

First Tahoe storm tests snowshoe agility during cocktail races

By Dan Tirabasso

CAMP RICHARDSON – The snow has fallen and Lake Tahoe is officially open for business, but snowsports are not confined to the ski slopes. This was evident during the Snowshoe Cocktail Races at the Beacon restaurant Saturday night.

The lolling barroom chatter flourished into a clamor of snow boots and laughter as the young crowd trickled in, sporting everything from bright red ski masks to robes.



Gina Craig,
right, and
Stephanie
Meyers at the
Jan. 21
cocktail
snowshoe
cocktail races
at the Beacon.
Photo/Geno
Fonderoli

Lack of snow forced the cancellation of the December race, but Mother Nature came through for the Jan. 21 event.

There were mens and women's competitions that consisted of obstacle and sprint races; with seven men and six women competing. The four-man relay race was canceled due to a low turnout.

The rules were simple, strap on snowshoes, balance a tray of drinks in one hand, and make it to the finish line without spilling all the drinks.

"It's a great atmosphere," Tahoe local Amber Pass said. "A great event with good prizes and good cocktails."

Boisterous observers lined the deck overlooking the snow-covered beach, so brightly lighted the calm lake and the cloudy night sky seemed to merge into solid black.

The crowd cheered as contestants attempted to shuffle and gallop their way through the races.

In the first round, a woman hit by a snowball missed an obstacle, and in the disorientation that ensued she turned tail and began to traverse through the obstacle course backward. The officials declared a redo.

The rest of the competition went smoothly thanks to enthusiastic mediation of snowboard emcee and self-proclaimed hype man David Hunt who kept the contest rolling and the crowd smiling.

Prizes ranging from new snowboards to ski passes were awarded for first, second, and third place. But given the lack of contestants it seemed more like a giveaway than a prize.

The Beacon's next Snowshoe Cocktail Races are Feb. 18 and March 10, 7pm.

