Awesome views of Tahoe from Snow Valley Peak



Much of Lake Tahoe can be seen at the end of the trail leading to Snow Valley Peak. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Snow Valley Peak is aptly named – especially right now with the various pockets of that white stuff leading up to the final approach.

With the heat wave the Lake Tahoe Basin has been experiencing, there will be even less snow now compared to two weeks ago. Still, it might be a good idea to take poles to steady yourself.

This East Shore peak at 9,214 feet is the tallest mountain in Carson City. (Carson is a city and a county all in one, with a small unpopulated swath of land that stretches into the basin.)

Traditionally, the east side of the lake is the place to hike in early season because the snow melts faster there than the

West Shore. With the Sierra receiving record snowfall last winter, it’s possible snow will be an issue for a while.

Our entire route to Snow Valley Peak was along the Tahoe Rim Trail. This was the second time I had done this hike. The first time we dropped in by Spooner Lake before going up to the peak – away from Marlette Lake and the Flume Trail.



Rhoda and Liz maneuver through one of the snow fields. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Had we been really adventurous, we could have gone the 61 miles to Tahoe City.

A nice thing about our route in June is bikes are not supposed to be on it. That’s a good thing. It’s mostly single track,

and was narrow at times with people coming from the opposite direction.

While there is plenty of beauty to be seen along the trail, it’s near the end that is the most spectacular. It’s as if the entire lake is before you. So often it’s just a section that is visible from most trails. Not this one. It’s like you are seeing 15-feet across and the whole 22-mile length of Tahoe.

The four of us, plus AJ the wonder dog, opted to not actually go to the peak itself. There isn’t any more beauty from there than along the ridge we were on. So we found some boulders and had lunch before turning back.

We met a woman along the way who had attempted to go to Marlette Lake, but said there was too much snow.

Several downed trees from winter storms cross the original path. For the most part they were easy to get around. There was one point where we lost the trail in the snow, but we quickly realized it and were able to get back on track.

There is no water, other than late snow melt, so be sure to take plenty with you and for your four legged companions.

Much of the trail is shaded, which was nice on a warm day. But it’s all exposed on the last push to the peak along the scenic ridge.

It’s about 12 miles round trip to the peak, with an elevation gain of 2,493 feet.



Marlette Lake from the trail above. Photo/Kathryn Reed

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe take Highway 50 east. Go up Spooner Summit. Just beyond Highway 28 is parking on the left. There is lots of signage at the trailhead there.

Calif. reservoirs replenished after drought



An arm of Lake Orville on June 22, 2015, is nearly depleted. Photo/LTN file

By Amy Graff, San Francisco Chronicle

California's reservoirs are brimming after a winter of relentless storms and a late-spring heatwave that thawed the a big chunk of the snowpack.

The Golden State's system of 154 major reservoirs is holding 34,464,000 acre-feet according to the most recent June 12 state report with data pulled from an array of entities that own and manage these bodies of water, including the Department of Water Resources, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers and several city water departments.

The state's reservoirs held 25,628,000 acre-feet on the same date last year, when El Niño was expected to bring extraordinary weather systems, but instead hit us with weak storms dropping average precipitation.

Read the whole story

Lots of water, little beach area in Tahoe

By Amy Graff, San Francisco Chronicle

Even packed on a Monday: The beach at Sand Harbor, Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, is packed on June 19. In the summer, even Mondays are busy at this popular beach.

The parking lot at Sand Harbor, the most popular beach on Lake Tahoe, filled up every day over the past two weeks.

That means 3,000 to 3,500 people were looking for real estate to spread towels and set up chairs on the crescent of sand.

Read the whole story

Fire danger forces shooting ban in Carson district

Due to the risk of wildfires, the Carson Ranger District is banning all shooting until Sept. 30 or conditions change.

The Carson Ranger District encompasses more than 400,000 acres on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada (136,232 acres) and California (270,208 acres).

The extremely wet winter led to higher-than-normal grass growth. In addition, the current stretch of hot weather has increased the fire danger by drying the grasses and elevating the risk for human-caused fires.

In May and June, there were nine fires that has burned more than 500 acres (seven fires in Washoe and one in Church Hill counties in Nevada and one in Alpine County) that were human caused and currently under investigation where target shooting has become the focus as the cause: two on private lands; four on Nevada Bureau of Land Management lands; and three on Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest lands. The amount of shooting-related fires are above the average number for this time of year.

Violating the temporary shooting restriction is punishable by a fine up to $5,000 and/or six months in jail. In addition, anyone found responsible for starting a wildfire will be held civilly and criminally liable.

To report illegal shooting, call 775.688.1331 or 775.688.1332.

