



THE MUGELNOOS

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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 and address changes to Pat Holleman, 1638 6th St., Manhattan Beach, CA 98226. \$7.00 per year due in October.

RCS AND SCMA NEWS

On Wednesday, January 21, 1987, the Board of the Southern California Mountaineering Association will present to the members of the RCS & SCMA - for their votes - their recommendations concerning the future roles of the SCMA and RCS organizations. It will be suggested that the RCS be reactivated and opened to climbers if they wish training under its aegis. The meeting will be held at the Griffith Park Ranger Station, 4730 Crystal Spring, Griffith Park. 7:30 PM sharp.

In the event that the membership votes to reactivate the RCS, the following trips will be scheduled:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Leaders</u>
25 Jan	Training Climb	
1 Feb	Training Climb	
8 Feb	Big Rock, RCS Reunion	Cole/Carter
14-16 Feb	Red Rocks, Las Vegas	Havens
14-16 Feb	June Lake Ice Climbing	Fried/Somoano
22 Feb	Training Climb	
1 March	Training Climb	
7-8 March	Joshua Tree	Siemens/Cole
15 March	Training Climb	
28-29 March	Fossil Falls Training Climb	
11-12 April	Joshua Tree	Hudson/Orange

SKI MOUNTAINEERS' POTLUCK, OCTOBER 25

It has recently come to my attention that I was supposed to do a write-up for the Mugelnoos on this event. My fellow skiers, I'm sorry, but I can't remember too much about it. But here goes:

When I arrived at Kathy Crandall's house, I was informed that I was the leader of the hike. And it was my job to select a suitable objective for the day. (Sometimes the best surprise is no surprise at all!) Since the skiing was rather thin last October, I suggested we hike up Echo Mountain and Mt. Lowe. And this we did.

The Sierra Peaks Section was well represented by Mary Sue Miller, Nancy Gordon, Dave Dykeman, and Mario Gonzalez. Andy Fried, Anna Zordan, and Eddie "Money" Nunez served as the SMS hosts. Others joined us, but no one was sure as to which side they were on, and they refused to commit themselves. Here is the joke of the day: "The bravest man who ever lived was the first man to eat an egg."

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the food was being prepared for the potluck. Due to the weird system of people with last names beginning with certain letters, it was soon discovered that there was an absolute dearth of main dishes. Don Pies finally showed up and saved the skiers from embarrassment.

After dessert (the Teriyaki Flan served Kosher style was very popular) a lot of slides were shown out of sequence. The objective here was to select some appropriate photographs to be included in the new SMS brochure. Unfortunately, this happened during some tense moments in the sixth game of the World Series. But it all worked out. Some swell pictures were selected, Boston won the game, and John Blumthal left the state shortly afterwards.

Finally, Gerry Holleman strong-armed several leaders into doing some ski tours this coming spring.

MUGELNOOS STAFF	SMS CENTRAL COMMITTEE
Editor----- Paul Kenworthy Mugelprinter-----LeRoy Russ Mugelnoos Chm.---- Dick Smith Mugelmailer----- Pat Holleman Reporters-R.J.Secor, Andy Fried Tom Jenkins, Mark Goebel	Chairman Don Pies Vice Chairman Kathy Crandall Secretary-Treasurer Paul Harris Outings-Safety Gerry Holleman Membership Don Pies Alternate/Council Owen Maloy
NEXT EDITOR: Pete Matulavich 1414 Paseo Manzana San Dimas, Ca. 91773 NEXT ISSUE: February 11, 1987 DEADLINE: February 4, 1987	C A L E N D A R Ski Mountaineers 17-18 Jan. Gorgonio Snow Camp. Fried/Gygax 24 Jan. X-C Downhill Clinic Goebel/Holleman 30 Jan-1 Feb. Training Camp-Keller Hut. Harris/Crandall/Goebel
HELP! Mugelnoos Editor for March needed.	
?ANY TAKERS?  Intermediate X-C/Advanced Alp- ine Skier/M-Leader needs part- ner for touring/ski mtneering April-May. Please write or call Frank Avella. 3246 S. Main St. 48E, Santan Ana, 92707. 714/662-1705.	JENKINS TO JUNKET  Tom Jenkins' extension request was approved. He now expects to remain in the LA area until at least June '88. Anyone who asked him to lead or do something and got a vague answer should call to dicuss sched- uling. H. 213/439-3780.W.213/590- 2371. After June'88 he is consider- ing retirement and mtn.travelling. Qualified partners welcome.
FUTURE MUGELNOOS MEETINGS Jan.21. RCS/SCMA Joint Meeting. Feb.11. "Trans-Sierra Ski Tours" Mark Goebel, lecturer-photograph- er. Joint Mugelnoos/SPS meeting Griffith Park Auditorium, 7:30 PM.	

