

# Heavenly Valley

by Jim Schrock and Louella Steller

We flew out of Houston on Saturday morning with confirmed reports that the Tahoe area had experienced their first long snowfall of the year; eight days of snow and more on the way. By Wednesday the forecast of "more on the way" was an understatement. We had a longer layover in Phoenix than expected but it gave us all time to pick up some official Superbowl souvenirs and mix a little with our group. We arrived in Reno, and with an hour bus ride to South Tahoe, it gave us a chance to view some fantastic scenery that proved the snow gods had prevailed.



Heavenly Valley Central Reservations Rep, Carol, gave us a brief orientation about Heavenly then it was time to head to the casinos and get rich. Tina Lipscomb, also known as The Dollar Slot Queen, wasted no time in picking out the lucky machines. Next year I'll listen to her. You got it; she's the only one that came home with big winnings!! June Cullum (Poker Face Cullum) wasted no time in using her profession as a Psychologist, and with the help of her financial advisor, Carolyn McGinnis, to figure out how to win (most of the time) at blackjack. Before the evening was over she had Steve Meyer and Ted Raif grabbing the first available stool. They were hooked on it for the rest of the trip. Many SCSC faces were seen nightly trying to pay for their ski trips at the tables or the slots. Some of those seen often were James Kelley, Randy Snider, Barbara Harker, Connie Smith, Greg and Kelly Wilde, Tom Hogle, Patti Richards, Thomas Zike, and David Street.

Sunday morning, everyone hit the slopes. Ann Clinton and her sidekick, Karen Kendall, both took to the snow on the new parabolic skis. Jim Schrock decided, with all the new snow, to try the new powder skis or as they are called on the mountain, "Fat Boys". They worked well with all the deep snow. Also seen that first morning was Steven Slade attempting to hire a dogsled team to carry all his gear to the top of the mountain. On the mountain you sometimes would experience several blurs whisk past you at a high rate of speed. Almost every time it would be Tom Hogle, Dale Allbritton and John Burke. It was their boyish nature surfacing. Dale Allbritton is still feuding with Tom Hogle because he claims Tom intentionally pushed him off the chairlift. Speaking of Hogle, he's not all that bad. During the week, Tom coordinated ski trips over to Northstar and Kirkwood. We understand he likes riding buses so much he may be applying for a job with Metro. While we are talking buses, ask Steve Meyer, James Barbee, and Ted Raif if they enjoyed their Friday night bus tour around Lake Tahoe. Sorry guys!!! Ted, as a consolation to you, I'm happy to announce you got voted SCSC Rookie Blackjack Player of the Year. As your prize, you win three gift certificates (two of those for your touring buddies) for a round trip on the Tahoe Queen in 1996 or 1997.

Everyday of skiing ended the same way - "Happy Hour" in the TC's condo. We had plenty of mini beers and a fine variety of wine, aged in deluxe cardboard boxes from the local grocery. Joe

Kulpinsky and Margie Greenwood added a touch of class to our Happy Hours with their own vintage. As the Happy Hours concluded, everyone teamed up and headed for dinner. Planet Hollywood was the choice for one of our evening dinners. Nancy Burke stocked up on T-shirts and during dinner Tina Lipscomb told of the house in the country she plans to build with her slot earnings. Then there was the \$6.99 Texas-size steak at the Horizon Casino that you could get any night. Doug and Terry Knab and the California Dreamers, Barbara Dovidas and husband Mark Picard, after hearing all the stories about this 5 lb. steak (each time the story got told, the steak got bigger) everyone was eating, marched over to the Horizon and tried it themselves. Doggie bags anyone?!!!

One of our last minute entries on the trip, Jack Thomas, joined the trip with sights set on skiing with one of our fellow skiers. We still don't know if they skied into the sunset! Also a late entry to the trip was new club members, Greg and Kelly Wilde, who shared their condo with ATC Louella Steller and her husband James Barbee, and got to assist in all the party preparations. For them this trip will always be very special as I received a phone call from Kelly last week with the good news of their first baby on the way. It's got to be that fresh mountain air. Congratulations to you both! It had to be a GOD send from HEAVENLY!

