

THE **BUCELENDOS**

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A newsheet published by and for the Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing Sections of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter since 1938. Send subscriptions & address changes to Dove Menkes, 2530 Coventry Circle, Fullerton 92633. \$7 per year due in October.

SMS 50th Anniversary Races

Meek, milk-mannered Kathy Johnson stepped behind a snow making machine, whipped into her Phoenix Torsion Comps, and emerged to smoke a crowd of 17 alpinists and telemarkers in the annual SMS races on Saturday, March 3. The races were held at the only place in town with snow, reliable Snow Summit. The affable staff of Snow Summit's Nordic Center, headed by Marty Murie, put together a race course fit to challenge the mettle of even the most hard core SMS skiers (viz "All I want to do is make it down the course once without falling down.") Marty and his staff provided official gate judges and timers and formed a cheering squad for the racers. Things went so quickly, we all got in four official runs and two additional runs.

Leading the ranks of the male telemarkers was Mark Goebel, also on Phoenix's, while Randy Danta and Erica Balsam (who cheated by wearing regular skiboots and bindings!) headed the men's and women's alpine divisions. Don Pies (whose racing style can be best characterized as all out physical assault on gates) brought along a video camera to record this historic event for posterity.

Following the races, a spaghetti dinner and potluck salad for hundreds was enjoyed by racers and nonracers alike. Then came the cutting of a 50th Birthday Cake with a remarkable ski scene on it, highlighted by the presence of both a telemarker and an alpinist! (We'd like to nominate that bakery for a diplomacy award!) The crowd then settled down for some serious video viewing - and hilarity was the definite order of the day. Gabrielle Kingsley assisted the crowd in identifying the skiers - for example we knew when her Dad was running the gates because "He skis all crooked-y." Bob Landry, however, earned the Franz Klammer award for best and most frequent recoveries (although there was some speculation that Bob is really the metallic man of Warren Miller's movies). George Grover's 4th place finish earned him the award for "Student of the Year", since he basically began telemarking at the SMS training camp in January. Paul Harris got the "stately pleasure" category sewed up for skiing in the most controlled and purposeful manner through every gate, except for when he paddled over the finish line. Best sport in the male division went hands down to Scott Bailey, who floundered through the gates each run and came up smiling. Next year he will make it through without falling - but if he doesn't, he has a flashlight as a prize to help him find his way through. Best sport in the female category was Elizabeth Grady, pressured into racing and surviving the course with style! Elizabeth even helped the group get in shape by leading SKIERCISE maneuvers back at Keller Hut. Mother of the year award went to Anna Lisa Kinsley, who gave daughter Gabby all the good gear (metal edged skis and good boots) for the race. Most enthusiastic participant was undoubtedly Randy Danta, who is reputed to be wearing the Al6 bomber hat he won to bed every night. Hardest luck tale came from John and Kurt Wedberg, who had to go home when John sprained his ankle.

Super racing was enjoyed by all participants, with the unanimous consensus that those who stayed away because of suspicion of poor snow conditions missed the event of the year. The fun of running the course four times was paralleled only by incredulity of watching ourselves (and others) on video four times - from the smooth and fast Kathy Johnson to the tight parallel turns of longtimer Lloyd Balsam. Many thanks must go to Don Pies for providing the camera the time spent filming -

(CONT. ON PG. 3)

MUGELNOOS STAFF

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NEXT ISSUE: May 15, 1984
DEADLINE: May 9, 1984 (Wednesday)

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: Third Tuesday of each
month, 7:30 pm, Dept. of Water and Power
Cafeteria (Orange Room), 11 N. Hope St.,
downtown LA. Parking free. Climbing/
skiing Program. All climbers and skiers
welcome.

C A L E N D A R

Ski Mountaineers

- Apr 21-22; Mineral King (Goebel, Crandall)
- Apr 27-29; Pear Lk Hut (Wilts, Secor, KC)
- May 12-13; Mammoth Crest & Morrison Cyn.
(Jenkins, Pies)
- May 19-20; Thomson Ridge (Haas, Malloy)
- May 26-28; Sawtooth Ridge Tour (Holleman,
Goebel)
- June 2-3; Mt Dana & Tioga Pass Area
(Jenkins, Goebel)

Rock Climbing Section

- Apr 21-22; J-Tree (Haupt, Koss)
- May 5-6; Suicide (Ryan, Fried) *NEW*
- May 12; Safety Test (Safety Comm.)
- May 19-20; Tahquitz (Ripley, Ryan) *NEW*
- May 26-28; Yose. Valley (Valkass, Korb-
Weberg)
- May 26-28; Granite Mtn, Ariz. (Vernon,
Fowler)
- June 2-3; Needles (Vernon, Perkins)