Barton’s sports performance training helps top athletes



Ty Tremaine has upped his game with performance training. Photo/Booth Photography

By Erika Cook and Angela Moniot

Barton Health sponsors some of the area's top athletes: Daron Rahlves, Marco Sullivan, Travis Ganong, Lila Lapanja, and now Ty Tremaine, world champion EnduroCross rider from Gardnerville.

EnduroCross is a hybrid motorcycle competition combining supercross, trials, and enduro racing. Forty competitors blast around an indoor track, maneuvering hundreds of pounds of motorized madness, all vying for top spot on the podium.

As a child, Tremaine emulated his father's passion for dirt biking – riding by age 3, racing by 4, and professionally endorsed by the RPM KTM Racing Team at 17. In 2013, at age 19, he became the youngest EnduroCross racer to qualify for and compete in the X Games. By 2016 he had claimed three AMA EnduroCross titles, including the AMA National 23 and under Pro EnduroCross Championship. This year, he took first in the

ISDE qualifiers.

Pure passion, skill, and speed were fueling his professional career. But his optimal stamina and strength had yet to be developed.

Expert help to up his game

Fellow EnduroCross rider and Barton physical therapy assistant Angie Hagenah recognized Tremaine's racing potential, but she noticed he suffered from fatigue and "arm pump." Arm pump is caused by poor posture induced thoracic outlet syndrome. Not surprisingly, it is prevalent in EnduroCross because of the hand and arm use needed to rein in such a rowdy ride. So the two began working together at Barton's Sports Performance Lab to help Tremaine improve.

"We began by using state-of-the-art sports performance methods, including a wingate test to assess his anaerobic power and a VO2 max test to identify his aerobic training zones as well as his peak oxygen use," explains Hagenah. "Based on the results, I designed a training program to optimize Ty's posture and performance. When we retested Ty after four months, he saw significant improvement in his fitness."

Tremaine credits his recent EnduroCross success to the new training program.

"EnduroCross racing is among the most intense, physically demanding sports. You are wrestling with a motorcycle while racing at your maximum heart rate for 15 minutes. It takes endurance, strength, and stamina," Tremaine says. "I was quick on the bike, but I could feel that my arm strength was lacking. It wasn't until I started working with Angie on my sports performance training that I closed in on the competition."

Going to the next level

Now, for the first time in his riding career, Tremaine is competing in the highly coveted Grand National Cross Country off-road racing series.

“Going from 15-minute races in an arena to three-hour cross-country riding will be a test of my endurance,” Tremaine says. “This is where my training and the work Angie and I have done at Barton’s Sports Performance Lab will be put to the ultimate test.”

In August, Ty will return home to the West Coast to compete in the EnduroCross All West Series to try to claim the national title.

“Being a part of an athlete’s success story makes me extremely happy,” Hagenah says. “An athlete like Ty is out there chasing his dreams, and it makes me proud to know we gave him the tools for ultimate success in his EnduroCross career.”

Erika Cook and Angela Moniot work for Barton Health.

Summer skiing – a rare, memorable experience



Shorts are the clothing of choice for most summer skiers at Squaw Valley. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

OLYMPIC VALLEY – You know it’s not an ordinary ski day when long pants and jackets look out of place.

Sometimes only a Speedo or bikini was covering certain parts. This is summer skiing. And it is very different than spring skiing – the atmosphere, the skier, the attitude, the conditions.

From the caliber of skier on the slopes off the five lifts at Squaw Valley these are die-hard, darn good skiers. It’s not that beginners aren’t welcome to the fun, but as some said, they probably aren’t going to get it.



Plenty of aerial acrobatics in the terrain park. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Yes, it’s a novelty to ski this time of year. After all, this is only the fourth time in Squaw’s history that it will have been open on Independence Day. But it’s something so much more. There’s a magic to summer skiing. Perhaps because only a few have had the opportunity to experience it this makes for an elite group.

It’s locals and out-of-towners showing up. Carly Carlson works at Squaw and was there Saturday on his day off to ski with his wife and their three kids – ages 6, 4 and 2.

“It’s a great treat. How often do you get to ski in the morning and paddleboard in the afternoon?” Carlson remarked.



You don’t have to be a skier to enjoy the pool and hot tub. Photo/Kathryn Reed

These days of summer are the icing on what was an epic, record-setting winter in the Sierra.

At Squaw Valley on July 1 it was a party atmosphere on the slopes, in the lift lines – and certainly at the pool at High Camp.

Squaw is the only Tahoe area resort still open. It will be through July 4, then Saturdays until the conditions deteriorate enough to call it a season.



