



SnowLine

The Official Newsletter of the
TAHOE NORDIC SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM, INC.
 Lake Tahoe • Truckee • Donner Summit

At precisely 10:49 PM on March 19, Lake Tahoe's position on Earth passed through the vernal equinox. Now with the sun in Pisces, water is the call of the moment. Liquid water, that is. Unprecedented warmth has put the snowpack into a serious temperament of melt. But there's some fat-deep snow in them thar hills. Don't let the halcyon days of spring tempt you into missing the tail end of the snow season. The next meeting of Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team will help ease the transition. The meeting is Monday night, **April 5, 6:30 PM** at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut. There'll be a wrap-up of this year's Great Ski Race, nominations for Team elections, and many other assorted delights. **April 5!**

28th G.S.R.

With the Great Ski Race always scheduled for the first Sunday in March, this year's race—March 7—was the latest the race could be held. During most years, a week makes all the difference in the amount of snow the Truckee end of the course can hold on to. There just can't be too much snow on the tail end of the Great Ski Race course! Serendipitously, one of the winter's more powerful snow storms held on through March 2, followed by coolish weather up to race weekend.

Race day was like none other this year. Clear, calm, and shirts-off warm by mid-day, no weather could have been more appropriate. Sure the snow got slow mid-afternoon, but it hardly affected the winning time. Scott Lookins, a Subaru

Factory Team skier (Subaru was one of this year's Great Ski Race's major sponsors) won the race, crossing the finish line after 1:10:06, a minute or so off record pace. Near the end, he never had to look over his shoulder; no need, as there were no other skiers in sight. Brooke Baughman, of Ketchum, Idaho, won the women's field—and claimed her second Great Ski Race victory—with a time of 1:17:13. In all, 974 skiers completed the course; 1038 registered for the race. Both these numbers are records.

The buzz this year among the skiers was the first ever wave race start. Six waves, each starting 3 minutes apart, kept the start safe, sane, and fast for everyone. Nordic Team President Steve Twomey worked the numbers, and of the 974 skiers to reach Truckee, more than 88 percent crossed the finish within one wave or less from which they started. That's a pretty good indicator that the majority of racers were properly seeded, I think. With almost no exceptions, the wave start was

received enthusiastically by everyone. Long gone are the days of 1000 skiers vying for position all at once.

Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team offers a hearty **THANK YOU** to all the race participants, volunteers, and sponsors for their support of the biggest Great Ski Race ever. Special thanks to Tahoe Cross Country Ski Area, Cottonwood Restaurant, and Northstar-at-Tahoe for their long-term commitment to The Great Ski Race, and in turn their support of Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team's life-saving efforts.

Two days after the race, the finish hill in Truckee had melted off in a big way, looking less like a ski course and more like the scrub sage that it is.

Searches

The Nordic Team was called to Northstar the evening of February 19 to search for two missing young girls. Sisters Brittany and Nicole, 11 and 9 years old, had been snowboarding together at the resort but failed to meet their parents at lunch time. Evidently one of the girl's snowboards had slid away from her, the board coasted out of sight under the ski area boundary rope on the north side of Lookout Mountain. They both chased after it; they never reentered the ski area.

More than 14 searchers from the Nordic Team responded, along with many Northstar personnel. By 9:30 PM, Team skiers had picked up the girls' tracks and were chasing them down. An hour and a half later, leapfrogging the Team skiers, Dan, a Northstar patrolman on a snowmobile, caught up with Brittany and Nicole. They were all the way into the Lahonton development, at a logging site about 3.5 km WNW of



This guy has some guns. U.S. Disabled Ski Team member Greg Mallory completed the 30 kilometer Great Ski Race course in a blazing 1 hour 54 minutes.

Photographs by Randall Osterhuber

Next General Meeting is Monday, April 5, 2004, 6:30 pm at the Granlibakken Resort's Ski Hut



The winner of the 28th Great Ski Race, Scott Loomis.

Creek from the upper environs of the Rifle Peak cabin is no easy circuit. Steep, rocky, brushy, narrow, and mostly without trail, Jim managed to descend the entire 11 km route by the wee morning hours, seriously tired, seriously scratched.

The Nordic Team snowmobilers and snowcat put in long hours on this search.

These were the Team's fourteenth and fifteenth responses of the season.

