

No. 520 -- April 21, 1976

A newsheet published by the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter. Send subscriptions & address changes to: Tim Ryan, 708 Loma, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254. Subscriptions \$2 per year. This is a 6 page issue.

THERE IS SNOW IN THEM THAR HILLS

The complete report of the 1976 Onion Valley ski tour will hopefully appear in the next issue, if the trip reporter returns to Seal Beach before the next deadline. Based upon the observations of this past weekend, it is safe to report that summer has definitely not arrived in the Sierra; there is adequate snow for skiing and it is still falling.

Tours into Robinson Basin and to the slopes below Bench Lake produced ski terrain covered with both fluffy powder, and super-skiable corn snow. So, do not listen to those optimistic backpackers looking for an early rush down the J.M. Trail, and definitely do not put your skis away for the season. Because the alpine wilderness skiing season is NOW, and you shouldn't miss another exciting turn. MG

SAN GORGONIO TOUR - March 27-28

Saturday morning the Ski Mountaineers met at Poop Out Hill, though only one car could make it all the way to the roadhead, while the rest had to park a mile down the road due to snow. After hiking a while with skis, the group had lunch at Dry Lake, after which six members climbed an unnamed peak between Lake Peak and San Gorgonio. Because of a cool breeze which blew all day, the snow didn't thaw and was crusty on the descent. However, a few good turns were made on spring snow in sunny and protected areas.

After a cool night without a campfire at Dry Lake, we toured to the base of Charlton Peak, left our packs, and five of us climbed Charlton to have lunch on the peak. The descent from the summit to the ridge was on crusty snow because of the cool breeze which continued to blow Sunday. Descending the chute on the east face was done on excellent spring snow, and the group made a tour up to Little Draw (crusty snow). We then skied with packs down to South Fork Meadows on good spring snow in the trees, and crusty snow on Christmas Tree Hill. We hiked out to the road head where our one car carried packs down the road.

While the skiing was not as good as last year due to the cool wind which blew all weekend, there is lots of snow at San Gorgonio considering our dry Winter. Touring should still be good in this area above East Fork Meadows, particularly on warm sunny days. This tour was still very successful due to the good skiing on Charlton, a good workout, and a real fun group. BF

RCS PROCTICE CLIMB - March 21

The March 21 Practice Climb at Stony Point Wind Tunnel was attended by 36 students and 18 RCS Instructors (student/instructor ratio 2 to 1) who spent most of the day investigating lift to drag ratios with the wind that persisted out of the southwest. The order for the day was practice climbing all morning, and instructing and testing all afternoon - excepting Phil Bruce's bucket drop machine which worked all day signing off on leader belay. I noticed that the students now practice the tie off of a fallen climber, so the instruction gets a little more thorough all the time. Frank Meyers appeared in crutches to support a badly sprained ankle, but laid it aside to climb both up and down the northwest corner of Rock One. RCS instructors were: Allan Carlson, Mike Sherrick, Horton Johnson, Phil Bruce, Bill Barger, Jim Endo, Dick Munder, Theresa Halula, Valerie Lloyd, Leonard Hall, Norm Rohn, Dick DeRusha, Frank Meyers, Dale Stein, Bob Kamps, Tom Jeter, Emory Yount and Dave Hornby. EY



MUGELNOOS STAFF

EDITOR ..... Tom Jeter  
MUGELMAILER ..... Tim Ryan  
MUGELGRAPHER ..... Mary Ferguson  
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Tioga Pass is scheduled to be opened as soon after April 10 as weather permits, with Sonora Pass to be opened one week later. A snow survey completed March 30 showed snow pack along the Tioga Pass Road to be the lowest on record. Inyo Register 4/8/76

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SKI TOUR PROGNOSIS

NEXT ISSUE: May 19, 1976  
DEADLINE: Thursday night, May 13

Thanks to the lateness of this year's snowfall (more snow in Onion Valley than during last "drought" 4 years ago), it still appears that SM tours will go on the dates (if not to the places) scheduled thru the latter part of May at least. Rock Creek backpack ski tour may be moved ahead to May 22-23. Contact leader of scheduled tour or Mark Goebel (820-1962 for info on this and other possible revisions. BL

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: 3rd Wed. of each month, 7:30 PM, Lemon Grove Rec Cen. 4959 Lemon Grove Ave, Hollywood (just off Hollywood Fry at Melrose) Program, refreshments; climbers, skiers & guests all welcome!!!

