

THE MOUNTAIN DOGS

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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.

ROUGH HOUSING IN ROCKHOUSE

One of the pleasures of living in Southern California has always been to be able to venture into the Sierra in October and find perfect cool, crisp autumn weather. This, combined with a relatively virgin climbing area, provides the ideal setting for the adventurer looking for new things to do.

This trip had as its initial objective a sojourn into the northern domes of Domelands Wilderness, a plan which changed as a result of needless mischief by the Forest Service.

The trip began as a slide show and party in Ridgecrest Friday evening and continued on Saturday with a rescue of a couple fishermen who had gotten themselves into a bit of difficulty. The Forest Service's bulldozing of the road on the east side of the South Fork of the Kern River prevented us from going to the north domes, so we looked for new climbs on some east facing rock just across the Kern River.

Four of the group of eight decided to trek over to White Dome while the rest of us went up to a formation which got dubbed "Flake Dome" which gives a fairly good description of the quality of the rock. We found the only good route on the formation and named it "Cling Like a Disease" (2 pitches 5.8) as it featured a rather committing undercling with a 30' runoff.

Camp was made at a sandy spot near the river. During the evening's discussion around the campfire, a loud splash was heard. It's ... It's the creature! Silence another splash. Lights scan the surface of the river. Nothing is seen. Who knows what lurks in the depths of the Kern River? Pleasant dreams!

Sunday started in a dense fog which soon lifted in a majestic fashion as patches of fog which shrouded the rock formations evaporated into the warming air. On the east side of the river is a formation called the "Dihedral Wall" which has excellent cracks, corners, and roofs. Routes from 2-5 pitches are possible. Three of us decided to do a route which was first climbed two years ago. It ascends a corner on the north side of the main butress and has several roof problems. The name "Spread Eagle" was given to it because of the wild stemming done on the climb and the eagle's nest near the second belay ledge. The route is 3 pitches in length, probably 5.9 in difficulty, and would have lines waiting to do it if it were in a more accessible area. A 5 star classic!

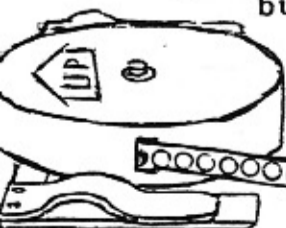
We all finished our routes, looked longingly at White Dome, the next climbing frontier in Domelands, cursed the Forest Service once more, and drove away - until next March or April anyway. --Greg Vernon

KITCHEN SINK MOUNTAINEERING'S LATEST OFFERING:

Do your leads run out of the pro you need before you run out of rope? Try the PRO-TRIEVER® from Kitchen Sink Mountaineering. Clip the end of the steel tape to your belay anchor, it pays out as you climb. Clip chocks to tape perforations as you place them. When you need your pro back, have the belayer detach tape end, then press release button. A powerful spring retrieves your pro for reuse.

Spring steel belt clip is chrome plated.

NOTE: Make sure all attached pro comes out with upward pull. Helmet, face guard and body padding may be desired when gear returns to your belt.



--Mike Jelf

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\$7 per year --- make checks to Mugelnoos

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NEXT ISSUE: February 19, 1985
DEADLINE: Tuesday, February 12

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: Third Tues. of each month, 7:30 p.m., Dept of Water and Power Cafeteria (Orange Rm), 111 N. Hope, downtown IA. Parking free. Program, conversation--climbers, skiers, guests welcome.

C A L E N D A R

Ski Mountaineers Section

- Jan 19 - Local intro.tour: Jenkins and Holleman.
- Jan 25-27 - Ski Mtneers Training Camp: Crandall/Goebel/K. Johnson.
- Feb 3 - Local intro.tour: Harris/Mantle
- Feb 9 - Baldy Hut tour: Secor/Holleman
- Feb 9-10 - San Jacinto: Jenkins/Fried
- Feb 9-10 - Pear Lake Hut: Goebel/Pies
- Feb 16-18 - Beck Seminar: Crandall/Goebel
- Feb 16-18 - Pear Lake Hut: Duryea/Gygax
- Feb 19 - Mugelnoos Meeting: hosts, SMS

Rock Climbing Section

- Jan 20 - Eaton Can.: Training Committee
- Jan 27 - Big Rock: Korbut-Weberg/Burdett
- Feb 3 - Mt Rubidoux: Training Committee
- Feb 9-10 - Joshua Tree: Valkass/Koss
- Feb 17 - Mt Rubidoux: Training Committee
- Feb 19 - Mugelnoos Meeting: hosts, SMS

MUGELNOOS MARCHES ON

This issue marks the 46th anniversary of the founding of the Mugelnoos. Glen Dawson edited and published Issue No. 1 in 1938. The strange name comes from the German colloquial "mugel," meaning a small hill or bump in the snow (hence the modern skiers' "mogel") plus "news" with a German accent--allegedly a takeoff on the diction of old time SM chair George Bauwens. The Mugelnoos became the official RCS newsletter in March 1938.

