

NO. 557, May 15, 1979

A newsheet published by and for the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter. Send address changes to Phil Bruce, 8544 Eucalyptus, Downey, CA. 90243. Published monthly since 1938. This is a 4 page issue.

ALPINE SKI TOUR, SAN GORGONIO, APRIL 7-8, 1979

After skiing to Dry Lake from well below Poopout Hill, six skiers enjoyed the slopes above the lake before dinner; there was even one moonlight skier. There was no campfire (not allowed) so we gathered around a candle lantern in the moonlight. The next morning we ascended San Gorgonio by way of the crusty north face and were rewarded by a long run down to South Fork Meadows.

The plan was to ski in one of the draws rather than attempt the peak but the snow looked so inviting we decided to go for it. The hard crust and wind slab made for tough climbing and most carried their skis part way. Leaving Dry Lake at 9:00 AM, after a leisurely breakfast, all made the summit by 1:15 PM.

While nervously working his way up the steep crust, your reporter was startled to be passed by a solitary Nordic skier on touring skis without metal edges, gluing his skis to the slope with red klister. However, being no novice, he glissaded down using his ice ax!

On the summit, we photographed one 65-year-old member of our party holding up his Medicare card. You see, you downhillers, you too can ski San Gorgonio--all you need is to be old enough! (And you can qualify for complementary passes at Mammoth and June Mountain ski areas too--ed.)

On the way down two hotshots bombed the chute below the summit. The others found some better snow in the west gully nearest Big Draw, after clattering over the windslab below the summit ridge. The snow conditions varied rapidly with altitude--firm and crusty on top (not really icy), and a narrow band of breakable crust part way down, turning quickly to soft corn snow. We met at the bottom, picked up our packs, skied down to the Meadows, across to Poopout and all the way to the cars. We spent an hour digging one car out and took off. Well, mostly--the leader spent the night in Redlands because his car refused to go any further without a working alternator!

THE SHINING DREAM - PEAR LAKE HUT ALPINE SKI TOUR, April 28-29

A record for car pooling on SMS tours was set when all 9 participants (7 skiers and 2 snowshoers) crammed themselves and their equipment into R.J. Secor's large van for the drive to Sequoia Park. After a 9:00 AM start Sat., all reached the Hut by 1:30 PM, which for once they had to themselves. Altho the snow on the descent to Heather Lake was rotten, conditions improved considerably thereafter. It had snowed about 2" recently, and in the spring during the 2-3 days it takes for this new snow to melt into the base, it glistens in the sun and provides fast smooth skiing, at the same time keeping the base firm underneath. It was the good fortune of the skiers on this tour to encounter this best of all spring skiing conditions--the "shining snow," to make this the first really successful spring Pear Lake tour since 1974. And the weather was mostly clear and mild.

Sat. PM, altho fog spoiled one descent, several excellent ski runs were made on both north and west facing slopes above the Hut, as late as 5:00 PM, after which a pleasant evening with appropriate beverages was enjoyed in the Hut.

Sun. AM the two snowshoers headed off to bag two peaks, while the skiers completed the "classic" Pear Lake spring tour--carrying skis up the "winter summit", descending the south side on a ski run of over 2000' and enduring the long climb back up before skiing back to the Hut. Altho a cool wind did prevent proper thawout of the upper part of the south side, both there and on the north side descent the skiing was rated as very very good. But the real bonus was the most perfect spring snow found on the west slope just above the Hut--it was with great reluctance that they packed up for the return trip. Beyond Aster Lake the snow was heavy and wet but at least continuous to the parking lot and after a drive through orange-blossom perfumed air, they enjoyed the traditional fine Chinese dinner at Gang Sue's.

Incidentally, the Sequoia Ski Club no longer handles the supplying of the Pear Lake Hut. Now, fuel only (no food) is supplied by the "Sequoia Natural History Association" and an advance deposit of \$2 per night per person (up to 10) is required.

BL

Barbara Lilley

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NEXT ISSUE: June 19, 1979
 DEADLINE: June 15, 1979

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: Third Tuesdays of each month, 7:30 PM, Dept. of Water & Pwr. Bldg., 111 N. Hope St., downtown L.A. Free parking. Program, refreshments, announcements, conversation. Climbers, skiers, guests, all welcome

CALENDAR

RCS Scheduled Trips

May 26-28 - Domeland Rock Climb
 (SEE NOTE*) John Ripley (213)692-5050
 June 9-10 - Tahquitz Rock Climb
 John Moore (714) 541-8886
 June 16-17 - Dome Rock
 Leroy Russ (213) 295-9703