## LATE SEASON SKIING -- 1986

The 1986-87 Ski Season has so far been a fizzle (as of Jan 1st - ed.), so with not much else to do, I thought back to the finish of last season.

At the end of May, 1985, a thinner snowpack year, Kathy Johnson, Claude Grandmaire and I hiked to Trail Crest on the Whitney Trail, and skied as far down down as Big Horn Park. A nice run, crusty at first, but excellent corn to the end. However, what I really wanted, was a longer ski-run ending at or near Lone Pine Lake (thus a shorter walk back to the car). 1986 seemed to be the year, lots of snow in the Sierra, so I enticed Paty and Gerry Holleman to come along, June 14th, after describing a quick trip, "You can do those chores on Sunday. Drive up Friday night, home Saturday night". A great and long ski descent, and exciting, too. Gerry was getting into skiing the steeps.

We started early from Whitney Portal, skis and boots in the packs, and running shoes on feet. Strangely, we didn't hit continuous snow until just below Trail Camp, which is where I found it in 1985. Only this time, a sea of sun cups were present. "Don't worry", I said, "it will smooth out up above".

Well, except for a few spots, those cups rose clear up to the Crest, at which point we could only start down.

"Looks better over here", said Gerry as he climbed over a precipitous pile of rocks and snapped on his skis. Pat and I followed, but after one precarious traverse, I decided there was nothing to prove here, and walked down a few 100 feet to a hopefully smoother surface. Gerry remained on his boards and was waiting patiently down below, still surrounded by those nasty cups, ever deeper as we descended.

Sun cup skiing through Trail Camp and down past Consultation Lake can only be described as exceedingly challenging, especially on skinny skis. Sort of like walking on beach balls. Hikers along the way certainly must have classified us as crazy. Below Consultation Lake we traversed over smoother slopes along the South side of the canyon, and were able to continue our descent until the snow ended only a short distance from Lone Pine Lake. Well, at least we made it down in one piece, and the goal was met.

Maybe in 1987 the snow will be smoother all the way. Anyone want to come along?

## SKI MEXICO

AS THE HIGH PRESSURE AREAS HUNG IN OVER CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST I WATCHED THE STORMS WE NEEDED SPLIT ALONG THE JET STREAMS WITH ONE BRANCH HEADING NORTH THROUGH WASHINGTON STATE THE OTHER GOING SOUTH THROUGH MAINLAND MEXICO, ONLY TO DRIVE UP NORTH AFTER REACHING THE GULF AND DEPOSITING ALL THE NEEDED MOISTURE IN THE NORTHEAST U.S. SINCE I WAS PLANNING TO LEAD A THANKSGIVING SCMA CLIMBING TRIP TO THE VOLCANOES OUTSIDE OF MEXICO CITY, I BEGAN TO WONDER IF PERHAPS THE FRESH POWDER WE WERE LACKING IN CALIFORNIA MIGHT NOT BE FOUND IN ABUNDANCE ON POPO. POPO, ALTHOUGH RATHER FAR SOUTH, HAS AN ELEVATION JUST SHORT OF 18,000' AND IS SNOW COVERED MOST OF THE YEAR. AS THE TRIP APPROACHED I READ WEATHER REPORTS FROM MEXICO AND TRIED TO DECIDE IF I SHOULD LUG MY SKIS DOWN THERE JUST IN CASE.