In the meantime back at Heavenly, John and Nancy Burke attacked the mountain on their radical painted ski boards as Vicki Singley was taking a 30 minute ski break on Ridge Bowl. Seen almost everyday was Bonnie and Rodney Hughes, SCSC's contenders for gold medals at the next Winter Games, skiing down the blacks. Patti Richards and Jim Schrock learned weather conditions at the mountain base can be quite different from the mountain top conditions. They both experienced what they call on the mountain, "WHITE OUT!!!!!!"

As Wednesday rolled around, so did a major storm. With winds up to 80 m.p.h. on Lake Tahoe, most everyone was "Condo Bound" or "Casino Bound". The Tahoe Queen ride across the lake to Squaw Valley was cancelled until Friday so we all headed to Harvey's Casino and pigged out on the \$5.99 Mega-Buffer breakfast. (Pigs, all of us!!!) I was told during the storm the highway crews who start the avalanches asked Karen Kendall to laugh to help start a major snow slide. Also during the storm, Terri Ulrich,

## Heavenly Valley continued

Vicki Singley, Donna Hahus, and Roger Holtzman sang "Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow" as they took a \$32.00 cab ride to see a movie. No cabin fever for those guys! Since the storm caused the Nastar races to be cancelled, we held them anyway in one of the casinos at the video downhill racer machine. We made so much noise cheering for each other that people came from all over the casino to see who had hit the jackpot. Instead, they saw a bunch of crazy Texans being led by Dale Allbritton, wearing his shoulder length blonde wig and sunglasses about 10 times the normal size of sunglasses.

Tony Huerta did not arrive until Wednesday but wasted no time in catching up on his skiing. Linda Thompson, who skied with us the first part of the week, had to take an early exit and flew back to Houston. As we finished breakfast, Ted Raif and Steve Meyer were seen running for the blackjack tables. James Kelly (alias Brett Maverick) won lots of money on the trip, but left poor because of having to bribe Louella Steller not to write about him in the trip story. Then there is Roger Holtzman, a Billie Kidd on the slopes and a Fred Astaire on the dance floor. Like Steven Slade, they both had hurting feet; Roger's, from thinking he was Fred Astaire, and Steven, from ski boots that were two sizes too small. Pat Walker and Cheri Staples had hurting feet too, but theirs were from Roger stepping all over them while dancing on the Tahoe Queen Friday night.

How could anyone forget the Slot Pimp (Schrock) and his ho's at Harvey's Casino. His girls, Tina Lipscomb, Carolyn McGinnis, June Cullum, Barbara Harker, and Karen Kendall, worked hard to keep their pimp's freezer bucket full of nickels. Karen got caught holding out some of her nickels and was sent back to the streets. One of the highlights of the trip was realizing "THE KING" is still alive. Matt (The King) Sheehan was asked to appear live on stage at Harvey's Emerald Theater in Dick Clark's American Band Stand Review as "The King of Rock n' Roll, Elvis Presley". When the MC asked him if he could, he answered with a confident "YES, I CAN!" and the theatre started to really rock. "The King" was met with rave reviews, well at least from our club anyway. Later that evening, as he strutted through the casino, Ann Clinton was seen begging for one of his scarves. Later, Elvis' older brother, Chris Sheehan, had trouble keeping "The King" out of the "hound dog house" with that fan who had asked for that scarf.

Our trip can be summed up in one word, "HEAVENLY"!!!! We experienced skiing at various resorts with plenty of snow. The final day at Squaw Valley more than lived up to its reputation. The fun and laughs we had each night in the casinos, Planet Hollywood, the pizza party, the condo breakfast, the Tahoe Queen ride and party, the soul singers at Harvey's who took us back to the days of The Temptations and the Four Tops, the blackjack lessons from June, and seeing Elvis are the memories we'll remember from our fantastic week in Tahoe. From Louella and myself, we both enjoyed the week skiing with all of you and hope that next year we all can do it again. Who knows, there might be another Elvis sighting!!!!



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