Freedom Festival is bringing out lots of patriotic garb. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“If we are able to operate on July 8, it would be the latest we have ever stayed open, but not the longest season. In terms of number of days of operations, we have had longer seasons in history, but have never operated past the 4th of July,” Sam Kieckhefer, spokesman for Squaw, told *Lake Tahoe News.*

On Memorial Day the base was about 192 inches, now it’s 103 inches at 8,200 feet. Top-to-bottom skiing is gone. At the base, well, it’s about cycling and golf. It really is a whole different world riding to the top via the funitel or tram.

Daily, crews assess the conditions to decide what to open. On what is skiable, the coverage is fantastic.



Clearly the seasons are blending as passenger vehicles and snowmobiles are needed to get around the mountain. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Each day the conditions change. That's what happens when it's 80 something degrees out.

"The heat wave contributed to a considerable amount of snow melt. Regardless, we still have a significant amount of snow," Kieckhefer said.

A snowcat at the top of Gold Coast clearly has been pulling snow from the side of the mountain to make the traverse to Shirley Lake do-able.

Once at Shirley, it's soft, manageable runs. To the skier's left of the chairlift is a GS style shoot where skiers seemed to get lost as they go through this mouse-hole of sorts. The laughter coming from there could be heard on the chairlift.



Hiking trails from High Camp are pretty short right now. Photo/Kathryn Reed

There were other unfamiliar sounds. It was coming from unusual wildlife – at least to a skier. Frogs were ribbitting in the water at the Shirley lift.

A couple from the Bay Area talked about their harrowing experiences to get to Tahoe this past winter. Sometimes arriving only to find the lifts unable to spin. They were determined to get their money's worth from their 2016-17 pass.

For some, the lift accessible runs aren't enough. Tracks are visible in various chutes. People have been hiking to Palisades. Skiing in some form might be a year-round activity in 2017.

While it's unusual to get snow in summer, it has happened. And with the amount of snow on the ground today and a possible early winter, it's not out of the question that this season

will just blend into 2017-18.



Snowcats are doing a better job covering trails than some people are covering their bodies. Photo/Kathryn Reed

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Notes:

· The Freedom Festival continues through July 4.

· Skiing is available from 8:30am-2pm through July 4, then Saturdays from 8:30am-12:30pm.

· The pool and hot tub are open from 11am-6pm.

· Fireworks start at 9pm, July 3.

Interior secretary to tour Nev. national monuments

By Henry Brean, Las Vegas Review-Journal

PAHRUMP — Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke didn't stop at any national monuments during his first official visit to Nevada, but he promised to return for a tour of Gold Butte and Basin and Range before the end of July.

During an event in Pahrump on Monday, Zinke said he wants to see the two Nevada monuments from the ground and talk to stakeholders before he decides whether the designations should be reduced, rescinded or left intact.

He said he doesn't have any "preconceived ideas" about the two Obama-era monuments, though he indicated that his recent recommendations on Bears Ears National Monument in Utah provide a blueprint for what might happen here.

Read the whole story

Energy project could crush rare Nevada toad



Development threatens the Dixie Valley toad. Photo/Patrick Donnelly/Center for Biological Diversity

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

A type of toad that only lives in a remote Nevada valley could be in trouble if proposed geothermal power project becomes reality.

Ormat Nevada is seeking permission from the Bureau of Land Management to build two 30-megawatt power plants and 15 production and injection wells on federal land about 43 miles northeast of Fallon in Dixie Valley.

The problem is the area is in the habitat of the Dixie Valley toad, a rare amphibian that doesn’t live anywhere else.

Read the whole story

Network of trails now spans the country

By Brooke Warren and Paige Blankenbuehler, High Country News

A network of long trails crisscrosses the West, through open deserts and wild forests. Many trails follow historic routes where people made pilgrimages or embarked on exploratory expeditions.

The National Trails System, managed by the National Park Service, has officially designated some of these extensive trails.

Under the National Trails System Act, passed in 1968, national scenic trails and national historic trails are long-distance paths designated by acts of Congress. National recreation trails and connecting and side trails may be designated by the secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture with the consent of the federal agency, state or political subdivision involved.

Read the whole story

Nev. oddsmakers cheer top-court review of N.J. sports betting case

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada gaming lawyers, lobbyists and handicappers applauded the Supreme Court’s decision Tuesday to hear a case against a law preventing legalizing sports gambling in New Jersey.

The Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act prohibited sports betting across the country, except for Nevada, Montana and Delaware. The law, passed in 1992, made an exemption for New Jersey too, if it offered sports betting within a year of

the law’s passage. It failed to do so.

In recent years, New Jersey politicians changed their minds and began working to legalize sports betting, hoping it would help the state’s economy and gaming industry, which has recently struggled.

Nevada bookmakers were also happy with the development. They aren’t worried about losing business to other states.

Read the whole story