



A typical Government Camp winter scene is full of snow.



But that same hill lies barren this January.

Photos by Mark Floyd

Lack of snow cripples Mt. Hood ski resorts

by MARK FLOYD

People dreaming of a white Christmas in the Mt. Hood area came away disappointed this year.

Now they may have to set their sights on Valentine's Day.

A lack of snow can be a problem early in the season on Mt. Hood, but things are usually up to snuff by the first of the year. Not this year, though.

The recent mid-winter drought has all but shut down skiing activities on Mt. Hood. Meadows, Multator-Ski Bowl and Summit have all been forced to close operations and Timberline is the only resort to remain open in the first week of January.

The recent heat wave has caused obvious financial suffering — not only for resort owners, but for numerous

employees who have been laid off.

"We haven't made a financial estimate in terms of loss yet, but it's been a lot," sighed Kathleen Wiscavage, marketing assistant at Mt. Hood Meadows. "One of our biggest seasons is over Christmas and we were hurt financially. That's where we get most of our funds for summer improvement."

Meadows opened Dec. 3 and remained open most of the month. But rains and warm temperatures forced Meadows officials to close the resort at the end of December.

"Most of our base is gone now," Wiscavage said. "But it was overcast and frozen this morning and that's a good sign. All that we need is a two-foot base to open and one good snow storm would do it. We've got a double

problem, though. If it does snow, we may have a problem getting our employees here because of the slides on Highway 35."

The rains which melted most of the snow in December also caused large mud slides which closed much of Highway 35 between Government Camp and Hood River and prompted Gov. Vic Atiyeh to declare the region a disaster area.

Wiscavage said that some of Meadows' employees have been using Long Prairie Road and that crews are just beginning to punch through at Cooper Spur. But, meanwhile the drought continues, and just 40 employees are still working at Meadows. Wiscavage said that the resort hires as many as 300 during its peak.

The snow is completely gone at

Multator-Ski Bowl. The resort opened Dec. 5 and remained open for two weeks. But things have been totally shut down since, except for one rainy weekend, according to Julianne Martin. "Our opening was about two weeks earlier than usual," Martin said. "It caught us by surprise — we were still training people. Now everyone's just waiting."

She said that all of the lift crews and restaurant crews have been laid off. Only 10 people are working now whereas the resort will hire as many as 150 during peak days.

The only place that hasn't been totally decimated by the warm weather is Timberline. The lodge recently opened the Palmer lift for the first time during winter months and the move has been a great success, according to

Timberline director Dick Kohnstamm. "We've had Palmer open, summer style," he laughed. "It's been a great help and the crowds have been good. We've had to let very few employees go, down just a few from our peak. Palmer has spelled the difference. The skiing up there Friday, Saturday and Sunday was just fabulous — couldn't have been better."

Kohnstamm estimated that business is down about 25 percent, both on the slopes and for visitors to the lodge.

"How much of that is the lack of snow and how much is the recession I couldn't tell you," he noted. "But I have seen much fewer snowplow vehicles than ever before, so it might just be the recession."

Timberline's other lifts would need a good snowfall, because "we'd be

starting from scratch. But in the meantime, Palmer has kept the resort from declaring financial disaster.

"We don't want to say we're crying the blues," Kohnstamm said.

Many of the support services in the Government Camp area have also suffered financial hardships. Business is down an estimated 40 to 50 percent and many of the experienced employees have left the mountain in search of work elsewhere. That means new employees will have to be trained should the snow ever return to Hood's slopes.

There isn't much anyone can do but wait until a cold, and wet, front moves in from the north. In the meantime, ski resort operators and employees will just have to grin and bear it.

And enjoy the warm weather.

TVL girls basketball

Pioneers rally to nip Foxes

TIMBER VALLEY LEAGUE

Team	W	L
Sandy	1	0
Oregon City	1	0
West Linn	1	0
Estacada	1	0
Silverton	0	1
Canby	0	1
Sweet Home	0	1
Molalla	0	1

RESULTS:
Sandy 36, Silverton 34
Oregon City 72, Sweet Home 38
West Linn 70, Molalla 44
Estacada 48, Canby 42

by MARK FLOYD

Char McKinney sank a 15-foot jumper with 46 seconds left to give the Sandy High girls basketball team a 36-34 win over Silverton Monday.

It was the Timber Valley League opener for both teams.

The Pioneers had a rough time offensively all game — a two week layoff during Christmas vacation may have had something to do with that. As a result, Sandy fell behind by nine points, 25-16, late in the third quarter. But Sandy Yantes keyed a comeback with six late points and the Pioneers crept back into the game.

Dawn New sank a pair of free throws for Sandy to push the Pioneers into their first lead of the game, 32-31, with 3:32 showing on the clock. The teams traded baskets then Silverton's Elise Lowe sank a free throw to knot the score at 34-34.

The Foxes regained control and called timeout for a strategy session. But before they could get a shot off, McKinney tied up Lowe. Silverton got the tip but Diane Beals had a rare miss from the wing and Yantes came down with the rebound.