NEW RCS PROFICIENCY
RATEES

The RCS welcomes experienced climbers Lee
Hudspeth & Ken Flaherty, and all of this
year's graduating students, to the RCS.
We look forward to seeing you on trips
and climbing with you. MK

NEW ADDRESS

Andre Korb-Weberg's new address &
phone is:
15569 Crestview Lane
Granada Hills, CA 91344-3107
(818) 368-3779
His mailing address remains the same:
P.O. Box 958
Sun Valley, CA 91353-0958

MISC. RCS NOTES

J-Tree (Apr. 21-22); The RCS campsite for both
Friday & Saturday nights will be Group Site 10
at Indian Cove.

Safety Test (May 12); The Safety Test for RCS
membership (and by arrangement, for RCS pro-
ficiency rating) will be held at Mt Rubidoux.
RCS Safety Committee, members, and proficiency
rating holders, please come out and help.
Those wishing to take the Safety Test must
make reservations with the Safety Chair prior
to May 8. Call Margo (213) 227-4973.

Safety Committee Meeting; There will be a
brief Safety Committee meeting after the May
Mugelnoos meeting, to discuss items we did
not resolve last time, and consider a few
new items. Let the Safety Chair know if you
have anything you would like to put on the
agenda. We will discuss scheduling of a
joint Safety Comm.-Training Comm. meeting,
open to all RCSers as well, to discuss the
suggestion that a multi-pitch experience
requirement be added to the current course
sign-off requirements for students to get
RCS proficiency ratings. We also will discuss
whether the RCS proficiency rating certifies a
sufficiently high level of experience and
judgement to be an appropriate substitute for
upper level LTC checkoffs on rock. MK

ARMCHAIR ADVENTURES

Adventure 16, Inc., will present the following
free shows at their West LA and San Fernando
Valley stores:

"Yukon: Retracing the Gold Rush Trail of
1848, Seattle to Dawson by boat, foot, &
canoe", a slide presentation by Boojum
Institute.

- Apr 25 in S.F.V. (818) 345-4266
- Apr 26 in West LA (213) 473-4574

"Edible Plants in So. Calif."; slide show,
talk, & plant tasting by Suzanne Swedo &
Terry Lieberstein of W.I.C.O. walks.

Apr 30 in West LA, May 1 in S.F.V.

Adventure 16, Inc. is located at 11161 West
Pico Bl. in LA and at 5425 Reseda Bl. in
Tarzana (S.F.V.). All shows begin at 7:30 pm. KC

A "NORMAL" SNOWPACK
IN THE SIERRA FOR 1984?

As of March 1, snowpack conditions (as repor-
ted by the DWP) ranged from 130% of normal in
the Mammoth area to 90% of normal in the Whit-
ney area. For those interested in statistics,
1982-83 produced the greatest total snowfall
ever recorded at the Mammoth Mountain ski area
(567"); 1981-82 was second with 510". The
famous winter of '69 is now third (484") but
still remains "champion" of the deepest snow-
pack on the ground at any one time. Two Grey-
hound buses were buried in the parking lot
that year, as well as about 50 cars! BL

SMS TO ELECT NEW
84-85 CENTRAL COMMITTEE

All active (paid-up) SMS members will receive ballots with this issue to elect the next
Central Comm. to take office June 1, 1984. The candidates are: John Bloomfield, Kathy
Crandall, Tom Duryea, Mark Goebel, Paul Harris, Gerry Holleman, Tom Jenkins.
Ballots are to be returned to the Hodgeman, at 5005 New York Ave, La Crescenta, CA 91214
by May 7 (postmarked) in order to be counted. The election committee consists of:
John Hodgeman, Phyllis Hodgeman, and Andy Fried
Phyllis Hodgeman

WEDNESDAYS AT STONEY PT. (AND MT. RUBIDOUX?)

Last year's Wednesday afternoon and evening bouldering get-togethers at Stoney Pt. (followed by beer, margaritas, etc. at El Toro) were so successful that a number of people would like to continue the new tradition. As soon as Daylight Savings Time begins, come out to Stoney in the late afternoons; there will probably be other RCSers there.

There may be an Orange County-Riverside cadre of boulderers as well;--is there anyone interested in starting Wednesdays (or other days) at Rubidoux? If so, we'll look for it in the Mugelnoos.