ON WED. NOV 26 AT 11PM I ARRIVED AT THE MEXICANA TERMINAL AT LAX WITH A FULL BACKPACK AND A PAIR OF FISHER AIR TOUR SKIS MOUNTED WITH SILVERETTA 400 BINDINGS. I HAD OPTED NOT TO CARRY MY SKI BOOTS AS I WAS STILL UNSURE IF I WOULD TRY TO DO THIS. IF I WERE TO SKI, I USE WOULD MY KOFLACH ULTRAS. THIS WOULD BE THE FIRST TIME I HAD TRIED TO SKI IN THESE BOOTS AND IT WOULD BE A GOOD TEST.

WE ARRIVED IN MEXICO CITY AT 8AM, AND AFTER SECURING THE RENTAL CAR AND PAYING ONE TRAFFIC "MULTA" NEAR THE AIRPORT DROVE ON TO THE IXTA-POPO PARK. WE REACHED THE HUT ALONG WITH A STORM THAT LASTED ALL THE NEXT DAY. CLIMBERS RETURNING TO THE HUT FROM FAILED ATTEMPTS ON THE PEAKS SPOKE OF FREEZING RAIN AND HIGH WINDS. STILL I THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS FURTHER UP THERE WOULD BE GOOD SNOW.

SAT AT 3:30 AM WE AWAKE AND FOUND THE SKY WAS CLEAR. BY 4:20 WE STARTED UP POPO ARRIVING AT SNOWLINE ALONG WITH SUNRISE. WE EXCHANGED OUR HEADLAMPS FOR CRAMPONS AND STARTED UP. BECAUSE OF THE ANGLE (35-40 DEG.) I LEFT THE SKIS ON MY PACK. IT WAS A LONG SLOG UP TO THE RIM AND ON TO THE SUMMIT. MANY OF THE CLIMBERS WE PASSED ASKED IF I PLANNED TO SKI DOWN. "MAYBE", I REPLIED. ALL SMILED AND WISHED ME GOOD LUCK. WE ARRIVED TO THE SUMMIT SHORTLY AFTER NOON. WE RESTED AND ATE LUNCH. THEN STARTED TO WALK DOWN. I HAD NEVER FOUND THE GOOD SNOW I WAS LOOKING FOR. AFTER DESCENDING ABOUT 200' I DECIDED THAT MY SHOULDERS COULDN'T STAND MUCH MORE OF THE PAIN FROM THE WEIGHT OF THE SKIS. SO I PUT THEM ON MORE TO AVOID THE DISCOMFORT THAN FROM A DESIRE TO SKI DOWN. AFTER A FEW TURNS AND SOME SIDE SLIPPING I GREW MORE CONFIDENT AND STARTED TO ENJOY IT. FROM THE UPPER PART OF THE PEAK I DROPPED DOWN AND CONTOURED AROUND TO THE LAS CRUCES ROUTE, FROM THERE I WENT DOWN MOST OF THE WAY JUST TO THE WEST OF THIS RT. TOWARDS THE LOWER PART OF THE ROUTE I TRAVERSED EAST TO AVOID EXPOSED ROCKS AND WAS ABLE TO SKI DOWN TO A PLACE ABOUT 600' ABOVE THE RUINED LAS CRUCES HUT. SOME PARTS OF THIS RUN OFFERED REASONABLE SNOW, BUT THERE WERE SOME WIND BLOWN ICE RIDGES THAT REQUIRED EXTRA CARE. I FOUND THAT WHEN I FELL I CONTINUED SLIDING FOR SOME DISTANCE BEFORE I COULD STOP, USING SKI-POLES AND EDGES.

I DOUBT THAT POPO WILL EVER BECOME A DOWN HILL SKI RESORT. HOWEVER FOR PEOPLE USED TO SKIING ON SIERRA CRUD IT SHOULD NOT BE TOO INTIMIDATING. THE COST OF THE TRIP IS LOW, THE VIEWS ARE FANTASTIC, AND THE MEXICANS ARE VERY SUPPORTIVE.