C A L E N D A R

FOR SALE

April 24-25 - Ski M. Tour Pear Lake  
April 25- RCS Practice Climb, Stony  
April 25- Environmental Expo  
May 1-2-Ski M. Tour Twin Lakes  
May 15-16 RCS Climb, Suicide  
May 15-16-Ski M. Tour Parker Cyn.  
May 23- RCS Safety Test - Pacifico  
May 22-23-Ski M. Tour San Joaquin Pk

Silveretta Plate Binding - \$20  
Marker Steckbacken Touring Attachment (New) - \$7  
Su-Matic Alpine/Touring Release Binding (New) - \$40  
Contact Ambrose Su (213)768-1825

NEW SKI MOUNTAINEERS

Ed Omberg and Mary Omberg  
4311 El Prieto  
Altadena, 91001; tel. 798-2548

NOTICE: GROUP PURCHASE OF ROCK CLIMBING EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE TO RCS MEMBERS.

The RCS will make a large purchase of rock climbing equipment sometime in May at discount prices for member of RCS only. Those interested contact Tom Jeter for equipment list and prices. Call 943-3112 or send SASE to Tom Jeter, 15520 Wilmaglen Whittier, 90604.

CORRECTIONS TO NEW RCS ROSTER

Don Rappolee  
155 Francisco St.  
Anaheim, 92807; tel. 714-998-1352

SC MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The above was held on Sat. April 3 in Los Angeles, and was attended by reps. of many of the Chapters in the state. Perhaps the most interesting part of the meeting was hearing the differing opinions on training of climbers. It was agreed to hold the spring 1977 meeting in L.A. coincident with an Improvised Rescue Seminar like the one recently sponsored by the RCS-SPS-LTC. EY

ADVENTURE 16 STORE GRAND OPENING

Adventure 16 Inc. has opened a new A-16 store in West L.A. on Pico Blvd just west of Sepulveda at 11161 W. Pico. May 1, 2, & 3 (Sat, Sun & Mon) will be the Grand Opening with a 20% discount on everything in the store (except Kelty products and boots).

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO

The RCS has built a twenty foot high climbing wall for this Sierra Club exposition. It's a one day affair, next Sunday, April 25. We need help from RCS members and guests who would like to belay tourist feller's up and down the wall. Contact Leroy Russ, we need some help! EY

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING COURSE

Cal. State Long Beach is offering a series of six lectures headed by Norman Dyhrenfurth starting on April 19 and running each Monday & Wed. to May 5. Fee is \$20 for the series (non-credit) or \$3.50 per lecture. Call CSULB office for further details tel. 498-5561.



## VERTICAL CAVERS DISCOVER ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

The Vertical Cavers are light years ahead of Rock Climbers when it comes to ascending and descending fixed ropes, as was proven recently at Cave of the Winding Stair when Fred Wing, Andy Fried, and Tom Jeter had to Jumar their way up the 2nd drop fixed rope. The aforementioned three huffed, puffed, sweated and cursed for about 20 minutes each up 165 feet of free hanging rope to a ledge, only to be followed by Vertical Caver Donna Lou Mrosczcowski, who did it in 5 minutes without having to draw a deep breath. Donna Lou kindly allowed your Editor access to her library of caving literature, and the following technical article of obvious interest to rock climbers is excerpted from a copy of the Baltimore Grotto News.