The Pioneers worked it around and found McKinney, a 5-foot-9 senior forward. She wasted no time going for

the jumper which found the mark from near the free throw line. That put Sandy up 36-34 and the Foxes took another timeout. It didn't do much good.

Kim Smoot missed a shot from the top of the key for the Foxes and her teammate, Chris Fisher, traveled after hauling down the offensive rebound.

The Pioneers took over at the far end of the court with just 20 seconds left and brought it up court. For some reason unknown to the Sandy coaches and fans, Silverton did not press full court and it didn't foul the Pioneers, who were just eight of 20 from the line on the night.

Yantes dribbled around for a while, fed Linda Mosbrucker and the game was over.

No one could have been happier of that fact than Sandy coach John Smith, who saw his team fall behind 6-0 and go the first six minutes of the game without scoring.

"The girls really wanted that win," he said. "They were really up for the game — maybe too up. We had to call timeouts twice in the first few minutes and talk about patience and settling down. The girls were intense the whole game, but things just didn't go our way. "It wasn't artistic, but I was really impressed with the way the girls scrambled the whole game."

The first six minutes were a disaster, though. Silverton came out and passed the ball like a college team. The Pioneers were a step slow and forced to foul. But they overcame that 6-0 deficit within a couple of minutes as Mosbrucker hit from the side and McKinney pumped home a pair of jumpers, the last coming on an offensive board with 15 seconds left in the quarter.

Both teams missed a lot of shots in

the first half, but the tough defense may have had something to do with that. The Pioneers forced a lot of passes and missed some open shots, but made up for it with a sticky defense. The half-time score was a ridiculously low 13-11 in favor of the Foxes.

Beals turned things around for Silverton in the third quarter. She hit three long range bombs from the same spot and the Foxes moved out to their biggest lead of the game, 25-16. The Sandy defense would stick with Silverton's passing game for three or four passes, then slow down and let Beals take the open shot. She canned four of five in the second half and that's what gave Silverton the lead.

But the 6-foot New began to assert herself inside and Yantes settled down after a rocky first half. Smith had said earlier in the season that it was important to get the lead because the Pioneers were not a come-from-behind team.

That may be true in most cases, but they certainly proved him wrong Monday night.

McKinney led the Sandy attack with 10 points and 12 big rebounds, her best all-around game of the season. New had seven points and 10 rebounds.

Beals led all scorers with 11 points.

A much tougher task now faces the Pioneers. Sandy travels to West Linn Thursday for a date with the Lions who are the surprise of the Timber Valley League to date. Everyone expected West Linn to be a playoff contender, but not many people thought they would get through preseason with just one loss. And the Lions have looked as strong as league favorite Oregon City.

The game is scheduled for 7:45 p.m. in the West Linn gym.



Photo by Mark Floyd

Char McKinney (22) moves in for rebound position against Sandy Berning of Silverton. McKinney scored the winning hoop for Sandy with 46 seconds remaining to give the Pioneers a 36-34 victory in their TVL opener.

Sandy to host Oregon City cagers

The Sandy High boys basketball team will make its home debut for league play this Friday, hosting the Oregon City Pioneers.

The Sandy Pioneers suffered a loss to Silverton Tuesday, 47-42 in their Timber Valley League opener. Oregon City, one of the favorites for the TVL title, opened with a 57-45 win over Molalla.

Both teams could be in contention for a league playoff berth. None of the eight TVL teams survived preseason with a winning record. Oregon City, West Linn and Canby are early picks to finish atop the league.

Game time this Friday is 7:45 p.m. for the varsity. The junior varsity game is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. See page 2 for the Sandy vs. Silverton wrapup.

Gophers, Sandy to tangle in crucial dual

Preparing for a dual swimming meet is much like playing a game of chess.

Both coaches will spend hours trying to figure out the proper event to place certain swimmers in order to pick up the maximum amount of points. A lot of times it doesn't matter — one team is usually sufficiently stronger than the other.

But the chess game may be an important factor this Thursday. The Sandy High swimming team travels to Gresham for a 4 p.m. dual meet with the Gophers and the teams are very evenly matched, especially in the girls competition. Gresham, on the basis of depth, should rate a slight edge in the boys race.

"They have a pretty strong team," admitted Mark Smith, coach of Sandy. "We know it's going to be tough any time we're swimming against Gresham. In making out the lineup, we'll put our people in certain events according to what we feel they'll do with their lineup."

It could come down to the final event in the girls competition. Sandy is a slight favorite to take district, but Gresham tied the Pioneers at the league relays. It's that close. The Sandy boys edged Gresham at the relays, but the Gophers were plagued by disqualifications, something the Pioneers can't count on to happen again.

Smith isn't sure how the meet will turn out and he isn't about to divulge where he will place his top swimmers. But he knows that the Pioneers are going to have a battle on their hands.

"It all depends on how everyone competes," Smith said. "I'm sure they'll be out to break times. They have the home-pool advantage and they get a lot of support from their parents. We're hoping to get some support, too. The kids are really looking forward to meeting Gresham. It's been quite a rivalry lately."

"If we don't break times and get what we want from our people, though, it's not going to be a very competitive meet," Smith added. "We really need some broken times."

The meet is scheduled for 4 p.m. at the GUHS pool.