Tahoe uses Cave Rock as its boat ramp.

"Usually the bites are a lot better in the morning. If they open later, you miss the bite," Eric St. Denis, who is part of the family run operation, said. He added, if they close the ramp early, it's hard on afternoon charters.

Mackinaw, brown and rainbow trout are primarily what people are catching. Many of the recreational fishermen are there for the fun "catch and release.

Ray Damato of Gardnerville is in his 19-foot boat once or twice a week. He's been casting a line on Lake Tahoe for about 30 years.

"We like to get out there right at 6 o'clock. Mackinaw fishing seems to be best in the morning," Damato said. "We only bring home maybe one fish if we are going to eat it that night."

When the gates are closed the fishermen call the number that is posted. Sometimes they reach a person who says they'll see what's going on, other times only a message can be left.

"If nobody shows up, nobody can fish," Damato said.

Squaw's Shanley dominates moguls

By Elizabeth Karam, USSA

WINTER PARK, Colo -â€ Zak Watkins (Telluride, CO) and Laurel Shanley (Squaw Valley, CA) were on top wrapping up U.S. Freestyle Selectionsâ€™ last day of moguls competition on Friday. Watkins and Shanley showed impressive composure to win the competition.

Watkins, a young skier who likes to go fast and big, did just that in Fridayâ€™s competition besting teammates Jeremy Cota (Carabbassett Valley, ME) and Joseph Discoe (Telluride, CO) to take the top step on the podium.

â€The competition was extremely tight today,â€ explained U.S. Freestyle Moguls Coach Todd Schirman. â€Zak Watkins set the bar high early in the finals.â€

Jimmy Discoe (Ridgway, CO) and David Digravio (Farmington, ME) put together solid runs to finish fourth and fifth.

Shanley added another victory, after winning Wednesday, ahead of teammate Heidi Kloser (Vail, CO) in second. Trailing Shanley and Kloser was Alison Digravio (Farmington, ME) rounding out the podium placing third.

â€We are really excited and proud of Laurel,â€ said Schirman. â€She has proven that she is a World Cup skier and dominated the womenâ€™s event.â€

The U.S. Freestyle Selections awards the top finishers, based on their results Wednesday and Friday, World Cup starts. The starts will be allotted next month in Deer Valley and Lake Placid. The World Cup starts provides the athletes an opportunity to qualify for the Olympic team. The athletes

receiving the World Cup starts are Joe Discoe, Jimmy Discoe, Laurel Shanley, and Heidi Kloser.

Moguls Men's Results

1. Zak Watkins, Telluride, CO, 24.52
2. Jeremy Cota, Carabbassett Valley, ME, 24.42
3. Joseph Discoe, Telluride, CO, 24.41
4. Jimmy Discoe, Ridgway, CO 24.19
5. David Digravio, Farmington, ME, 23.98
7. Bartley Damon, Sun Valley, ID, 23.45
8. Bryan Zemba, Killington, VT, 23.40
9. Holt Haga, Boise, ID, 23.14
- 12 Brandon Cronin, Winter Park, CO, 21.69
13. Michael Degrandis, 20.90
14. Bradley Wilson, Taylorsville, UT, 20.88
15. Ryan Reilly, Park City, UT, 20.60

Mogul Women's Results

1. Laurel Shanley, Squaw Valley, CA, 24.11
2. Heidi Kloser, Vail, CO, 23.53
3. Alison Digravio, Farmington, ME, 22.37
4. Sylvia Kerfoot, Canada, 22.36
5. Jillian Vogtli, Ellicottville, NY, 21.91
8. Whitney Henceroth, Dillon, CO, 21.14
9. Alyssa Lawson, Boulder, CO, 21.02

10. Lindsey Cannon, Telluride, CO, 20.88
 11. Larissa Burg, Winter Park, CO, 20.53
 12. Brittany Loweree, Point Lookout, NY, 19.90
 13. Lane Stoltzner, Telluride, CO, 19.89
 14. Rebecca Miller, Park City, UT, 19.86
 15. Ali Kariotis, Winter Park, CO, 12.95
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Tahoe snowboarder cross competitors in middle of pack

Tom Kelly, USSA

TELLURIDE – A dynamic, never let you rest snowboardcross course courtesy of Olympic course builder Jeff Ihaksi tested the world's best SBX athletes Friday as men and women competed in qualifications for the Visa U.S. Snowboardcross World Cup at Telluride Resort in Colorado. The U.S. qualified nine men and two women into the competition, which is set for Saturday afternoon.

The U.S. men were led by none other than Olympic gold medalist Seth Wescott (Sugarloaf, ME) who was second. Three other U.S. men marked top 10 speeds with World Championship bronze medalist Nick Baumgartner (Iron River, MI) in third, 2002 Olympic halfpipe gold medalist Ross Powers (Okemo, VT) in sixth and five-time X Games gold medalist Nate Holland (Squaw Valley, CA) in ninth.

"It's great. The speed is really good across the board and I'm

pretty excited to see how the pack races go,” U.S. Snowboarding Head Coach Peter Foley said.

