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Story and photo by Jared Dangerfield

RICHMOND — Snow may have already fallen in the Bear River Mountains, but the newest Cache Valley ski resort is still rushing to finish final preparations before it can properly welcome the 2014-2015 ski season. Cherry Peak Resort, which sits east of Richmond, is anticipating opening Dec. 13, so long as everything gets finished.

“We’re just hoping Mother Nature gives us a few more weeks and we’ll have a whole bunch of stuff buttoned up,” said Jed Clark, a local from Wellsville and general contractor for the resort.

Clark, with an optimistic attitude, continues to prepare for the resort to open on schedule. He says there are many things yet to be finished but the end is in sight.

The road—11000 North— from Upper Richmond Road to Cherry Peak used to be a rough dirt road, but crews finished laying asphalt Oct. 27. The parking lot for the resort also received new asphalt.

Bret Christensen, another Cache Valley local from Richmond, was contracted by Clark to do the roads. Christensen says the road has taken a lot of work to go from a Jeep trail to what it is now. His crew will now begin focusing on finishing the shoulder of the road, using rocks from Cherry Creek Canyon.

Having the pavement done is a major step towards opening, but the resort will still need snow and lots of it to bring in skiers and snowboarders. Because of Cherry Peak’s location, artificial snow-makers are going to be used to build a base of snow, hoping nature will provide the rest. Clark is focusing on making the snow-makers operational. Trenches for the pipes that will run the water for the makers are currently being dug and he hopes to have them producing snow soon.

One lift — of the four eventually planned — is set and ready to go, and the control tower for the second was put in place Saturday. Clark says they are trying to go as fast as they can to finish the second and third lifts before the snow really sets in.

The lodge for the resort is also a work in progress. The foundation is set and the first floor is framed, and Clark says they will now start focusing on getting the second and third floors framed. He hopes the trusses for the roof will be put on before more snow falls. However, the electrical and sewage is now hooked up to the lodge and ready to go.

Clark says part of the reason why things have taken longer than he would have liked can be attributed to waiting for permits and signatures. “When you start putting the logistics of this kind of thing together, its amazing what it takes to throw a ski resort together and have all the groomed trails.”

He says he has never taken on a challenge like this before, but is able to make it work by contracting out companies who have done work similar to this.

“I’m in over my head, but you hire people that know what they’re doing, and that makes a difference.”

Clark says other resorts hire out “big-wigs” from Switzerland to do all the construction, but at Cherry Peak they are just a bunch of country boys “gettin’ it done.”

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