



No. 535 -- July 20, 1977

A newsheet published by and for the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter. Send address changes and subscriptions (\$2) to Phil Bruce, 8544 Eucalyptus, Downey 90242 6p.

FACE CLIMBING AT YOSEMITE

Fourteen RCS members and guests showed up for a beautiful weekend June 11-13. Four RCSers, arriving Thursday night, got up the Four Stooges Variation of Harry Daley on Friday and then on Saturday, starting at 5:30 am, did Royal Arches, finishing at 6:30 pm. The Rotten Log, precarious as ever, still (after 40 years) leads to that good belay ledge, just as the guidebook tells us. Also on Saturday, three other climbers did routes in the Yosemite Falls area, two did Overhang Bypass on Lower Cathedral Rock, and two climbed the Grack (Center) at Glacier Point Apron.

On Sunday, two routes were climbed on Monday Morning Slab, and an attempt on the Footstool (Right) was abandoned for lack of protection with nuts.

Activity tapered off on Monday, two lissome maids doing the first pitch of After Six, and two other climbers (?) giving up at the tree half way up. Throughout these Sunday-Monday RCS activities, RCSer Randy McDonald and Ron Overholtz were observed (with field glasses) doing Washington Column. FW

FACE LIFTING AT BALDY HUT

Someone said the work parties at the San Antonio Ski Hut are more fun than they are work. Well, about 20 souls showed up at the Baldy Hut June 11-12 for the Spring traditional, and the consensus was that this maxim is true. Several hundred pounds of construction supplies were packed up the hill by the participants, with some help from some of the general public, who were pressed into service as they attempted to pass on the trail.

The north wall of the hut was completely repanelled in textured plywood, and a special vandal-proof locker was constructed of 3/4-in. plywood to hold our newly acquired rescue equipment and medical supplies. Some repair work was done on the upstairs bunks, the cellar was finally straightened up, and additional trail maintenance and retaining wall work was completed where the trail forks near the creek (to encourage people to "walk on"). Also, a couple of badly needed air vents were installed in the new outhouse. Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast were furnished for a modest cost by chef Betty Powers.

All work ceased suddenly Sunday morning, when some bighorn sheep were spotted on the skyline down the forested ridge to the southwest; all hands gawked awhile in silent wonderment. Sunday afternoon at 3:30, Dr. Willard Hunter of Claremont and some friends arrived, and a short ceremony was conducted to dedicate the new emergency facilities, and to dedicate the hut as a rescue center for the mountain. Funds for the new equipment were provided through memorials to Dr. Hunter's son Bob, who was killed several years ago. An engraved plaque now reposes on the hut's north wall to comemorate the dedication.

Another weekend visitor ws the local Mt Baldy Ranger, who authorized a helicopter landing site, which the San Antonio Hut Management Committee has agreed to prepare. It is felt that the addition of the rescue facilities and the close cooperation with the USFS and county authorities will hold the Sierra Club property immune from a possible change in wilderness boundaries, which could mean forced evacuation of the Baldy Hut.

Special recognition for their dedication and hard work over the weekend should go to Howard S.V. Gates, Mark Ikeda, Carl Lundquist, Milt McCauley, Robin Ives, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Lavton, Randy Bernard, Freeman Allen, Bill and Sherie Warner, and Jim and Betty Powers. JW

MUGELNOOS STAFF

EDITOR for June.....John Ripley
 MUGELMAILER.....Phil Bruce
 MUGELGRAPHERS.....Mary Ferguson
 and George Shinno
 CONTRIBUTORS: France Cordova,
 Diana Dee, Barbara Lilley, Al
 Meckler, John D. Mendenhall,
 Ruth D. Mendenhall, LeRoy Russ,
 John Wedberg, Fred Wing.

\$2 per year A six-p. issue.