Margo Koss

BIG ROCK, APRIL 7

The RCS swarmed all over Big Rock. About 40 climbs were undertaken by the 39 climbers who participated. Eschewing a Trough or African Flake daisy chain, both the old hands and this year's newly graduated students accepted the challenge of most of the harder climbs on the rock;--The Roof, Northwest Passage, Headwall, Hard Trough, Cheap Thrills, Let It Bleed, Edger Sanction, Mad Dogs, Boogaloo, Cratermaker (complete with a couple of spectacular leader falls, despite which the leader, with impressive determination, completed the lead successfully), and so on. At least two climbers did the first leads of their climbing careers;--Mae Stees and Jim Martellotti--with notable aplomb. With some advertising by the climb leader (the For Sale sign was hung where on her?!), a number of RCS t-shirts were sold.

Margo Koss

(SMS RACES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

and thanks as well to Pete Matulavich for covering the camera during Don's racing stints. Special thanks go to Paul Harris and Mark Goebel for their work in soliciting prizes.

Prize	Donator	Winner	Time	Racing Turn
Goretex Jacket	Holubar	Kathy Johnson	22.1 sec	Tele
Merrell XCZ Boots	Mountain 'n Air	Mark Goebel	22.8	Tele
\$50.00 Gift Cert.	Sport Chalet	Gabby Kinsley	24.1 sec	Para
Bomber Hat	A16	Randy Danta	22.2	Para
Large day pack	Sports Hut	Don Pies	24.8	Tele
Large Fanny pack	Dolt	Lloyd Balsam	24.0	Para
Large Fanny Pack	Evolution Alpine Equipment	Eliz Grady	39.2	Para
\$15.00 Gift Cert	Mountain Shop	John Blumthal	26.4	Tale
Pile Vest	REI	Norm Kinsley	24.7	Para
Flannel~Shirt	REI	George Grover	26.5	Tele
Fanny Pack	Dolt	Erica Balsam	23.5	Para
Fanny Pack with flashlight	Hostelhaus	Scott Bailey	41.6	Tele
Fanny Pack	Dolt	Bob Landry	Doorpirze	
Rental Cert.	Westridge	Charlie Gonzalez	Doorprize	

All these generous shops sell (and most rent) metal edged nordic skis and have complete back country ski shops.

Those who missed this installment of the SMS 50th Anniversary celebration should make a note that the RCS and SMS will hold a joint celebration of our 50th on November 10 & 11 at Harwood Lodge. The race videotape will be available for viewing at that time - along with many other classic movies you won't want to miss!

Kathy Crandall

ALPHABET SOUP

Once there were some aerospace types who were worried about outings safety. They decided that safety would be enhanced if all trips were classified into five (later six) categories, labelled with the acronyms C,O,M,E,T. Everybody knows that you can't get anywhere in the aerospace business until you have a cute acronym for your program, especially if it spells something, so they felt safer already. Now people wouldn't have to read the trip writeups, but just decipher the code. Now that seems easier, doesn't it?

Now of course it was necessary to set up a committee to decide what trips fell into what categories. This provided lots of employment for those who needed to feel useful.

Now that we have categorized trips, they reasoned, we must categorize leaders. It would be illogical, and therefore probably unsafe, to have only one grade of leader

(CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR)

(ALPHABET SOUP, CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE)

as those old-fashioned sections do. They learned in engineering school that everything has to be in one-to-one correspondence. Therefore, there must be a separate grade of leader for each grade of trip, and the training for each grade of leader must be different.

This really made a lot of work, and everybody joined in enthusiastically, helping work out the details of the imaginary system. There were all sorts of plans and requirements to write. Obviously this was far too complicated a system for lay people to get involved in; they would have to have a special committee with the authority to set the standards. The whole business was far too technical to be handled democratically. Newcomers would take up too much time with questions (like, why are we doing this?).

And whenever the trips were published, each writeup had to be screened, to make sure that the real trip was appropriately assigned to one of the imaginary categories, and that the leader was also appropriately categorized. This obviously critical safety function was assigned to the highest safety authorities, who had to rush through it, in view of the tight four-month schedule deadline. They were hurt when people complained about their mistakes in interpreting their own records, but they felt justified. Just because somebody is a world-class mountaineer, we hardly know that it would be safe for her to lead a day hike without the proper rating!

But as the years went by, cruel things began to happen. Nobody seemed interested in the vital technical distinctions between categories; they just wanted to climb mountains. More effort, and more long hours, went into clarifying the rules. And now that the leader training had been separated into categories, obviously the training instructors would have to be categorized too. Still more work.

Because they perceived (correctly) that the program was not respected, they decided to tighten up on instructor requirements so that none but the most technically qualified could instruct (that is, those who could explain the differences between the categories). That made everybody feel lots better. With so few instructors, it was easier to keep things neat and organized. Besides, the other leaders were off leading somewhere, and never came to meetings. Thus, just as in the aerospace business, the criterion for management responsibility became time spent in meetings, rather than getting the job done.