The name should be pronounced with a "moo" as in cow: MOO-gul-news. Ed.

REMINDER BILLING ON THE WAY

Post cards are going out this month to remind delinquent subscribers to pay up. Bob Caswell's computer has now become smart enough to hound all you deadbeats. Actually, this should help you avoid missing any issues.

HONORARY MEMBERS: Your subscriptions are free--but if you send money, we'll gladly take it. DM

NEW MEMBERS

The RCS welcomes the following new members: Al Franz, Jane Clark, Jim Martellotti, Bill Percival, Michael Feldman, Tom Wirt, Dale Hanes

F O R S A L E

Edelrid 150' 8.5 mm ropes--two. For double rope system, haul line, or drag rope for rappel. Excellent mtneering rope. \$55 ea or \$105 for both.
Titons - large sizes (11-17). \$3.50-\$4, but I must buy over \$100 worth to get this price. Send note if interested.
Harness - REI large size. \$10.
Above items: Greg Vernon, 2006 Mitscher, Ridgecrest 93555, 619-446-5724.

DESERT BOULDERING & PICNIC

On Feb. 23 & 24, Greg Vernon and Cuno Ranschau will be hosting a private high desert bouldering and picnic weekend. There are many great boulder problems and good climbing near Ridgecrest, and instruction in free climbing techniques will be available. This trip is open to anyone. For information, call or write Greg Vernon (address/phone above in ads). RS

RCSers WIN AWARDS!

Don Pies and Virgil Shields have been selected to receive Angeles Chapter 1984 Outings Service Awards for their support of the Rock Climbing Section. The awards will be presented at the Annual Banquet on March 9, 1985 at the Luminarias Restaurant, located at the intersection of the San Bernardino (I-10) and Long Bch (CA-7) freeways. Tickets are \$15 and include dinner, tax, tip, and parking.

Surely many members and friends will want to be present at this festive and auspicious occasion. Individual tables of ten may be reserved for the banquet. The RCS will consider reserving such tables. Those interested please contact Robert Somoano as soon as possible. Additional info. will appear in the January Southern Sierran.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DON & VIRGIL! RS

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The information from the ARI catalogue which appeared in the Dec. Mug. was quite interesting but also questionable. If it had been written by an objective source, then it would have contained valuable information, but on the contrary, it was published by Ramer to sell Ramer equipment.

One knowledgeable skier (grad. student studying snow physics at UC) reports that he attended a recent conference in Colo relating to snow physics where Ramer spoke. He later questioned Ramer at length. He now believes the 3 catagories of Nordic skiing equipment are not nearly as well defined as stated in the catalogue. Another pro crosscountry skier claims some of the weight listings are not only incorrect, but misleading.

We should all be concerned about the accuracy and source of any ski and climbing equipment statistics.

Ellen Wilts

SOVIET MOUNTAINS: the Caucasus, the highest range in Europe, is open to climbers thru the Mtneering Camps run by the USSR. US rep is Mtn Travel, 415-527-8100.

THE SIERRA CLUB SKI TESTS

By Owen Maloy

The old Sierra Club ski tests, given for many years by the SMS, have a new lease on life. Old-timers may be interested in what is happening now, and new members may be interested in the history of the tests.

Back in 1932, the Sierra Club established a Winter Sports Committee to promote backcountry skiing. Much interest was generated by articles on skiing in the 1931-32 Sierra Club Bulletin. These articles were illustrated by magnificent ski pictures taken by Ansel Adams, showing people jumping cornices and cranking telemarks in places like Tuolumne Meadows. Sierra Club skiers skied the John Muir Trail in the 1920's.

The Club decided to adopt some specific tests for skiing ability, namely the First-, Second- and Third-Class Tests of the British Ski Association. A first-class skier was an international racer, while a third-class skier was still a very good skier. A Fourth-Class Test for beginners was devised by Dr. Walter Mosauer, one of the founders of the SMS. According to Joel Hildebrand, writing in the Bulletin in 1935, the purpose of this test was to give the new skier confidence that he or she could complete a tour "without having to be carried home". Essentially the same tests were used by the California Ski Association and the National Ski Patrol.