NEXT EDITOR: Richard Stanton
 627 Strand St #1
 Santa Monica 90405
 (213) 399-3836

NEXT ISSUE: August 17, 1977
 DEADLINE: Fri., Aug. 12 or sooner

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: 3rd Wed. of
 month, 7:30 pm, Lemon Grove Rec.
 Ctr., 4959 Lemon Grove Ave, LA,
 just off Hwd Fwy near Melrose exit.
 Program, news, food--all welcome!

C A L E N D A R

July 30-Aug. 1: RCS, Whitney E.
 Face (T). D. DeRusha 661-9924.
 August 13-14: RCS, Tahquitz (T)
 L. Bayless, 693-3035 (CHANGED).
 August 17: Mugelnoos. Jack
 Parker on Smokies (CHANGED).
 August 27-28: RCS, Suicide (T)
 E. Yount, (714) 525-5196.

SMS SEC'Y NEEDS CORRECT INFO.

In order to prepare an up-to-date as possible Ski Mountaineers Directory, all SMS members who have moved since January 1, 1977 are requested to send their new addresses & phone numbers to SMS Secretary (Barbara Lilley, 8421 Lindley Ave, Northridge 91325) by Sept. 1. It is hoped to put the Directory out with the Sept. Mugelnoos. If your address appears incorrectly you have only yourself to blame! BL

MORE RCS ROSTER CHANGES

Butler, Jim: 10547 Bradbury,
 Los Angeles 90064
 King, Dan: Inyo Conservation Ctr,
 Rte 2, Box 22L, Bishop 93514
 Meckler, Al: 3160 Yorba Linda,
 Apt D-9, Fullerton 92631
 (714) 996-5176
 Ripley, John: phone(213) 692-5050

HE DID IT

Glenn Kaplan has passed the RCS Safety Test and has applied for membership. As required by the bylaws, RCS is soliciting confidential comments from members on his climbing practices. Send to Safety Committee c/o J. Ripley.

THEY MIGHT DO IT

The Ski Mountaineers are considering a merger with the Snow Touring Committee. (See page 4.) Send comments to D. Mantle or M. Goebel.

LATE FLASH--A. Fried reaches top of McKinley!

ADVENTURER WANTED

France Cordova, who comes highly recommended (see July 3 trip page 3), is a Sierra Club member who will be in Chile as a visiting astronomer Nov. 4-11 of this year. After her work there, she would like to rock climb and/or backpack for a few days in the Andes of Peru, Bolivia, or Chile. She wants to know if any S.C. member is interested in joining her or has a trip planned for the Nov. 12-28 period.

France can be contacted c/o Geo W. Downs Physics Lab., Cal Tech, Pasadena 91125, 795-6811 X-2229.

CAMP 4 FACES NEW THREAT

A new Yosemite proposal contemplates converting Camp 4 into a day-user parking lot. The Amer. Alpine Club has protested to the Park Superintendent, Les Arnberger.

RDM

IF I HAD THE PINIONS OF AN ANGEL,
 UP THESE ROCK WALLS I WOULD FLY...

The following conversation between Jim Whittaker and Alaska Congressman Don Young occurred at a hearing on the proposed Alaska Wildlands bill, according to the Seattle Times:

Young: (Inquiring about climbers' hardware) What about pinions?

Whittaker: Those are pitons.

Young: I call them pinions.

Whittaker: I'll never go climbing with you.

Young: It's only the very few, the very young who go hiking...

Whittaker, 48, after a little more talk, turned his back on Young and walked away amid prolonged applause from the audience of 800. Need we add that Whittaker is in favor of establishing nat. parks, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas in Alaska, and Young is opposed? RDM

WALT HENINGER IN CRITICAL COND.