AF

Private Trip (Guided) MONARCH DIVIDE TRANS-SIERRA May 86

Last May, Tom Jenkins was one of about 8 skiers who splurged on a trans-Sierra nordic tour guided by Alpine Expeditions (Alan Bard, Chris Cox, Kim Walker-Carter et. al.) in Bishop. This company charges more (\$650 last season) than competitor Dave Beck but has a higher ratio of guides and porters to clients and thus clients need only carry their own gear, all their lunches and one breakfast or dinner for the group. Employees carry all tents, stoves, fuel, emergency and repair equipment, and the remaining food. This allows a better climbing pace and makes descents more fun as turns can be attempted. Tigers have the option of making most descents twice; and a couple of superjocks even took their packs to the top of long ascents, skied down to the party plus the same distance beyond, and then climbed up again without packs to rejoin the party on top. The guides sometimes allowed this and sometimes not, depending on snow conditions, safe runouts, etc. This particular party was stronger than the average according to the guides. Tom was about in the middle in terms of uphill pace and probably the least stylish though not the slowest downhill.

## Monarch Divide Trans Sierra (Con't.)

The trip is called Monarch Divide because it largely follows the crest of the ridge separating two forks of the Kings River. In some places it makes intricate twists through secondary saddles. Anyone planning to do it without someone who knows the route well should get it sketched onto their maps by someone familiar with it or allow two extra days in case of exploratory detours or navigational errors. Alpine Expeditions advertises the route as "Big Pine Canyon trailhead....south fork of Big Pine Creek....campsite above Brainerd Lake...South Fork Pass...Mt. Bolton Brown....Vennacher Pass....Cirque Crest....southwest of Glacier Lakes....across the Goat Crest...Granite Pass to the roadhead...." at Copper Creek. The guided trips take six days, but it could be done faster by a strong party that did not stop to savor every good descent and enjoy some of the bowls that appear periodically on each side of the route. On the other hand, if you want to carry enough food, there's a full month of slopes just crying to be carved up in there.

For only \$60 more, the guides will arrange for an airplane ride back across to Bishop. This not only shortens the shuttle time but gives great views of the mountains with your own fresh S's and 8's in your photos, weather permitting.

The guides are highly qualified and very friendly. Upon return to Bishop they loaned us their house so the clients could have showers, a barbeque supper and a place to sleep if desired before driving home.

THJ

## OSTRANDER LAKE SKI HUT -- YOSEMITE

Ostrander Hut is located in Yosemite National Park, approximately 9 miles SE of Badger Pass Ski Area. The hut holds 23 persons, and is open from mid-December until mid-April. Reservations can be made through the Yosemite Association, P.O. Box 230, El Portal, Ca. 95318 (209/379-2317). The Hut contains bunks, wood heating stove, limited cookware, and an evening lamp light. Visitors must bring food, sleeping bag and personal gear. The route to the Hut is well marked and not difficult, but it can be strenuous and time consuming. An early start is strongly advised to avoid darkness.

Terrain to the hut is at first rolling, then a steady climb. A variety of ski slopes exist nearby to the Hut. S-C skis with metal edges are recommended, as the trail can be icy. The route can be done entirely on wax, or thin climbing skins. The first 3 miles are along the Glacier Point Road, for which wide skins would be very slow.

The hut is staffed by a caretaker who can suggest various tours from it. Beginning skiers or persons not in good shape will have a very difficult time with this trip.

Over the years, many SMSers have enjoyed the use of this fine hut, the skiing and fine scenery. Snow conditions are typical backcountry. Anything goes, and you will <sup>find</sup> it all over time, if not all in one trip. Deep powder to breakable crust. Christmas, 1986, we found only skiing on the road, and 0 to 8 inches around the Hut. No skiing, but excellent ice skating on Ostrander Lake. Also, more boulders that we ever knew existed. However, those same great views were still there, along with good company. Thank you, Andy Fried, for obtaining the reservations.