The low-level Fourth-Class Test covers such basic skills as kick-turning, herringboning, and snowplowing; the Second-Class Test requires the ability to make smoothly-linked turns on 30-degree slopes at high speeds, and jump turns "preferably in breakable crust".

When the SMS was founded outside the Sierra Club in 1934, third-class skiing ability was required for membership, because the Ski Mountaineers was to be a club for better skiers only. This position was soon compromised by such factors as the need for cheap labor to build ski huts, not to mention the tendency to select friends of the opposite sex for qualities other than skiing ability. In February of 1939, the section voted to establish a new grade of associate membership for fourth-class skiers. The requirements for regular membership (now called "Big Badge") were raised to include the first-aid and rescue, avalanche safety, and snow-camping requirements of the new Sierra Club Ski Mountaineering Test, announced in the Bulletin in late 1937 as a qualification for future leaders. Only Big Badge members could be leaders at that time. This rule was dropped in 1956.

The tests were administered by Sierra Club judges, appointed in Southern California by the SMS. Judges gave tests at places like the Keller Ski Hut and Clair Tappaan Lodge, and sent the results to San Francisco. Attractive badges were (and still are) available for those who passed the tests. But the system slowly fell apart as downhill skiing became commercialized, professional instruction became available, and the Sierra Club grew too large to administer the system. The Winter Sports Committee was disbanded around 1970. The tests no longer had an official home, although still part of the SMS membership requirements.

In 1980, the SMS Central Committee reviewed the test requirements, soliciting the comments of qualified outsiders, including those with experience in backcountry skiing on Nordic skis. We knew from decades of SMS experience that the tests worked; the only question was whether they needed improvement or clarification. It was agreed that the tests were still not only relevant but actually very good, except for charming but archaic terminology. In particular, nobody felt that the tests were too stringent for people on Nordic skis. Off-track cross-country skiing in the California mountains is not the same as Nordic track skiing, which is a different sport using different equipment.

Slightly modified versions of the tests were put in the 1980 SMS safety policy (we now call a christie a turn, and telemark turns may be substituted for stem or parallel turns -- attempting a skidded stem turn on stiff, double-cambered Nordic skis often leads to Unsatisfactory Results). The names of the tests were also changed, because people had trouble understanding what the numbered classes meant. Many people thought the Fourth-Class Test was the most difficult and were afraid to try out for the SMS. The Fourth-Class, Third-Class, and Second-Class Tests are now called the Qualifying, Advanced, and Expert Tests respectively.

As in 1939, leaders must be qualified at the Big Badge level. First-aid cards and navigation ability are required (Angeles Chapter I-rating); avalanche knowledge is obtained by attending an approved seminar. Nowadays, most SMS

SKI TESTS (Continued from Page Three)

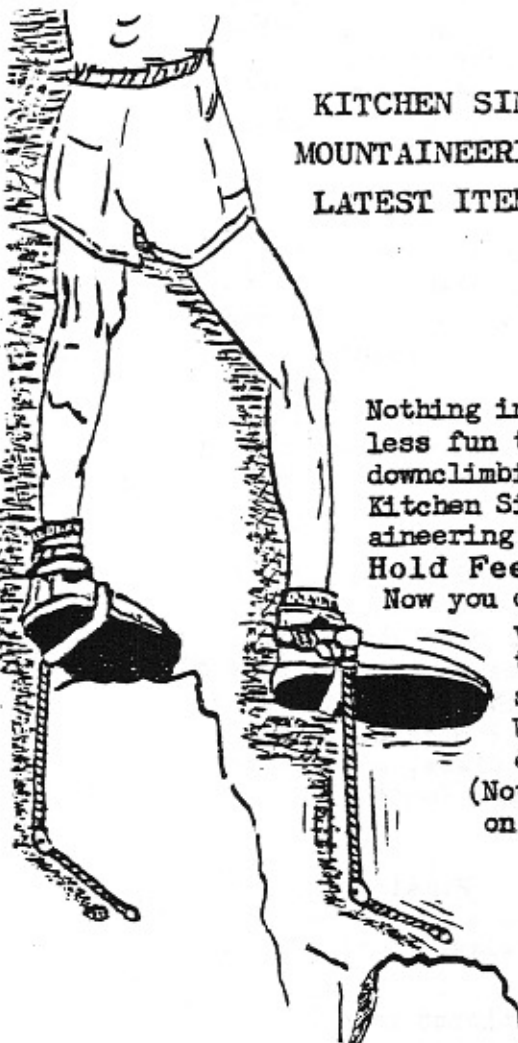
members have extensive snow-camping experience. There are quite a few members qualified for the Big Badge, but the Central Committee has been reluctant to emphasize a system which divides the membership, so that no new Big Badge members have been created in recent years.