Long time friend of the Ski Mountaineers, former Baldy Hut manager and RCS member, and S. C. Life Member Walt Heninger is under intensive care after a serious operation. His condition has been critical for over a month. JW

L E T T E R S

Dear Ed.: Anyone who thinks "1984" might not come even sooner should backpack in Grand Can. N.P. (if you can get a permit--weekends must often be reserved a year in advance) Not only are wilderness permits required, but each backpacker must carry an individual tag which is personally inspected by a ranger living at each camping area. In addition, altho it's perfectly feasible to hike from one rim to the other in two days, "Big Bro." Park Service requires everyone to take three. Barbara Lilley

TAHQUITZ OVERWHELMED BY SHEER NUMBERS

On Saturday, June 18, an amazing total of 40 persons signed in; 23 showed up on Sunday. A substantial number of these climbers were recent students with signed proficiency cards who came to climb with RCS members. One, who had passed the Safety Test, climbed with a Safety Committee member.

The following routes were climbed: Angel's Fright (2 ropes), East Lark, Fingertip Traverse (3 ropes), Fingertrip, Flakes, Frightful Variation (3 ropes), Jensen's Jaunt (2 ropes), Le Toit, Long Climb (2 ropes), Lower NE Rib (2 ropes), Maiden (2 ropes), Mechanic's Route, Mendenhall Var. of Frightful Var., North Buttress, Reach, Sahara Terror, Ski Tracks (3 ropes), West Lark, Swallow, and Trough (2 ropes).

FW

ABOVE THE PALISADE GLACIER--JULY 3

Very sorry for all who missed a challenging outing amid beautiful surroundings. 23 climbers turned out, a quite respectable number (as to individuals, well....).

Lindgren and Erskine did the most continuously demanding climb, the Starlight Buttress of North Palisade. Master and Cole (who is a vet of the climb) ascended North Pal via the U-Notch. Kaplan and Chon followed the same route; Chon is new to our section but has broad experience.

The strong team of Somoano, Irvine, and Dotta would have made North Palisade, but mal de mer struck one.

Dave Perkins qualified as an expedition leader by guiding guests Davis, Anderson, Gretha, and two Frys up Sill by the interesting North Couloir, then did Gayley. Erb and Rutherford did the same routes in reverse sequence.

Sharpsteen, Hoste, France Cordova, and J. Mendenhall tackled Sill by the Swiss Arete. It was fine to see Hoste again. France is an able rock climber, and it is hoped that she joins our activities. Anyhoo--there was, with other parties, a total of eight climbers (a traffic jam) on the route. A fall above us sent down a sizable rock (ask for it and ye shall receive--enough of urban crowding!). The RCS four traversed into the popular but safe North Couloir route up Sill.

JDM

RCS BYLAWS AMENDED

RCS members overwhelmingly voted to change their bylaws as recommended by the Bylaws Committee. The results of the election, which closed July 1, were as follows (refer to Mugelnoos No. 532, April 77):

1. To change the annual meeting to the last calendar quarter instead of November; passed 33-0.
2. To create a permanent History Committee; passed 31-2.
3. To give the Safety Committee duties relating to the correction of unsafe climbing practices; passed 31-2.
4. To allow active members to be made honorary members; passed 31-2.
5. To give honorary members free Mugelnoos; passed 30-2.
6. To place the word "season" in quotation marks (technical change); passed 31-1.

See the April Mugelnoos for the changes until a new set of bylaws is printed. Many thanks to Pat Butler and her committee of LeRoy Russ and Al Fowler; also to Emory Yount, who contributed much time.

Ed.-LR

ROBBERS' ROOST CLIMBING SEASON AMENDED

Robbers' Roost, the rock tower near Inyokern, is now to be closed from January 1 to July 1 each year to protect nesting raptors. The rock is a fairly popular climbing spot, especially with the China Lake crowd.

The Bureau of Land Management has announced that it will patrol the area to enforce the closure. Prairie Falcons, golden eagles, and red-tailed hawks use the crag and need solitude for successful nesting.

--from BLM Newsbeat, 6/77, submitted by DD

LAW OF THE MOUNTAINS?