SMS Scheduled Trips

May 19-20 - Mt. Dana (or alt.) Alpine tour/
 Mammoth skiing. G. Shinno (213)664-1534
 May 26-28 - Ritter Range Alpine tour
 C. Cameron (213)688-3813 (days)
 June 2-3 - Rock Creek Alpine tour
 J. Wedberg (before 8PM) (213)472-6768
 June 9-10 - 1-day tours, Mammoth area, depends on interest/snow conditions. (Not in schedule). Barbara Lilley (213)886-4154
 NEXT MUGELNOOS MEETING - June 19, 1979

SMS DIRECTORY TO APPEAR

A Ski Mountaineers Membership List will be published with the June Mugelnoos. Anyone with a new phone number (since July 1978) or who has failed to notify the Mugelmailer of change of address or who's resubscribed to Mugelnoos and wishes to be reinstated as a member should notify Barbara Lilley, 8421 Lindley, Northridge, CA 91325 by June 11, 1979. Also, skiers who have qualified on tours and have met the other qualifications (Mugelnoos subscription & Sierra Club membership) are urged to send their application cards in by that date.

EDITOR URGES NEW MEETING PLACE FOUND!

Two of the last six Mugelnoos Meetings have been "bumped" from the DWP Auditorium --it is simply not fair to those who have prepared programs to have to present them under the adverse conditions of the cafeteria. If anyone knows of a reasonably centrally located and reliable place, such as Savings & Loan or Parks & Recreational facility, please contact John Ripley.

MEMORIUM

Helen Hennies, long time Ski Mountaineer, passed away on April 16 from cancer. She and her husband Walt, also SMS, have lived in Visalia for a number of years. JC

WANTED

Rappel ropes, back in the days when they were prevelant, used to wear out and be retired when the center section suffered attrition. George Harr is interested in acquiring half (120') or all of a 5/6" dia. retired rope. Contact @ 744 Obispo Ave. Long Beach 90804 or at (213)438-0153. GH

FOR SALE

Attn. BMTcers: One pair of unusued 10-pt. crampons (sans straps). Contact George Harr (see Wanted above). Price \$15.00.

*DOMELAND FOR MEMORIAL DAY

The Memorial Day Weekend RCS trip to Domeland in the Southern Sierra will start at a roadhead determined by last minute scouting of road and snow conditions. This new (for our Section) area promises to provide many years of exploration. Contact leader John Ripley during the week prior to the trip at (213)692-5050 (eves.) or 922-3978 (days.) JR

IRS ATTEMPTS TO ICE SKIERS' DEDUCTIONS

The National Ski Patrol is a charitable organization whose members can deduct expenses in connection with their volunteer work. The IRS challenged one Long Beach family's ski patrol deductions on the grounds that they enjoyed skiing and the camaraderie of patrol work, but the court said this was not grounds for denying them a deduction. However, they couldn't write off the cost of their motor home as lodging (though they could deduct motels when they stayed in them), nor could they write off their ski equipment, but could deduct the cost of repairs. (Search & Rescue Mag., Spring 74) JW

THE END IS IN SIGHT (Skiing, That Is)

Mammoth expects to operate thru the end of June; spring rates of \$8 per day now in effect. As of mid-May they reported 7 ft. of snow including 12" new. At present there is NO gas shortage, NO lines and few station closures north of the Kern County line. There are usually several stations open in Mojave at all times and in Bakersfield as well. No odd-even either. And best of all, the "standby gas rationing plan" has been defeated! (This must be disappointing to those anti-outing types who look upon gas rationing as a way to keep people out of the mountains.) ed. SO KEEP CLIMBING!

NEW ADDRESSES

Cliff & Betty Cameron
 2990 Topaz Ave.
 Simi Valley, CA 93063
 Gordon MacLeod 675-7311
 4727 W. 147th St., #138
 Lawndale, CA 90260

ALPINE SKI TOUR, SARDINE CANYON/ONION VALLEY, April 21-22, 1979

In this 107% normal snow year, the snow in Sardine Canyon had retreated to 7500', so the 4 participants walked up the old mining road to 8000', then continued on skis up canyon to the now apparently inactive mine at about 10,700' (as only too well remembered by the writer, the snow turns icy above this point). Below here, the snow, though quite skiable, was surprisingly heavy--apparently this canyon just does not get enough sunshine to consolidate well even this late in the year. One of the participants came along for a "checkout" tour--his skiing ability was such that it took about as long for him to come down as to go up! Experiences like this certainly make one appreciative of those unsung heroes who lead our introductory tours. (And in the future, those who basically refuse to attend any introductory tours because "it doesn't fit into their schedule" will not be permitted on overnight tours--it is simply not fair to either the leaders or the other participants. Exceptions will be only those who are brought as guests by a qualified leader who will take full responsibility to stay with them should they prove incompetent.)

