

Safety, Health & Fitness—

US Army Asks Californian Ski Areas for Their Guns Back

The US military is asking two Sierra Nevada ski resorts to return howitzers used for avalanche control, saying the weapons are needed by troops fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Alpine Meadows and Mammoth Mountain have five howitzers between them, valued at around \$1million each, loaned by the US army for avalanche control work. Resort employees said they had not thought the army would ask for the guns back so soon, but would certainly return them, understanding that their was a war going on.

The arrangement to loan gun to ski areas is not new and in Mammoth's case goes back at least 30 years. Resorts spend hundreds of thousands of dollars transporting the guns and reimbursing the Army for training and build firing platforms. The US military are reportedly trying to find some older weapons, no longer used by the military but effective for avalanche control work, to replace the returned howitzers.

Madison Native Shelley Glover Dies While Training For U.S. Team

Shelley Glover, a Madison native who is training with the U.S. Ski Team's Development Team in Bend, Ore., was critically injured in a skiing accident at Bend, Ore., this week, a team official says. Glover, 17, sustained a head injury Wednesday during a routine training session on Mount Bachelor.

"It was actually a relatively low to moderate-speed incident. It wasn't a high-speed crash or anything like that," Kelly said Thursday. "Unfortunately, her impact with the snow caused an injury."

Glover was taken by helicopter to the critical care unit at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend where she died three days later.

Protect Your Knees

After a few hard runs, screaming quadriceps remind skiers that quad strength is essential. But if strong quads aren't balanced with strong hamstrings, the knees can be unstable, leading to injury. With knee injuries accounting for 30 to 40 percent of all on-slope injuries, skiers can't afford to ignore their hamstrings. Hamstring curls can help build the strength skiers need to keep their knees stable and ligaments strong.

How To Do It

Lying prone, attach a sport cord or resistance band around one ankle.

Bend the knee and lift the ankle, keeping the hips pressed to the ground and making sure the back doesn't arch. Also, keep your abs and glutes tight and maintain tension on the cord throughout the movement.

When your shin is just past 90 degrees in relation to your thigh, squeeze the glutes and hamstrings and hold the position for one second. Then slowly lower the ankle to the floor. Do three sets of 10 to 15 repetitions with each leg.

Summer is Here...Water Safety Tips !

While childhood memories are often filled with carefree days of summer, emergency room doctors know it as "trauma season." Tragedies peak during the summer months because children are supervised less, have more free time and engage in more outdoor activities.

Water Safety Tips for Kids—

- If you do not know how to swim, always wear a life jacket.
- Swim with a buddy.

You've probably heard this many times, but it's worth saying again. If you get into trouble, your friend can get help fast.

- Always go feet first into unfamiliar water.

There could be rocks or tree stumps in rivers and lakes. Even pools can be more shallow than they look. So always check out the depth of water before you dive in.

- If you see someone in trouble, signal the lifeguard or responsible adult.

Don't try to rescue the person yourself— you could get pulled under the water. Wave your hands over your head to signal the lifeguard or another adult.

- Don't EVER pretend you are drowning.

It wastes lifeguard's time and may take their attention away from someone who really needs help.

- It's a good idea to stay near people who know you and will notice if you are in trouble.

If you are with a group of people, have a check-in time and place to meet. Be sure you show up on time so you won't give the adults gray hairs.

- Don't let your friends tease you into something you don't want to do.

Even if all your friends are jumping in, don't do it if you are afraid or feel like you can't handle it. Knowing your limitations is nothing to be embarrassed about.

- Make sure you always follow the adult in charge's instructions!
- Wear sunscreen!

Know the Skier Hand Signal

Hand signals are an extremely important form of communication while water skiing or wake boarding. A skier yelling instructions over the noise of the boat motor can be nearly impossible to hear. Unsuccessful communication with the skier can be dangerous.

Verbal communication can be used when the skier is still floating in the water before the boat accelerates. When the rope is tight and the handle is in the skier's hands, the driver waits on a signal from the skier if they are ready or not.

The people in the boat should yell, "Ready?" The skier should either say "Hit It" or "Wait." The words "Go" and "No" should not be used because they sound very similar.

The most common hand signals are—



Slower



Faster



Speed Okay

Other signals the skier & observer should know are—

- There are times when the driver wants the skier to stay directly behind the boat. This happens when there may be a lot of congestion or a potentially dangerous situation ahead. The observer should extend one arm straight in front of their body and move it up and down.
- A way to indicate to the skier that wakes are coming is to extend one arm straight out to the side and move it up and down.
- If the driver needs to turn the boat, the signal is given by rotating the forearm and hand around in wide circles. Skiers should get inside the wake for a safe turn.
- A skier should signal the driver they want to get back to the beach or dock by patting their head several times with their hand.
- If the skier wants to let go of the tow rope they should use a hand to simulate a "slice across the neck."
- When a skier has fallen, they should raise an arm to signal that they are okay.
- While a skier is waiting in the water for the boat to come back around after a fall or drop, the skier should raise a ski or wake board so that any approaching boats can see them in the water.