The present method of judging and testing is less formal. Any leader qualified at a given level may act as a judge for that level, and the tests are passed by demonstrating the required skills on tour (the actual practice for many years). But even without a formal judging and examination system, the Sierra Club ski tests provide valuable standards by which people can judge their own ability, by which leaders can screen people for trips, and by which the SMS Safety Committee can determine if someone is qualified to be a leader.

This system is now being used by other sections. Seven sections in the Angeles Chapter now lead cross-country ski trips. Orange County Sierra Singles, for example, has an extensive cross-country ski program involving about 1000 skier-days per year. At first most of this skiing was easy track skiing, but in California some of the tracks are steep, and people are getting more ambitious and get in over their heads. The leaders complained that the category of "intermediate" skier was meaningless, and of no use in deciding who was qualified. That problem has been corrected by defining an intermediate skier as a fourth-class skier, and by encouraging people to practice using the test as a guide.

Several OCSS leaders ski at the third-class level, have satisfied the requirements of the Ski-Mountaineering Test, and lead snow-camping trips. We don't see many of these folks skiing the face of San Geronio the way the Ski Mountaineers do, but the more specific standards have certainly helped correct the dangerous idea that "if you can walk, you can ski". Previous safety training emphasized such marginally-useful skills as elaborate avalanche precautions and the building of igloos; now, the tests emphasize skiing ability as the cornerstone of safety. There is not much point in teaching avalanche safety to people who can't ski a slope steep enough to slide, especially if one mistakenly gives the impression that such training makes risking avalanche exposure any safer. As noted by Bob Brinton in the SMS minutes in 1938, "the best way to get out of one seems to be to wait till the spring thaw".

At the instigation of SMS members, the revised ski tests were adopted as Sierra Club advisory policy by the Sierra Club Mountaineering Committee in November 1983. The tests have an official home once again.



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JOSHUA TREE THANKSGIVING 1984

COLD COLD COLD and a little rain

Many came but few stayed.

On Sat. 21 signed in but only 14 signed out to climb and on Sun. 7 signed in and 6 signed out to climb.

Sat. afternoon some of our most fearless hardmen (past chairman/sec. treasurer included) elected to face the hazereds of a Yucca Valley movie house rather than the COLD HIND on the rock.

Sat. night LeRoy and Margo placed a 20+ pound cooked stuffed TURKEY on the table and others produced a variety of goodies for a real Thanksgiving Feast.

Good friends and good food made it a memorable evening.

RM

THE BULLDOZING OF ROCKHOUSE BASIN - A REFLECTION

by Greg Vernon

The recent bulldozing of Rockhouse Basin by the Forest Service has dramatically illustrated a trend which has been developing over the past several years: Wilderness management has for the most part involved thinking of new and ingenious ways of discouraging people (or preventing them) from entering wilderness areas and enjoying public lands.

The stratagems employed have included bulldozing roads, erecting new gates, moving trailheads a couple miles further down the road, permit fees, unrealistic daily quotas, erroneous weather reports, and outright closing areas off.

To counteract this, wilderness users have (1) Ignored the new rules so that they could be tracked down like fugitives. (2) Applied for a permit at several trailheads for the same weekend thus reserving slots he has no intention of filling. (3) Have several people in the group apply for a permit for the same trailhead (thus a group of 5 could conceivably reserve 25 spaces for a single day for just themselves) (4) Stay home - which is presumably what the rangers would like you to do anyway.

This is wilderness management? What's worse, at least in the Southern Sierra, the Sierra Club is taking the blame for much of it. Why? Because the Club is no longer perceived as a conservation organization but as a group of preservationists whose agenda is to close public lands to any use (not to mention their dabbling into defense policy, energy development, and population control).

I think that wilderness managers could do a lot better than what they have done in order to both maintain wilderness values and accomodate wilderness users, who, afterall, theyare supposed to be serving. I also believe that those of us who use public lands should be a bit more parochial in our attitude toward wilderness as land given up for complete preservation, just as land given up to the shovel and the saw, is not ours to use again.

And Northern Domelands, a unique and beautiful new climbing area, can only remain in our minds for what it could have been, for it has been taken from us by the bulldozer.