## THE WILLIAM T. PLUMMET THUMB BRAKE RAPPEL

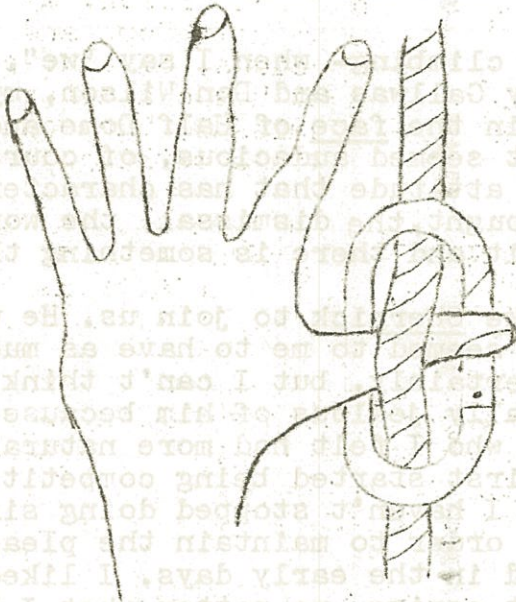


Figure 1

In keeping with the current trend toward streamlining caving technique and using simple gear adaptable to a variety of situations, the inventor offers this modification of the brake bar rappel. See Figure 1.

Note the following advantages.

1. The absolute minimum of extra hardware is needed (one carribiner). Not only is the cumbersome brake bar eliminated, but also the extra carribiners and slings normally required to attach the friction device to the body. This is made possible because the thumb itself is already part of the body (i.e. the thumb bone connected to the hand bone, connected to the wristbone, connected to the arm bone, etc. - etc.).
2. The method is simplicity itself, with essentially no time lost in rigging up or rigging down.
3. The method is capable of allowing a very rapid descent, saving much time in getting to the bottom.

**CAUTION:** Proper orientation of thumb against rappel line is of utmost importance. Keeping the fingers pointed away from the body insures that the rope will always be working against the natural bending direction of the first thumb joint (see figure 1). Pointing the fingers toward the body will almost certainly result in flexing at the joint with consequent loss of the rappel.

**EDITORS NOTE:** Novices at this technique may at first attempt too rapid a descent, with consequent uncomfortable build up of heat at the thumb. This can be alleviated in practice situations by placing a band aid around the thumb before rappelling, untill sufficient experience is gained to dispense with the band aid.

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## NOTES FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY

..... The question of the first technical climb (in the US, Ed) may be more a problem of semantics than of facts. Ropes and eye bolts were used on the first ascent of Half Dome in 1875. The only thing separating that ascent from the more modern type of climbing was the lack of a running belay - a rope fed to the leader by a stationary second man. The Climbers Guide to the High Sierra reports that Francis Farquhar and Robert Underhill introduced the proper use of the rope to the Sierra Nevada on the north face of Unicorn Peak in 1931.....

..... Underhill's article, "On the Use and Management of the Rope in Rock Work", is prominent in the 1931 Sierra Club Bulletin. Today's climbers look at the illustrations with sweaty palms. One series of photographs, showing the body belay, pictures a climber with a rope running over his shoulder, without any anchor, standing at the brink of a cliff. The real surprise is hidden in the "Mountaineering Notes" in the back of the same bulletin. On September 7, 1930 John Mendenhall and Max Van Patten climbed the northeast face of Laurel Mountain. Mendenhall writes, "My companion and I were roped, moved one at a time, and employed the belays." One wonders how many other Laurel Mountains are tucked away in the unwritten history of early Sierra climbing....

(The above excerpts are from an introduction by Galen Rowell to his recently published book, The Vertical World of Yosemite. Ed.)

..... In 1955, we became more focused on climbing- when I say "we", I mean a small group of us, including Jerry Gallwas and Don Wilson, my Sentinel companions. We got interested in the face of Half Dome and here we saw a very great opportunity. It seemed audacious, of course, but you never know - This is the sort of attitude that has characterized my climbing since then - the wild thought, the dismissal, the wondering, and finally you really look into it and there is something there after all .....