There was some progress, in that sometimes people could be heard on trips discussing whether the trip was rated correctly, rather than worrying about irrelevancies like finding the next handhold, opening the beer, or admiring the scenery.

But there were also logical problems. Sometimes a trip or an activity just wouldn't fit into any of the categories. It was decided that it would be safest to ignore those. They couldn't be called T, even though that was a catch-all. Because the categories were listed in order, T had to be higher than E, and it was hard to imagine anything that high. They listed some things T, but were always nervous about whether it was safe. How could they be sure that somebody who had spent 20 years paddling white water really knew anything about canoeing, for instance? If only she would take the elementary test!

Somehow or other, nobody seemed to appreciate all this effort at designing the perfect training system. Not many people came to be tested, and even the instructors often failed to show up. When asked to take the course, people would say they had other plans. When asked to help, people would say, help do what? They also kept asking, when are you going to produce some leaders? And, why aren't people signing up for your program?

The founders replied, we're in the aerospace business; we rarely produce anything. We just design it. Heavens, all our production contracts are cancelled. Production is not our problem, and the government just gives us new business when our marketing people ask for it. We don't worry about that. It is up to the customer to buy our product; we don't care if he likes it or not.

But at long last they admitted they needed help, so they offered to let the others handle the administration and testing, so long as they kept control over the definitions of the categories, because that was so technical and there was so much work involved. Thus they hoped to delegate responsibility but not authority, just as any bureaucrat would do if he were admitted to heaven by mistake.

But the others said, we'd be glad to help, but we're sure you won't mind if we do it our way, because we never did understand all that technical stuff.

Besides, the others asked, where did you ever get the idea that labelling trips has anything to do with safety, or that there is any need to label them at all? We never figured out what those letters were for anyway; we always just read the writeups. Isn't that what everybody does?

Owen Maloy

SKI MAMMOTH

Ten skiers turned out for the 1984 Ski Mountaineers Mammoth checkout tour. Sy Ossofsky could not come because of an injured wrist, and Tom Duryea served as assistant.

This adventure began on Friday night when the Sherwin Grade iced over after a minimal snowfall. Detecting a snow deposit in excess of one snowflake per square meter, the CHP declared that chains were required. The downhill crowd all stopped in the middle of the freeway to put on chains, blocking the road for hours.

If only more people knew about snow tires. Modern snow tires can be kept on all year; they make no noise, stick like glue, and wear forever. It really doesn't make sense to go through the chains hassle -- I haven't put on chains in five years.

To avoid the traffic jam we hung a left at the Lower Rock Creek turnoff and drove up the old Sherwin Grade in 3-4 inches of new snow. But we stayed up till 3 waiting for others (enjoying Charlie Gonzalez's excellent brandy and conversation), and gave up after we figured out that as sensible and well-equipped Sierra Club types the missing people had crashed in a campground somewhere. As indeed they had.

We got up an hour late (leader's dispensation), the missing showed up ready to go, and we skied up to the Lake Mary area to pick up Mike Layland and Emmett Rixford at the Johnson-Layland cabin. The trail fee was discounted from \$4.00 to \$2.50 for us as Sierra Club types, no doubt as a result of the entrepreneurial efforts of Norm Kingsley, who was there leading a busful of Nordic Ski Touring Section beginners.

The new snow that closed the grade deposited a few inches of nice powder over a month of ice. We skied to Sky Meadow, where it was windblown and icy; but there was a bowl full of powder, where we had a brief practice in linking telemark turns. Telemarks worked better than parallel turns in this snow; I tried both. Then, we skied over a bowl or two and skied down with many nice turns in the powder, and some rather embarrassing turns where there was no powder. Seven people qualified for SMS membership on this tour.

We made the mistake of trying to find a restaurant in Mammoth, and finally got something to eat near 10 P.M. This formerly slow weekend is now a national holiday.

The next day we split up into two groups. One group toured to the Red Cones with Tom Duryea; four others skied down to Red's Meadows to soak in the hot spring (a new Sierra Club emblem and list game; when you finish the hot springs list you are at least clean). The Red's Meadows tour is fairly long; maybe 12 miles, 2500 vertical feet. Because of the length and because the snow tends to be crusty and icy, this trip is for experienced skiers with metal-edged skis. Skins or good technique on wax or waxless skis are needed to get out before dark. The main problem is the terrain on the west side of Mammoth Pass; there are a lot of gullies. The best bet seems to be to ski partway to the Red Cones and then cut northwest; this route misses the worst of the gullies.