In the women’s race the sun started to sink in the sky, throwing shadows across what most are calling an inventive and relentless course, and making the women’s race a challenge to make the top 16. The one and only Lindsey Jacobellis (Stratton, VT) marked one of two U.S. women’s spots, finishing eighth.

“Last week she trained a lot faster, especially in comparison to the boys, than what she did today. It’s fine where she’s qualified, but it seemed like she wasn’t riding at her top speed,” Foley said.

Following Jacobellis was Salt Lake City’s Faye Gulin who rounded off the women’s field in 16th.

If the day left spectators with anything, it’s that Saturday’s World Cup, the second of five Olympic qualification events for the U.S., will be competed on a course that never gives the athletes a moment’s rest.

“It’s a super challenging course in a lot of ways. The features are sharp and kicky at first, then it goes into high speed sections. The jumps are varying in length, so you can’t just ride off of each one, you have to suck it up or pop it to get to the landing,” Foley said. “Then there are turns and you have to be a great turner in those. After that you have another set of big jumps. There’s really a wide variety of skills involved and all kinds of different challenges.”

Qualifications (Top 5 plus U.S. in top 32)

Men

1. David Bakes, Czech Republic
2. Seth Wescott, Sugarloaf, ME

3. Nick Baumgartner, Iron River, MI
4. Tom Velisek, Canada
5. Robert Fagan, Canada
6. Ross Powers, Londonderry, VT
9. Nate Holland, Squaw Valley, CA
12. Shaun Palmer, South Lake Tahoe, CA
13. Graham Watanabe, Sun Valley, ID
18. Alex Deibold, Manchester Center, VT
27. Jayson Hale, Sierraville, CA
31. Bobby Minghini, South Lake Tahoe, CA

Women

1. Maelle Ricker, Canada
 2. Helene Olafsen, Norway
 3. Simona Meiler, Switzerland
 4. Dominique Maltais, Canada
 5. Sandra Frei, Switzerland
 8. Lindsey Jacobellis, Stratton, VT
 16. Faye Gulini, Salt Lake City
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Bagging peaks becomes a fundraiser

By Danielle Margosian

Tahoe locals Nicole Cartwright, Cindy Thaw, Brian Black, Travis Thaw, and Margie Maxhimer supported the teens in placement at Tahoe Turning Point™s four group homes by participating in the 2009 Peak Bagging fundraiser.

This was the second year of the fundraiser, which rewards participants for the peaks they hiked from April through November. After registering, each peak hiked was documented and a photo was taken on the summit. The peak records and photos were turned in to determine who won prizes for the following categories:



Rich Barna,
left to right,
Brian Black,
Danielle
Margosian,
Russ Thaw,
Margie
Maxhimer, and
two residents
from the group
home.

Photo/Provided

âž¢ Most peaks overall

âž¢ Most peaks above 10,000 feet

âž¢ Highest peak

âž¢ Farthest peak from South Lake Tahoe

âž¢ Best summit photo

Nicole Cartwright hiked the most peaks overall, reaching 14 summits. She also claimed the prize for the farthest peak from South Lake Tahoe, for a summit in Mexico.

Cindy Thaw, a second-year participant, won a prize for bagging seven peaks over 10,000 feet. Her son, Travis Thaw, claimed the highest peak overall, Mount Williamson at 14,375 feet. He also won the prize for best summit photo, for his picture on top of Half Dome.

Brian Black was runner-up in several categories, and enjoyed prizes for his efforts in bagging 10 peaks.

Margie Maxhimer, another second-year participant, was not able to do as much hiking as she would have liked this year, but she enjoyed supporting the fundraiser.

Tahoe Turning Point would like to thank all of our sponsors for donating the prizes that reward our participants for their peak-bagging efforts. We would also like to thank our participants who care about the teens in placement at our group homes. The money raised from their registration fees (\$40 per person) goes toward gear and supplies for our residents to enjoy the outdoor activities Tahoe has to offer.

Participants also enjoyed prizes for their efforts, which were generously donated by businesses within the community who sponsored the fundraiser. This year our sponsors were:

âž¢ Sierra-at-Tahoe and Northstar-at-Tahoe

âžŸ Tahoe Keys Resort

âžŸ Inn by the Lake

âžŸ Kahle Community Center

âžŸ Tahoe Bowl

âžŸ Sierra Cycle Works

âžŸ Alpen Sierra Coffee

âžŸ Grassroots

For more information on Tahoe Turning Pointâ€™s peak-bagging fundraiser, and how to get involved, please contact us at (530) 541.4594.

Danielle Margosian is a counselor at Tahoe Turning Point.

Lake Tahoe ski report, Dec. 18



Another resort in the Lake Tahoe Basin is open – Homewood. The sun is out – so go ride. Here is today’s ski report brought to you by Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Homewood ski resort opening Dec. 18

Homewood Mountain Resort opens Dec. 18.

The more than 5 feet of snow so far in Lake Tahoe means 100 percent of the terrain at this West Shore resort will be open.

Homewood's two day lodges (North and South Lodge) will be open to guests offering ticket and season pass sales; equipment rentals; adult and kids' instruction; Snow Rangers full and half-day children's programs; dining; and après-ski refreshments.

The resort's Mid Mountain Pavilion restaurant and Happy Platter surface lift will open Dec. 26.