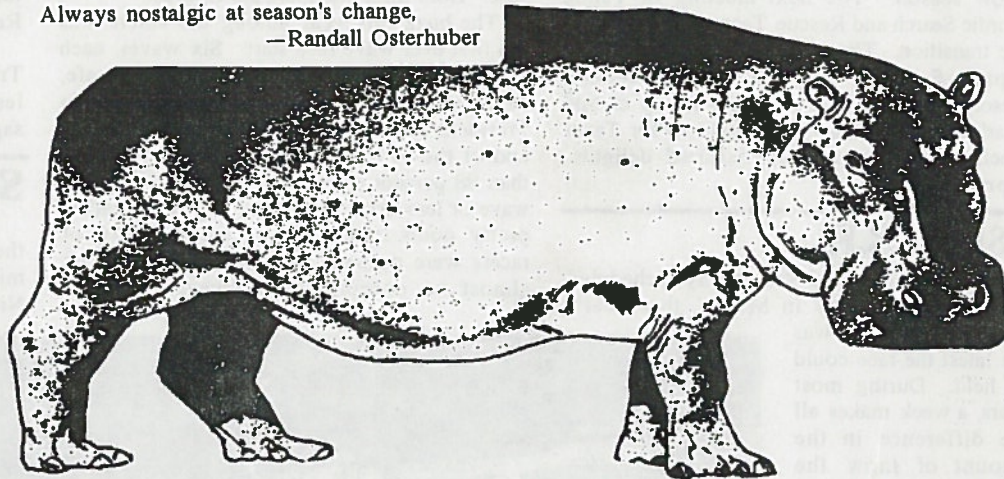
Last Trainings

The last scheduled Team trainings for the snow season are as follows. Any additional training exercises added to the calendar will be announced via the monthly meetings and/or by telephone. Keep in touch. The Team garage is located at 223 Fairway Drive in Tahoe City, behind the Chevron station.

March 28: Bernie Mellor (546-2238) will lead a ski out to Granite Chief—and beyond. Meet at the Team garage at 7:15 AM or in front of the Squaw Valley tram building at 7:45.

April 3: Sarah Lagano (775-745-7037) will lead a ski to Rubicon Peak—and beyond. Meet at the garage at 7:00 AM.

Always nostalgic at season's change,
—Randall Osterhuber



Team Officers

President	Steve Twomey	525-7280
Vice President	Russ Viehmann	525-6978
Treasurer	Scott Schroeffer	546-2809
Secretary	Terri Viehmann	525-6978
Board Members	Karen Honeywell	546-8609
	Sarah Lagano	775-745-7037
	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
	Dirk Schoonmaker	583-2929
Directors-at-large	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
	Joe Pace	583-1806
	Doug Read	583-6381
	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376

Committee Chairs

Cuisine	Debra Schroeffer	546-2809
Dispatch	Jackie Thomas	587-2687
Education	Karen Honeywell	546-8609
Equipment	Russ Viehmann	525-6978
Great Ski Race™	Doug Read	583-6381
	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
Newsletter	Randall Osterhuber	546-4491
Snowcats	Scoop Remenih	583-1684
Snowmobiles	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
Technology	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
Training	Paul Honeywell	546-8609
	Bernie Mellor	546-2238
Website	Peter Sporleder	546-0583

All phone numbers area code (530) unless otherwise noted.

the ski area. They were very exhausted and cold complaining of cold feet and hands. The girls were fed hot chocolate and candy bars then transported to a Truckee Police patrol car.

Just as that search was wrapping up, a call came in for a missing snowmobiler somewhere in the Martis Peak area.

Local snowmobiler Jim Rippey, infamous for executing—and successfully landing—a backflip on his snowmobile (as chronicled in the Team video *Winter Aware*), had called from his cell phone reporting a mired snowmobile and that he was taking off on foot. He could see headlights on a road far below and was headed for it. What he didn't realize was that the road he was looking at was Interstate 80 in the Truckee River Canyon. Jim spent most the night trying to figure out where he was while trashing down Gray Creek. He answered his phone a lot too. The route down Gray

Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Team, Inc.

Post Office Box 7703
Tahoe City, California 96145
(530) 581-4038
www.tahoenordicsar.com
www.thegreatskirace.com



MARK JOHNSON
PO BOX 8258
TAHOE CITY CA 96145

please keep us informed of your correct address!

530-581-4038 #8