..... So we got a young climber named Mike Sherrick to join us. He was brilliant. There are few people who have seemed to me to have as much natural ability as Mike - Chuck Pratt, certainly, but I can't think of any others. As a matter of fact I was really jealous of him because he was one of the few climbers at that time who I felt had more natural ability than I. That was really when I first started being competitive and started pushing myself in a way that I haven't stopped doing since. I suppose I've done this in some ways in order to maintain the pleasant aura of success that made me feel so good in the early days. I liked that so much that I determined to keep it coming, no matter what I had to do to get it.

SO YOU COMPLETED THE HALF DONE ROUTE WITH GALLWAS AND SHERRICK.

Yes, that was a great adventure. We did the route in five days and we suffered a lot from both heat and fear. We were really scared because we hadn't done anything like it before. We took up 1000 ft. of extra rope, just in case we couldn't get up after the long traverse. We could have used the rope to get down to the ground again, but as it happened it would have been perfectly possible to retreat down our ascent route.....

(The above excerpts are from an interview with Royal Robbins, in The Vertical World of Yosemite. Ed.)

.....I thus made my way into a wilderness of crumbling spires and battlements, built together in bewildering combinations, and glazed in many places with a thin coating of ice, which I had to hammer off with stone. The situation was becoming gradually more perilous; but having passed several dangerous spots, I dared not think of descending; for, so steep was the entire ascent, one would inevitably fall to the glacier in case a single misstep were made. Knowing, therefore, the tried danger beneath, I became all the more anxious concerning the developments to be made above, and began to be conscious of a vague foreboding of what actually befell; not that I was given to fear, but rather because my instincts, usually so positive and true, seemed vitiated in some way, and were leading me astray. At length, after attaining an elevation of about 12,800 feet, I found myself at the foot of a sheer drop in the bed of the avalanche channel I was tracing, which seemed absolutely to bar further progress. It was only about forty-five or fifty feet high, and somewhat roughened by fissures and projections; but these seemed so slight and insecure, as footholds, that I tried hard to avoid the precipice altogether, by scaling the wall of the channel on either side.

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## NOTES FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY (CONTINUED)

But, though less steep, the walls were smoother than the obstructing rock, and repeated efforts only showed that I must either go right ahead or turn back. The tried dangers beneath seemed even greater than that of the cliff in front; therefore, after scanning its face again and again, I began to scale it, picking my holds with intense caution. After gaining a point about halfway to the top, I was suddenly brought to a dead stop, with arms outspread, clinging close to the face of the rock, unable to move hand or foot either up or down. My doom appeared fixed. I MUST fall. There would be a moment of bewilderment, and then a lifeless rumble down the one general precipice to the glacier below. When this final danger flashed upon me, I became nerve-shaken for the first time since setting foot on the mountains, and my mind seemed to fill with a stifling smoke.....

(Have you ever been in this situation? See next page for the final outcome of this account. ED.)

## DWP REPORTS SNOWPACK NEAR RECORD LOW

Preliminary snow survey results by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power indicate that this winter's snow pack is the second lowest in 46 years of record keeping. Duane Georgeson, Aqueduct Engineer stated that only the winter of 1931 produced snow fall lower than this year. The spring and summer run-off this year is expected to be only about 43 percent of normal according to the Department of Water and Power. "Our stream flow records for the Eastern Sierra go back to 1906, said Georgeson. "Only in 1931, the lowest year in recorded history, was the flow less than is expected for this year."

