



No. 549, September 19, 1978

WORD FROM DONNA M.  
PAGES 3 & 4

#### FRESNO DOME

Despite changing locations and leaders, 6 climbers signed in Saturday morning for the Fresno Dome Climb. As few routes on this formation have been published all climbers were treated to the thrill of "A First Ascent", in other words, "Will it Go" climbing. Members Tidball, Carlson, Fried, (Beal didn't sign in) and guests Nathon John, Paul Harris and Adam Paul were treated to cool breezes and fine granite face climbing (there were some cracks).

The next day saw the birth of some new routes, among them were "It Could Have Been Easier", "De Bulge" and "Wash Out". These routes (if they can be found again) should be popular. A new road was found on the return trip which was much faster than the one described in the last Mugelnoos. Hopefully, next year will see a larger turnout at this fine climbing area. (AF)

#### MOONLIGHT IN THE MINARETS

Two ski mountaineers participated in a recent National Outing--The Minarets Mountaineering Base Camp. One was the leader, while your reporter was a candidate for initiation into the mysteries. Along with 11 other climbers, they enjoyed the sunset, moonlit evening, cool pre-dawn breezes and eventual sunrise on top of Riegelhuth Minaret, as a result of a problem in climbing logistics. One of the ropes intended for rappelling off was needed for extra security on a lower pitch.

As a memorial to this mountaineering experience, it was suggested by those present that the top of Riegelhuth be known henceforth as "Hotel Ossofsky". While the view from this hotel is superb (Do you have a picture of Banner and Ritter taken from a mountain top at 6 a.m.), the accommodations and room service are rotten. (For those who do not know this peak, a fine photo of it may be found on the front pages of the 1977 BMTC text on the same page where it says, cryptically, "About the course." Let me tell you, those people are serious.)

The next morning was made more interesting by getting the rappel ropes stuck at the top of the 150-foot class 3-4 pitch on the back. Fortunately, one of our younger and more eager climbers, fresh from camp with a pack full of turkey sandwiches for us (what else?), ran unroped to the top and freed the ropes. After a frantic but futile search for the register we had hidden, he scurried back down, protected only by what we assumed were incantations uttered by the leaders--we could not quite hear what they were saying. Being a Sierra Club trip, there was unfortunately no saccharin to slip into his granola.

The next day we climbed little spires more within our powers. One had room for a five-climber bivouac on top, and it was suggested that here could be the site of yet another hotel in the Ossofsky chain. (JOM)

#### MENDEL COULOIR

As some RCS members were awakening in the meadows others were donning packs for the rather difficult stroll into the Darwin Canyon area for a shot at Mendel Couloir. Climbers Glen Kaplan and Andy Fried and sightseers Helen and Susan started over the pass under light cloud cover and heavy packs.

Dawn Sunday (after a windy night) saw our climbers out of camp and on their way up to the bergschrund on the Mendel Glacier. This obstacle was passed with little difficulty and the first belay established just above. Leads were swing on snow and greenish-white ice, protected by some screws. One p.m.

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MUGELNOOS STAFF

Editor for Sept.....Frances Cholewa  
 MUGELGRAPHER.....Barbara Raichle  
 MUGELMAILER.....Phil Bruce  
 REPORTERS: Phil Bruce, Al Carlson,  
 Frances Cholewa, Joan Clark, Andy  
 Fried, Barbara Lilley, J.Owen Maloy,  
 Donna Mroczkowski, Richard Doege

NEXT EDITOR: Ed Nissen  
 4618 Palo Verde Avenue  
 Lakewood, CA. 90713  
 (213) 425-6340  
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C A L E N D A R

Sept. 23-24: Sat-Sun. Needles Area -  
 Sequoia: Andy Fried, 466-0480,  
 see below\*\*.  
 Oct. 7-9: Sat-Mon. Yosemite Valley,  
 Leader - Fred Wing, 476-4398, Asst.  
 Ed Nissen  
 Oct. 15: RCS Annual Picnic  
 Oct. 21-23: Sat-Mon. El Gran Trono  
 Blanco, Baja, Leader - LeRoy Russ,  
 295-9703, Asst. Andy Fried  
 Oct. 17: Tues., Muglenoos Meeting\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*NEEDLES AREA, Sept. 23-24. Directions:  
 North on Rt. 99 to Tipton; East on  
 190 through Porterville to Quaking  
 Aspen Campground. Meet 8:00 a.m.,  
 Sat. Climbs 5.7 and up, some aid but  
 LeRoy Russ reports easier climbs in  
 lower section.  
 \*\*\*The October Mugelnoos Meeting will be  
 held in the DWP cafeteria Stage-End,  
 instead of the auditorium. Same for  
 Nov. Mtg. December we return to the  
 auditorium.