Under a bill recently sent to the floor of the State Assembly, skiers could be fined up to \$1000 for leaving the scene of a ski accident--except to report it--if someone is believed injured.

--LA Times, 6/15/77, submitted by RDM

SKI MOUNTAINEERS CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, 6/28/77

Old Business. Due to the absence of Treasurer G. Shinno, financial discussions were postponed until the next meeting. The SMS still prefers Lemon Grove for meetings over the Orange Room at DWP.

New Business. The SMS schedule writeup has been shortened to avoid charges for extra lines. A list of remaining saleable Alpine Touring equipment will be prepared. As Dave Field has moved to Colorado, Cliff Cameron was elected to replace him on the Central Committee. Bill Feldmann will be the new SMS chairman; Doug Mantle vice-chairman. Ed and Mary Omberg were made SMS Qualified Leaders. The November-February ski touring schedule was set up (to appear in the November Mugelnoos); meeting programs and refreshments were assigned. The forming of a "wilderness skiing section" by joining the SMS and the Snow Touring Committee was discussed. If approved, this would probably take effect in the 1978-79 winter season. NOTE: All Ski Mountaineers Section members are urged to send their comments on this merger to D. Mantle or M. Goebel.

BL

REPORT ON THE VAGABOND CLIMBERS, JUNE 18-25

By Al Meckler

I joined Don Wilson on Saturday. On Sunday, Don, Ron Overholtz, and I drove up to Tuolumne Meadows to do some bouldering and met "Ranger" Maggie Weesner (ex-Joshua Tree) on her way to the valley from the east to rejoin the group. Later on in the week, Janet Wilts and John Long arrived in the valley.

Tuesday, 21st, Frances Cholewa led Don and I up Royal Arches. We got a good start (7 am), but were late getting back (12:30 am). It was a very enjoyable climb except for the last third of the down-climb which was done very slowly in the dark (with flashlights of course!). Rope management on a number of short pitches was probably the main thing that slowed the three of us down. On the way up, we met three high school students who had bivouacked on the sandy ledge with the tree. The third member had gone up the next pitch, then decided to go down and stay in "camp." We passed the second member prusiking up the pitch (5.2-5.4) with some difficulty. When we passed the leader, he explained, "That fellow is not a climber, he's just my belayer." We immediately saw the possible business value of "rent-a-belayer." We also saw where some of these "climbing statistics" come from--all three had taken a "rock climbing course" in high school, but had never climbed anything.

On Friday the 24th, Jim Endo and me, following on one rope, and Don leading Ranger Maggie on the other, did the Snake Dike route on Half Dome. We really made excellent time, 5 am to 6:30 pm, with threatening weather adding incentive. Secondary or induced static discharges could be felt across the cables on the way down, caused by the distant lightning. We decided to go down holding on to just one side! On top we saw Tom Frost, in charge of a crew making a movie.

And as long as I'm name dropping, RCS student and Yosemite Medical Staff member Judith Fairchild made friends with climber/author Warren Harding, who stopped by camp several times. He is certainly a very friendly and sociable chap.

Don's ever faithful companion was kicked out of the valley--German shepherd Maurena. Because the dog hates all ropes (will not belay you--and does not appreciate one), Don could not take her on climbs or leave her tied in camp. So Don brought her back to LA on the 4th of July weekend. (She wasn't that good a climber anyway. Tho her friction technique was outstanding, she couldn't do a layback and had difficulty doing chimneys and mantels.)

Don said that by mid-July the group would probably move up to Tuolumne Meadows to avoid the heat (temp. or big climbs?). Well, I don't know, but, like gypsies, you can be sure they will have fun!

RUSSIANS CLIMB CASSIN RIDGE

Two Russian mountaineers climbed the Cassin Ridge on McKinley in six days, in late May and/or early June. The weather was good and the climb was made alpine style. They were among the six Soviet climbers who visited Alaska as members of the American Alpine Club's mountaineering exchange program.