Snow surveys on Bishop Creek drainage completed March 25 continue to indicate an extremely poor runoff condition. Although the final percentage has not been calculated, preliminary projections are for about a 35 percent of normal six month runoff in Bishop Creek. This is slightly lower than the 1931 runoff, which was the previous driest on record. Inyo Regestor 4/2/76

## RCS LEADERS SIGN UP FOR FIRST AID TRAINING

A big turnout of 17 RCS Leaders have signed up for the special First Aid training sponsored by the LTC Committee next month. In addition, a number of other RCS members have indicated that they have made arrangements through their local Red Cross to get training locally leading to a standard Red Cross First Aid Card. It's good to see such a strong response to our urges that this training be obtained by our leaders, and for that matter, by all of our members. I'de like to apologize to anyone who might of thought we pushed a little too hard on this issue. TJ

## NORTH FACE OF MT. SAN JACINTO CLIMB

RCS members Andy Fried, LeRoy Russ, Jim Endo, and Jim McPherson climbed the Snow Creek route up the north face of Mt. San Jacinto on April 4th & 5th. This snow route is long (9000 ft gain), and required crampons all the way, as the weather was cool and a storm moved in. Andy and LeRoy are becoming experts in cold bivouacs and this trip was no exception, as the party spent the night 2000 feet below the summit in a snowstorm.

## SKIERS' NUTRITION

Water: This should probably be listed first, due to its importance to skiers. The need for water replacement during prolonged activity occurs before conscious feelings of thirst register on the mind. There is less danger to performance by over intake of fluids than by inadequate replacement of fluid loss. Because of the body's ability to rapidly acclimatize and conserve salt, there is little need for additional sodium chloride when sweating occurs, but potassium balance needs to be met either by supplementation in the fluid taken by mouth or included in the daily diet. Most fruits and cereals (and beer) are good sources of potassium. Far West Ski News Nov. 1 1975



NOTES FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY (CONTINUED)

..... But this terrible eclipse lasted only a moment, when life blazed forth again with preternatural clearness. I seemed suddenly to become possessed of a new sense. The other self, bygone experiences, Instinct or Guardian Angel, - call it what you will, - came forward and assumed control. Then my trembling muscles became firm again, every rift and flaw in the rock was seen as through a microscope, and my limbs moved with a positiveness and precision with which I seemed to have nothing at all to do. Had I been borne aloft upon wings, my deliverance could not have been more complete.

Above this memorable spot, the face of the mountain is still more savagely hacked and torn. It is a maze of yawning chasms and gullies, in the angles of which rise beetling crags and piles of detached boulders that seem to have been gotten ready to be launched below. But the strange influx of strength I had received seemed inexhaustible. I found a way without effort, and soon stood upon the topmost crag in the blessed light.....

(The above account is a description of the first ascent of Mt. Ritter by John Muir, as written by that author in his book The Mountains of California pages 51-52. ED.)

Water and Power... lowest in 10 years of record keeping... lower than this year... to be only about 43 percent of normal according to the Department of Water and Power... back to 1906... ordered history... Snow surveys... to indicate an extremely poor runoff condition... percentage has not been calculated... about a 35 percent of normal... is slightly lower than the 1931 runoff... on record...

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WORTH FACE OF MT. SAN JACINTO CLIMB

BCS members Andy Fried, Ledyo Russ, Jim Endo, and Jim Robinson climbed the Snow Creek route up the north face of Mt. San Jacinto on April 24th & 25th. This snow route is long (9000 ft gain) and requires crampoons all the way, as the weather was cool and a storm moved in. Andy and Ledyo are becoming experts in cold divotices and this trip was no exception, as the party spent the night 2000 feet below the summit in a snowstorm.

EXERCISE NUTRITION

water. This should probably be listed first, due to its importance to athletes. The need for water replacement during prolonged activity occurs before conscious feelings of thirst register on the mind. There is less danger to performance by over intake of fluids than by inadequate replacement of fluid loss. Because of the body's ability to rapidly acclimatize and conserve salt, there is little need for additional sodium chloride when sweating occurs, but potassium balance needs to be met either by supplementation in the fluid taken by mouth or included in the daily diet. Most fruits and cereals (and beer) are good sources of potassium. For West Ski Team, Nov. 1975