NEW PHONE

RUTH AND JOHN MENDENHALL  
 (206) 784-6642

NEW ADDRESS

DAVE PERKINS  
 20006 Superior  
 Chatsworth, CA. 91311

ANNUAL RCS PICNIC

The annual RCS picnic will again be  
 held in the Big Rock area of the Lake  
 Perris State Park at 10 a.m., Oct. 15.  
 All RCS members, guests and students  
 are invited. Bring a pot luck to feed  
 four. If your last name begins with  
 A through L bring main dish, M through  
 Z bring dessert. The section will sup-  
 ply refreshment. This is an occasion  
 to tell stories, climb and eat. Plus  
 it counts as a climb. Bring family &  
 friends. For more info. contact Al  
 Carlson (714) 521-7952. See attached  
 for directions. (AC)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Annual Business Meeting has been  
 scheduled for Tues. 7:30 p.m., Oct. 24,  
 Room 871, Dept. Water & Power, 111 N.  
 Hope St., L.A. Please come, we will  
 vote on retaining members who are  
 lacking the required 4 climbs, elect  
 new officers, and discuss other matters  
 that affect the club. We need at least  
 25 members to conduct business.

RCS NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A nominating committee consisting of  
 Fred Wing and Dick Mundwiler has been  
 appointed. If you have suggestions or  
 are willing to be an officer these are  
 the people to contact.

TRAINING MANUAL

Any suggestions for revising or  
 changing the training manual should be  
 sent to Ron Master, for consideration  
 before the next printing.

SAFETY TEST

The safety test went off as scheduled  
 on Sept. 10. Eight students showed up  
 for the test at Pacifico. The Bucket  
 Drop was not provided but will be set  
 up at Stony Point in the next few weeks.  
 Contact Dick DeRusha for further info.  
 661-9924. (FC)

Ski Mountaineer Sam Roberts is a  
 new member of the American Alpine Club.  
 He, along with SMS'ers Mary Omberg  
 and Mark Goebel, reached the summit of  
 Noshaq, Afganistan, this past summer. (BL)

CONSERVATIONIST HARRY JAMES DIES

Mugelnoos has learned belatedly of  
 death on May 28, 1978 of Harry C. James,  
 82. Over sixty years ago he organized  
 the Western Rangers, later known as the  
 Trailfinders, and during ensuing years  
 he and his wife, Grace taught hundreds  
 of boys about forest lore and conser-  
 vation. Some Trailfinders went on to  
 become Ski Mountaineers, such as: Bob  
 Brinton, Glen and Muir Dawson, Bud  
 Halley, Dick Jones and Nelson Nies.  
 Mr. James founded the Desert Pro-  
 tective Council and was a co-founder  
 of the Defenders of the San Gorgonio  
 Wilderness. (JC)

ATTENTION ALL MUGELNOOS  
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Mendel Couloir

found the climbers in the right fork of the Couloir, which was now covered with a flowing mass of hail and water which dampened mittens and boots. Occasionally, a rock would whizz by, sometimes deflected by a helmet. With the peak obscured by clouds it was decided to forego the last two or three pitches and return to camp while the weather was still "good". Sunday night brought more wind, Monday morning's hail changed to snow. It was decided to forego a hot breakfast in favor of a departure to Lamark Col. After crossing the Col and discovering that the weather was just as bad on the other side they continued toward North Lake with some haste. As the group dropped down, the snow turned to rain and all were wet on arrival at North Lake. The same luck that had blessed the party with the fine weather also carried over to the car.

When finally all vehicles were running, the group departed for Whiskey Creek where it was felt that Irish coffee might be a fitting end to an uneventful trip. (AF)

THEY MET THE PILOT FACE TO FACE

At about 4 p.m. on July 31, a small plane slammed into the north side of Dollar Lake Saddle. Six Sierra Club hikers happened to be nearby. Lloyd Davis and Howard Howell were on the ridge west of the saddle and saw the crash. Coming up the trail were Nate Clark, Jim Carriel, Ed Stella, and John Land. By the time these four reached the scene, Davis and Howell had released two unconscious passengers hanging upside-down from their seat belts in the wreckage. One man had been hurled from the plane and lay near it. The pilot had tumbled fifty feet down the slope.

Three young men camping on the ridge (their names were not learned) didn't see the crash, but responded to a call from Davis and Howell and helped with the victims. An airplane seat was made into an improvised bed. Hikers' extra clothing kept the lightly clad injured people warm. Nate Clark sat for several hours by the pilot, who had severe head injuries and was unconscious and prevented him from pitching farther down the slope.

Meanwhile, Land and Davis hurried down the trail to Dollar Lake, where they found a ranger with a walkie-talkie. He contacted the San Bernardino County Sheriff, who immediately instigated rescue procedures. A couple of 2-man helicopters, the first of which arrived at 6:45, took turns landing on a slightly rounded snow bank flanked by large trees, and gradually brought members of the volunteer rescue squad, several paramedics, and medical supplies and blankets. Many of the landings were after dark, with only red flares to direct the pilots, who kept returning to the ridge until after ten o'clock.