GUIDE TO GUIDES

The "West Coast Rock Climbs" volume of John Harlin's "Climbers Guide to North America" has been released by CHOCKSTONE PRESS, 526 Franklin Street, Denver, Colorado 80218 (\$20.50 postpaid). The book is well done and has good photography. Chockstone is the same outfit that publishes the Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows topo guides and will soon release the new Tahquitz and Joshua Tree volumes by Randy Vogel. They have some other very good climbing literature and are very prompt in mailing your order. Their publications list is well worth obtaining.

The new Red Rocks guide published by the American Alpine Club is also a well done piece of literature. It has the shortcoming that it neglects to mention the fine hiking and backpacking opportunities in the southern Spring Mountain range and also misses a few technical routes in the Charleston/Mummy area which could well have been included. Red Rock National Recreation Area is 17 miles west of Las Vegas on West Charleston Blvd. and is a must for any climber or desert rat. The guide book is available at the Mountain Shop in Northridge (where Kelty used to be down Nordhoff and Tampa). A list of hikes is obtained at the Visitor's Center.

GV

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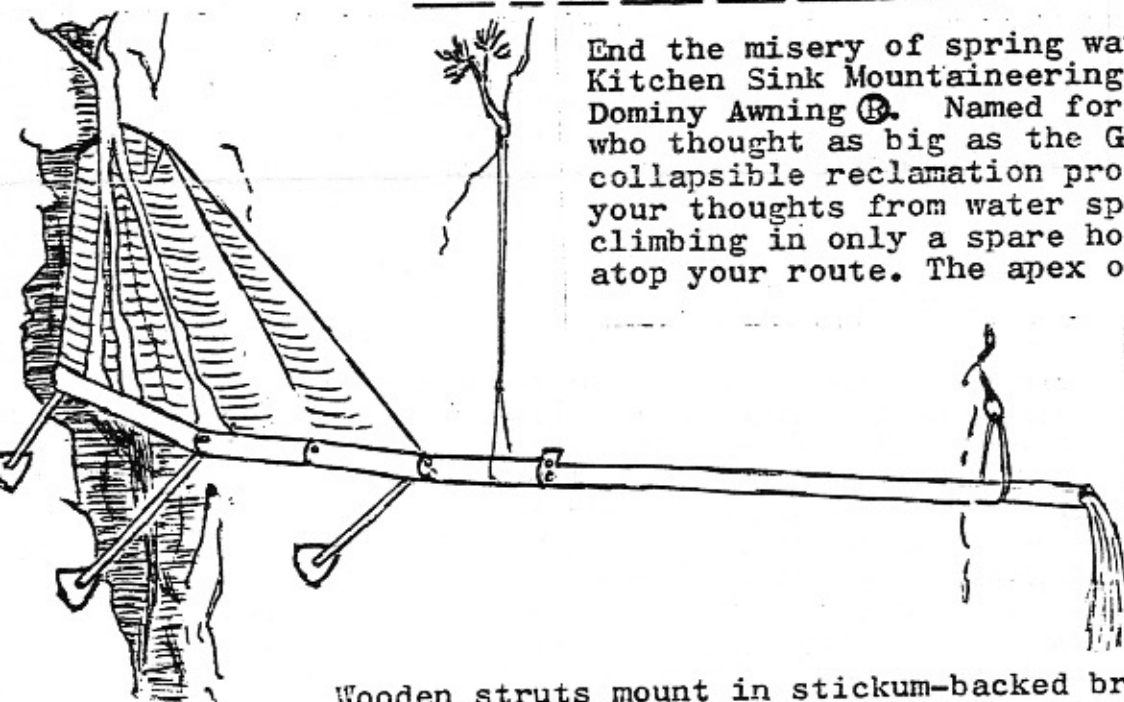
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Andre Korbut-Weberg is the "reserve editor," in case a substitute is needed.
If questions arise, contact John Ripley. Thanks to all, and good luck! --Ed.

GOING UP THE DRAIN WITH KITCHEN SINK

End the misery of spring water climbs with Kitchen Sink Mountaineering's Dominy Awning [®]. Named for the bureaucrat who thought as big as the Grand Canyon, this collapsible reclamation project can divert your thoughts from water sports to rock climbing in only a spare hour's installation atop your route. The apex of the Dutch canvas awning's nylon framework is adaptable to any shape of water-course, while galvanized gutter and downspout sections bolt together to carry the water far from nature's intent.

Wooden struts mount in stickum-backed brackets.
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Specify right- or left-handed downspout. WARNING: Not tax deductible.

-MJ

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