Too much snow had already melted out of Little Onion Valley (a report on that area will have to wait until next year with an earlier scheduling date) so, after a pleasant camp at Symmes Creek Campground, they headed for Onion Valley on Sunday. After the usual rock slalom the end of the road was attained by car. Here the timing was perfect. The snow extended down to the parking lot even on the Kearsarge Pass trail and was well consolidated spring corn. Altho strong winds were blowing as a front passed to the north, the snow below 11,000' thawed out nicely. One skier had blisters but the other two made several runs on the slopes above Gilbert and Flower Lakes. Three Alpine ski tourers with backpacks and Ramer bindings were observed making beautiful S-turns as they skied from Kearsarge Pass down to the parking lot. A final climb and ski descent was made on the west facing slopes of Robinson Basin; due to the continuing winds, skiing was best in the trees. BJJ

TRUE GRIT

At a recent Mugelnoos meeting there was speculation about a climbing accident at a Basic Mountaineering Training Course session at Joshua Tree. The facts are as follows:

The climbers were instructors and well-known leaders taking time out from a navigation make-up session, not students. The person hurt was the belayer, not the climber. The belayer, Mary McMannes, is one of the most attractive members of the Sierra Peaks Section and an enthusiastic peak-bagger. She has passed the SPS Mountaineers List rock safety test and is a provisionally M-rated leader just completing her training. The climber, who was an assistant BMTC instructor, climbed to the side of the route (unseen by Mary), peeled off, and pendulumed across the face, pulling Mary violently out of her belay spot, which had no place for her to brace her feet. The anchor was bombproof and she was pulled only a short distance, but her leg whipped against the rock, breaking both bones below the knee. She says that her leg was immediately splinted by the BMTC instructors and SPS leaders present with such skill and assurance that she did not black out or go into shock. She will be in a cast for several months.

The climber was not even scratched, because Mary held the fall until the climber went off belay even though she knew her leg was broken. She attributes her instinctive holding of the belay to the excellence of the instruction she has received from the BMTC, LTC and SPS. OM

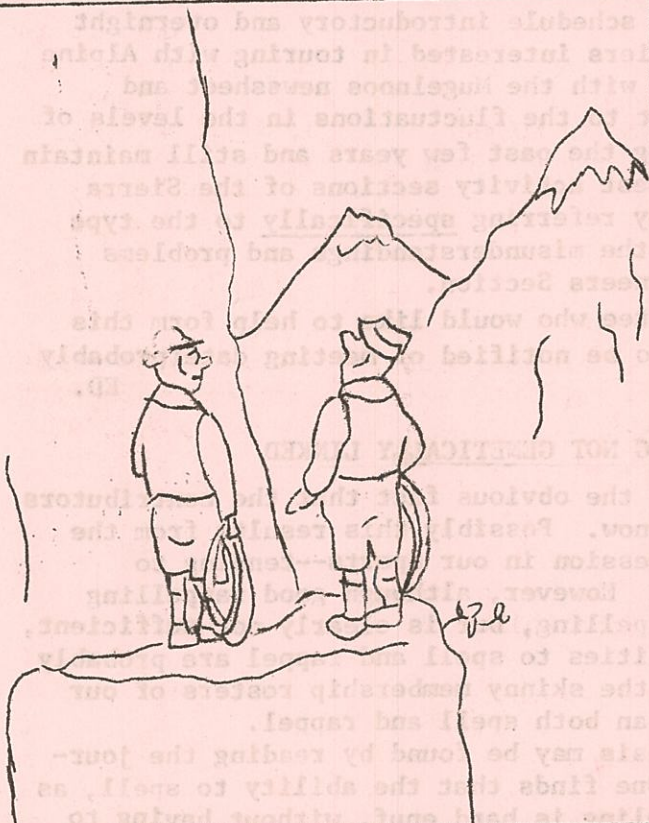
RCS ROSTER CORRECTIONS

Addresses: Hans Lees PH:(213)427-4167
822 E. 37th St.
Long Beach, CA 90807

Randy Sheaff
3922 Boltaire St.
San Diego, CA 92107

Dates: Gil Chon (3/78)
Jim Hoste(5/70-11/76)(1/79)
Stan Klein (3/78)
Emory Yount (11/69)
Glen Dawson(9/34-8/40)(1/41-11/46)
(Honorary 2/77)

Sorry about this--every climber takes a fall occasionally. Thanks to Phil Bruce and John Ripley for the belays. JS



"What a challenge it offers to man's ingenuity and ability to withstand hardship and danger. I'm going back!"

