

# Tahoe's talk of Vancouver, Jan. 25 am edition



By Kathryn Reed and Susan Wood

WHISTLER, British Columbia – Today was supposed to be our day to check out Cypress Mountain. Mother Nature said no.

This is because rain had been falling earlier this month on the mountain that will host the aerials, moguls, parallel giant slalom, halfpipe and skiercross events during the Vancouver Olympics next month.

The mountain was closed Jan. 13 after warm weather followed the rain.

Facing a ticking clock, Vancouver Olympic officials quickly swooped in to take over the mountain, politely excusing the ski area staff. The Olympic staff had no comments to or suggestions for viewing options for *Lake Tahoe News*.

Ironically, the condition quandary comes after Whistler-Blackcomb boasted record snowfall more than a month ago.

As for Cypress, bulldozers and other heavy equipment were called in to ensure what snow would get moved to the locations of the venues. This will be Grand Central for the likes of South Lake Tahoe's Hannah Teter who grew up in Vermont and should have no problem with what they call hard pack here in Canada.

Enough snow remains on top of the mountain to be able to be moved by helicopter or snowcat to the venues for the Games, according to officials.

The resort does have snowmaking, with a reservoir with 5 million gallons of water. Since November, the state-of-the-art snowmaking system has used 35 guns to convert 21 million gallons into snow to create the necessary features.

Officials are using wood and straw on some of the terrain and then covering it with snow.

The closure is to preserve what snow is there.

Cypress is at a lower elevation than Whistler-Blackcomb. It is between Whistler and Vancouver.