RDM

STARTING ROCK CLIMBING IN SO. CALIF.--THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE RCSUnderhill and Leonard

The So. Calif. (now Angeles) Chapter Rock Climbing Section was organized in the Fall of 1934, the direct product of a club- and state-wide growth in technical climbing. During the 1920s, Sierra Club members were making progressively more difficult ascents. Francis Farquhar induced Robert Underhill, the leading technical climber of the day, to come west for the 1931 Summer Outing to teach proper rope technique to club members. Some Sierrans had been using ropes, but without the guidance of experienced climbers. Underhill's visit was a great success; a number of fine ascents were pioneered (including the East Face of Whitney) and the new methods were quickly assimilated. Glen Dawson was in Underhill's "class" and carried his knowledge Southward. He and local boys "Bubs" Brem and Dick Jones made the 1st descent of the E. Face of Whitney during a chapter outing over Labor Day of 1931.

Up in the Bay area, Dick Leonard and friends formed the Cragmont Climbing Club in March 1932 to promote safe climbing. The membership was drawn mostly from the Sierra Club, and by November 1932 the Bay Chapter was willing to endorse a Rock Climbing Section drawn from Leonard's group. Emphasis shifted from the Cragmont Club to the new RCS, with the original group being disbanded in 1933.

Leonard carried on a very extensive correspondence with Underhill (who lived in the East) and developed a program emphasizing local practice climbs leading to improved skills. These methods travelled to our area by way of Glen Dawson, who attended some of the practices.

Locals Learn the Ropes

The Bay Chapter RCS program was manifestly successful, having led to an outstanding season of High Trip climbing in 1933. Here in So. Calif., young Sierrans were forming a Junior Section. (There were then no sections in our chapter, as the Nature Study Section had folded in the late '20s.) Some of the Juniors were experienced climbers, and under the leadership of Glen Dawson the new section held two practice climbs (11/5/33 and 5/5/34). Using Eagle Rock and Bee Rock, Dawson, Dick Jones, and John Poindexter introduced the Bay RCS type of local climbing to our area.

Arthur B. Johnson was one of the participants in Dawson's trips. He had been scrambling up Sierra peaks for some time, and after the Summer of 1934, he felt the need for a more extensive technical climbing program. His idea was not a new one, but he pushed it harder than anyone previously--why not a So. Calif. RCS? Glen Dawson, to whom most looked for leadership, was just starting his last year at UCLA and would be leaving for a year's trip around the world in June 1935. He suggested that Art, who had done little rope work at that time, take the initiative and organize the section. Art went to the Chapter Executive Committee and, in September 1934, convinced them to authorize a Rock Climbing Section.

Organizing the Section

Art Johnson wrote to Leonard and received batches of forms and procedures, including a large notebook of correspondence with Underhill. The new section adopted the rules, procedures, and membership requirements (4 activities per year) of the Leonard group, and was similarly governed. Present members might be surprised to know that all sections in those days (Bay RCS, Junior, and our RCS) were more closely controlled by the Chapter Executive Committee than today; the ExCom appointed the chairman, who in turn appointed the rest of the management committee. Members did not vote.

The original management committee of September 1934 consisted of Cecilia Carney (acting as secretary), Glen Dawson, Mary Jane Edwards, Howard Roster, and Art Johnson, chairman. A schedule was immediately submitted for publication. A previously scheduled Junior Section climb took place in September, and then, on November 3, 1934, the RCS ran its first climb: Eagle Rock practice, with Howard Roster as the leader. (Four days later, the Ski Mountaineers held its first organizational meeting as an independent club of UCLA skiers, outside the Sierra Club.)

Early trips went to Picacho Peak (near Yuma), Bee Rock in Griffith Park, and Vasquez Rocks off the Sierra Highway.