In case somebody does get stuck at Red's Meadows, it is worth noting that the phone at the ranger station works. An emergency call will bring the Mammoth Mountain Ski Patrol on snowmobiles. They get lots of practice; nearly every day some downhiller skis off the back of Mammoth Mountain by mistake and winds up at Red's Meadows. Those who don't find the telephone sometimes wind up as coyote food.

Owen Malloy

HARD MAN COMICS

BASE



BY GERRY LANTS

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5/6

"...ONCE UPON A STRAWBERRY"

Unknown to most Southern California climbers are the many climbing haunts of the past which exist within the expanse of the San Gabriel mountains. Of these, a particularly beautiful one is the North Face of Strawberry Peak. Situated in the midst of the San Gabriel mountains above the Upper Big Tujunga Canyon the lofty 450 foot cliff provides the setting for unexpected adventure.

As described by John Mendenhall in a 1940 Sierra Club Bulletin, a number of routes are established on the North Face. Among these the longest and most obvious is John's Tiptoe Traverse route which ascends the prominent cleft in the middle of the face.

In mid 1982, R. J. Secor provided me with a reprint of John Mendenhall's article along with a 1943 climber's guide. The "guide" carefully delineates between difficulties by describing the various pitches as either class 5 or class 6. The article instilled instant desire which climaxed several weeks later as Robert Somoano and I approached the North Face from Colby Methodist Camp, north of the peak.

One of your worst experiences can be had by approaching Strawberry Peak from the north. Although the distance is perceived to be much shorter than it is by trail from the Angeles Crest Hwy to the south, or by firebreak from the Angeles Forest Hwy to the west, the lack of a continuous ridge or firebreak (from the road it appears you can reach the face via a ridge) deposits you amidst the abundant undergrowth. Can you imagine what half inch thorns can do to your body. Having survived this made our boulder hopping amidst the lush and plentiful poison oak below the base of the North Face quite tame.

Our choice for a route was the obvious aforementioned cleft in the middle of the face. It was determined by the end of the second pitch that this was Mendenhall's Tiptoe Traverse route. We carried primarily nuts although a handful of pins were held in reserve. We also wore helmets. The rock on the initial two pitches varied from poor to good. Although we were careful climbers who seldom dislodged more than a pebble on a climb, an estimated 50 pounds of rock had been added to the talus at the base of the face by the end of the second pitch. I led the second pitch, using the first pins of the climb when it seemed that the blocks I was liebacking would detach themselves. A lieback traverse (the first tiptoe) out of the cleft to the left (on good rock) occurred when the crack transformed itself into a vertical dirt filled and vegetated chimney near the end of the 2nd pitch (165' ropes used). Robert set up a third belay about 50' up at the base of a steep crackless slot. Not willing to risk pulling up on a hand jam in the crud in the slot, I bashed in a rurl in a seam and used the sling for a handhold (also I didn't want to test the resiliency of my helmet by dislodging the debris). Thus began the first (and hopefully last) imaginary lead of my climbing career. Ten feet above the first rurl I managed to bash in a second rurl, followed 20 feet later by a tied off shallow angle. From there the traverse went to the left on friction (the 2nd tiptoe). After 10 feet I found a seam in which to marginally place a tied off knife blade. This was decidedly the crux of the climb. Traversing several more feet produced a marginal stance and a rotten crack. A desperate 30 minutes followed as I managed to insert two small wires in opposition. Shortly thereafter I reached a good crack and continued up across "ball-bearing" scree on top of a slab to a "secure" belay on a 15x5 foot block wedged behind a tree.

At one point while seconding the lead, Robert requested tension so he could remove a pin. As he leaned out on the rope, the block upon which I set dropped a foot. The shock didn't last long as I realized that I was still here. The resultant cascade probably added an additional 100+ lbs to the base of the face.

Robert led the last pitch off to the left of our marginal belay stance. Not long after he was out of sight I was startled by the deafening sound of rock tumbling down the face. Moments later I was relieved as the rope slowly started to move. Shortly thereafter I arrived on top. Robert explained how he had accidentally upset a huge block which was precariously balanced in the chimney he was ascending. He ducked just in time as the block glanced off his daypack, contributing to an additional half a ton of rock at the base of the face. The climb was behind us, though, as we coiled our ropes and descended the ridge (including two rappels) in the lengthening shadows. From here the climb would have ended uneventfully if we had just figured out how to avoid those half inch thorns!

Virgil Shields

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!

Mugelnoos editor is needed for October; volunteers please contact John Ripley (818)791-4924.
John Ripley