JOSHUA TREE ROCK CLIMB, April 7-8, 1979

On a weekend when the weather was almost perfect we had 19 members and guests on Saturday, and 12 who survived Saturday night signed in on Sunday. The weekend saw a mass attack on Headstone Rock with 6 going to the top on Sat. and 5 more on Sunday. Our younger stronger climbers McDonald, Paul, Wellon, did things like Right Ski Track(5.10A), Try Again(5.10C) and others in that category while the rest of us struggled up things like Overhang Bypass, Bat Crack, Black Title and the Swift.

Andy Fried brought an interesting guest, John O'Brian of Dallas, Texas. John was the founding chairman of the only RCS in Texas. He fit right in around our Saturday night campfire regaling us with Texas type climbing stories (no taller tales than our own). On Sunday he climbed Walk on the Wild Side (5.8) with us and found it interesting. RHM

RCS AT TAHQUITZ ROCK, April 14-15

This first RCS Tahquitz climb of the year offered warm sunny days; however, snow on the ground was extremely heavy requiring ice axes to get to the base of the rock, which was also snow covered on routes north of the Switchbacks so "winter rules" applied.

Student Field Day: On Sat. we had 18 RCS students plus 6 RCS members(or near-members) Climbing routes extended from the Fingertrip to Orange Peel. Last climb completed at 6:15 PM and 3 of us plowed down thru the snow to reach the road in full darkness. Mt. San Jacinto State Park. We had campground reservations here both Fri. & Sat. nights. At this time of year the Park is nearly empty and we had two spacious campsites. About 20 enjoyed a roaring campfire Sat. night with a nearly full moon. EEBs in the Snow: Sun. there were 16 students and 5 "members" enjoying climbing in brilliant sunshine. One intrepid group of 4--Shields, Bannister, Morrill & Sattler--climbed the White Maiden Direct, topping out at 7:15 PM (full dark). That route was still in winter mode and the climbers had some interesting comments about kicking steps in snow. Remember what its like getting off the rock in full darkness? Third class is a little harder and the going is slower especially with only 2 flashlights for 5 people. The moon looked nice on Marion Mtn. but was little help as we glissaded (or plowed thru hip deep snow near rocks and logs), thankful the snow wasn't frozen as we had no crampons! Cars reached at 11:00 PM where car poolers & asst. leaders Leroy Russ & Paul Harris were awaiting our safe return. To Hemet for dinner; ground fog to Riverside past tightly-closed gas pumps. Good trip: lets do it again! EY

SWAN SONG--BUT A NEW BEGINNING

The Ski Mountaineers Section will become inactive at the end of the current season. For a long time now the number of active members, both new and old, has really not been large enough to justify its continued existence as a Section, especially since its scheduled activities are so seasonal and weather-dependent.

However, since there is still a definite, continuing interest in Alpine ski touring(especially after such trips as the recent Pear Lake Hut tour), it is planned to form in its place, in time for the 1979-80 ski season (pending approval from the Ex-Com), an "Alpine Ski Touring Committee" which will continue most of the present activities of the SMS--provide information and schedule introductory and overnight Alpine ski tours for experienced "downhill" skiers interested in touring with Alpine equipment--and of course retain an affiliation with the Mugelnoos newsheet and meetings. A "Committee" can more easily adjust to the fluctuations in the levels of activity and interest that have occurred during the past few years and still maintain the continuity of membership of one of the oldest activity sections of the Sierra Club. It is hoped that the change in title, by referring specifically to the type of activity, will help avoid at least some of the misunderstandings and problems which have continually plagued the Ski Mountaineers Section.

Anyone not on the current SMS Central Committee who would like to help form this new Committee can send comments or a request to be notified of meeting date(probably in early June) to the present SMS Secretary. ED.

SPELLING & RAPPELLING NOT GENETICALLY LINKED

One of the joys of reading the Mugelnoos is the obvious fact that the contributors are as at home on top of, namely: rocks and snow. Possibly this results from the frequent need for sudden and graphic self-expression in our sports--tending to select people who can spell as well as rappel. However, although good rappelling may be necessary for continued good (or bad) spelling, but is clearly not sufficient, the theory of evolution tells us that the abilities to spell and rappel are probably not genetically linked. This may account for the skinny membership rosters of our two sections. There are not many people who can both spell and rappel.

Direct confirmation of this genetic hypothesis may be found by reading the journals of our sister Sections in the Chapter. One finds that the ability to spell, as well as rappel, are hardly linked traits. Spelling is hard enuf, without having to spell hard words like rapell. Thank goodness the rapeling is better than the spelling, or we'd have to get extra Club insurance even to get out of bed, let alone do Dangerous Things like go to the bathroom. JOM