(Continued on page six)

RCS HISTORY (Continued from page five)

Difficulties and Discoveries

The section gained Jim Smith in February 1935, but partially lost Chairman Johnson, who was transferred to Mono Basin. He doggedly hung in, making long drives from Bishop in a Model A on weekends to lead section trips. He was not back in LA permanently until November 1935, and an unsung heroine stepped into the breach by handling many administrative and organizational tasks--secretary Cecilia Carney. Though she was never a "serious" climber, Johnson credits her with keeping the section going during that first critical Summer.

Early climbs were mostly practices; a scouting committee hunted for promising spots for "real climbs." The north face of San Jacinto was an early "big trip." Then, in June 1935, Jim Smith and Mary Jane Edwards were hiking in the San Jacinto Mts and spotted Tahquitz Rock. Smith had no doubt about what he saw--he submitted a scouter's report touting Tahquitz as having "vast possibilities for difficult climbs of a very advanced nature.... This rock offers by far the best in advanced rock climbing to be found in So. Calif."

Belays and Bylaws

In the summer of 1935, RCS members climbed two new routes in the Whitney area; Tahquitz was attempted in the late Fall, but the weather and difficulty defeated the climbers. In October the RCS was flattered by being used by the Ski Mountaineers as the model of how they wanted to be considered by the Chapter ExCom in becoming a part of the Sierra Club. Actually, however, in becoming the third chapter section, the SMS brought about a change in that it retained its old bylaws essentially intact, and officers were elected. This triggered the setting up of a committee in the RCS to change the bylaws. The RCS continued under the old rules through 1936 (management committee with Johnson, Chairman; Smith, Vice-Chairman; and May Pridham, Secretary), but new bylaws were accepted by the Chapter in November 1936, under which the officers were elected. The members voted to retain the 1936 officers for 1937.

Getting back to 1936, Art Johnson was back in town all year, and Glen Dawson returned in August. In a triumphant return to Tahquitz, section members put up the first four routes, with Smith, Johnson, Bob Brinton, and Bill Rice the main participants. The section joined the Bay RCS at Yosemite Valley over Memorial Day, the start of a long tradition. A series of trips to the Sierra saw such climbs as the first ascents of Rice and Bedayan Minarets and a new route on North Palisade. "Discoverer" Smith found and scheduled the north face of Strawberry Pk in the San Gabriels, reporting it to be rotten, but worth the trip. Closing out the 1936 season over Labor Day, RCSers climbed Whitney's East Face, made a route on Thor, and attempted the East Buttress of Whitney.

End of the "Probation Period"

In 1937, the section's level of climbing achievement flowered, while an internal controversy split the group--only to leave it stronger than before. A full climbing schedule included practice climbs, Yosemite Valley, Strawberry Pk, the Palisades, and Tahquitz Rock. RCSers pioneered the White Maiden and Mechanic's Route at Tahquitz; the Pink Perch on Thor, Jensen Minaret, and the East Buttress of Whitney in the Sierra; and East Temple in Zion National Park. Jim Smith published the first guide to Tahquitz Rock.

In the Fall of 1937, a controversy developed over the definition and practice of safety in climbing. The RCS was split into two groups, each placing a different emphasis on the various factors that contribute to safe climbing. A showdown vote upheld the authority of Chairman Johnson while resulting in the election of a committee from both sides to review the safety rules. The regulations they adopted required certain practice climbs before a novice could climb at Tahquitz, and certain Tahquitz climbs before the more difficult Sierra routes. In slightly modified form, these rules are still in effect.

Elections in December 1937 installed Dick Jones as Secretary, Jim Smith as Vice-Chairman (again), and Howard Koster as the second Chairman. Art Johnson had been chairman for three years, longer than anyone else to this day. He brought the group from a small, sometimes apathetic bunch, to a good sized club capable of arousing, in place of the apathy, a passionate controversy among a concerned membership.

The RCS has existed continuously since Art Johnson stepped down forty years ago. Members can be proud of the section's place in the history of climbing.