The victims, lashed into wire "baskets", had to be hauled about 600 feet up a 25 degree slope through brush and over rocks to the ridge, then carried a quarter of a mile to a helicopter. They were flown one at a time to Loma Linda Hospital. One man, on vacation from Hamburg, Germany, died on the ridge. His wife, who subsequently was hospitalized for a month with fractures and internal injuries, on Aug. 30 was flown home as a stretcher passenger. The Cessna's pilot, George Schick of Torrance, and his father, are recuperating at home. All four probably would have died from injuries and exposure if the hikers had not been right there.

After one rather sleepless night, the Sierra Club men resumed their trip and during the next two days climbed nine peaks including Mt. San Gorgonio. (JC)

LETTER FROM FORMER RCS STUDENT DONNA MROCZKOWSKI

August 21, 1978

Dear Andy, Leroy, Fred, et al, Koroba-Papua, New Guinea

We spent today at the air strip waiting for the weather to clear to get a plane back to "civilization"-no luck - perhaps tomorrow. After an intensive 3 days of walking to get here, it is kind of a let-down to be stranded, particularly, with no hot shower or clean clothes! However, I've had a tremendous time these past few months on the expedition.

Instead of coming up with the deepest cave in the world, we ended up with the longest cave in the Southern Hemisphere and Southeast Asia. The Atea(?) Kananda is a bit over 30 kms. long with impressive passages extending in almost every

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Letter - Donna Mroczkowski

direction. We had a total of about 50 people involved at various stages. Most of the cavers were from Australia. In addition, some came from Britain, New Zealand and 2 others from America. The expedition cost some \$80,000 (including air fares) with about \$30,000 worth of sponsorship. There were about 8 tons of food and equipment helicoptered or air dropped - quite big time, huh!

I was quite amazed at our base camp - pleasantly so. We had a large dining/scientific/radio building, a kitchen with 2 fires complete with homemade oven, 2 large bunk houses, an equipment/food/medical storehouse, an equipment drying room, a shower stall with two shower buckets, an outhouse, a large building for our 12 local men and most of these had covered walkways connecting them. I thought we'd really be roughing it. The food has been quite excellent, too, though we seemed to have had a surplus of saltines and oatmeal.

New Guinea is quite a beautiful place. I've really come to love the jungle and the people here. They are friendly and gentle. Their smiles are genuine and happy. The locals who helped us at camp were excellent bushmen. They could create fires in moments after our lot would be trying for hours - quite embarrassing!

I should have a good slide show for you when I return. (If all goes right according to Plan A, I should be there in May.) I'll send you copies of the news coverage our expedition received from the Sydney Morning Herald (which also sponsored us with \$5,000). A movie is also being made of the expedition which will hopefully be sold to Australian TV for prime time viewing. Both the film crew and the reporter were excellent additions to our camp and their presence added to the excitement of the expedition.

It is raining here in Koroba at the moment. I'm hoping for a clear morning tomorrow so we can fly to Mt. Hagen and the comfort of a friend's house who has a highly recommended shower. My poor body needs a few days away from the bush to recuperate.

That's it for now. Hope to hear from you while I'm back in Australia. Thank for being so good about keeping in touch - it's greatly appreciated!

(DM)

Donna Mroczkowski  
c/o King  
34/130 Burns Bay Road  
Lane Cove, NSW, 2066  
Australia

"ROCK!" or "ROPE!"?

Once I knew a climber who tried several times to drop a rope to rappel on. My partner and I were waiting at the bottom to climb the same pitch. A strong wind was blowing. Each time he threw the rope, the whole 165-foot coil would foul in mid-air and fly back against the rock.

Finally, he tied a monkey's fist on the end of the rope, putting a sizable stone in its clutch. I can only imagine the satisfaction he felt in this ingenious solution as he yelled, "Rope!" and threw it again. This time the rope did not foul--but neither did his hastily tied knot hold onto the big stone. "Rope!" was hardly an accurate warning for the missile that buzzed past us and shattered on the next ledge with a startling crack.

Here we climbers have something to learn from sailors--not, however, related to what kind of language to use in this situation. Sailors were in the business of heaving lines centuries before men took to the mountains. Aboard ships the monkey's fist is a permanent working knot tied to the end of a special heaving line that is bent to the eye of a hawser. It is a complicated knot and hence is rarely tied at the moment of use.

A seasoned sailor doesn't need a monkey's fist to heave a small 11-millimeter line. Instead, he anchors one end to a belay point and carefully coils the line in two halves. Then he holds the anchored half of the coils loosely in his left hand and heaves the other coiled half with his right. The coils in the open hand (left) pay out over the same arc as the heaved coils, and the line lies across the target without fouling. The only modification that I would suggest for a strong wind in the mountains is to heave forcefully overhand. (RD)