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Born to Ski?



Taariq Saffouri races the Giant Slalom at Sugar Bowl Photo Deven Hickingbotham

Taariq Saffouri started skiing when he was four years old. He joined the Alpine Meadows racing team, part of the Tahoe League, when he was eight. At age nine, he began to show real promise as a racer, finishing in 8th place in the 9-10 age group; a serious contender, competing against boys who live in the Tahoe area and ski daily. This year Taariq, who is now in 5th grade at Rheem Elementary School in Moraga, blew away the competition in the first race of the season, taking 1st place in the Giant Slalom in the league's opening race at Sugar Bowl on January 10, 2009. He's currently ranked #2 in the Tahoe League 9-10 Boys division.

"Taariq demonstrated that he had a talent and passion for skiing at (an) early age," says his mom, Reem Saffouri. "He showed an interest in race teams when he was six; every time he saw the team training he would say, 'Mom, I want to join the race team.'"

Taariq placed third in the Slalom race on Saturday, February 7, at Diamond Peak. He was also given the distinction of being the forerunner and opening the Far West race at Alpine Meadows; an honor, explains Reem Saffouri, because, "Far West is the equivalent to Orinda Aquatics (year-round swimming) in this area, whereas Tahoe League is like OMPA."

The next race for Taariq will be on Sunday, March 22, at Alpine Meadows.

L. Borrowman

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[back to top](#)

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