MG

Private Trip (Guided)      TRANS-SIERRA HIGH ROUTE      Apr 85

In the spring of '85, Tom Jenkins was one of two skiers who went on a trans-Sierra trip guided by David Beck of Mammoth Lakes. Dave's approach to guiding is different from that of the organized guide services like Alpine Expeditions. You could almost say you are being taken into the mountains by a buddy who is a mountain bum, so you pay his costs as well as yours and he carries more than his share and gives you the benefit of his experience. Dave's knowledge of routes and snow is outstanding. He can guess at 2:00 PM one day whether to start over the next pass at that time or wait till morning in order to get the best corn for the descent of the other side, and almost always gets it right. His clients' packs are not as light as with Alpine Expeditions, and the food is not quite as good; but there is less of a guide/client atmosphere and the trip is in most respects like a good unguided trip minus the challenge/worry of navigation, avalanche prediction, etc. It is also very nice to be able to get a week in the Sierras after being very busy at work without having to stay up all night the preceding week getting everything together.

This particular trip had an unusual highlight because we were soon joined by a group of Marines who teach alpine ski mountaineering at the Mountain Warfare School in Bridgeport. These guys telemark on alpine skis with the front part of Ramer bindings and rubber "Mouse boots", and make it look easy. Living and working at 11,000' certainly helps their rate of climb, too. They were a good bunch, and we were glad to link up with them. We even got an air show when NAS Lemoore sent two helicopters over to see how they were doing. Dave knew them already because he had been doing some instructing at Bridgeport.

The Sierra High Route is Tour 35 in Dave Beck's guidebook. Briefly, it goes Shepherd Creek, Mahogany Flat, Shepherd Pass, Kern River, saddle left of Milestone Mt, saddle south of Colby Pass, contour WSW to pass NE of Triple Divide Peak, contour side of ridge containing Elizabeth Pass, past Eliz. Pass to saddle N of peak 11,830, down to un-named lake feeding N fork of Lone Pine Creek, contour and climb to Tablelands, W through Table Meadows then follow streams to Pear Lake Hut and out by trails to Wolverton. It could probably be done in four days under ideal conditions, and six in most decent circumstances; but can also be enjoyed for many more.

THJ

## PRIVATE TRIP--AROUND CRATER LAKE BY NORDIC SKIS--April 16-21 1984

Inspired by an article in Sunset Magazine, Kathy Zyetz proposed a ski trip around Crater Lake National Park via the Rim Drive summer road to Steve Dawson and Tom Jenkins. All were able to get the week after tax weekend off; so we set out with the intent of making a leisurely four day, three night trip with edged Nordic skis, skins, full avalanche gear, etc.

The weather reports in the week before the trip showed new snow, so the trip was now regarded as being in the middle moderate range. The drive up I5 can best be described as twice as long and three times as boring as going to Yosemite from LA, but it was considerably mitigated by the comfort of Steve's VW diesel pickup which had very adjustable seats and a covered back with foam bed to take turns resting stretched out in. (Now for sale for \$1200, if anyone is interested!) The mountain roads were free of snow and ice, and mostly dry, all the way to Park HQ. After half a night's sleep in the back of the truck, we were eager for the unlocking of the Ranger office next morning. In addition to a permit and some very helpful and accurate advice on avalanche hazards, likely camps, etc. we received a free slide show on the conditions and scenery normally encountered on the trip. A short drive to the overnight parking at Rim Village put us at the trailhead, where eight feet of well-consolidated snow was covered with a thin and occasionally breakable crust and a few inches of fresh snow. Much of the road was not only snow-covered, but exposed to wind in such a way that deep drifts alternated with low spots, making for much more interesting skiing than we had anticipated. At first Tom and Steve enjoyed this, while Kathy, who had assumed that if the guides took Sunset reporters around in three days it must be easy, and who therefore had never practiced using her new metal edged skis at all, and never used any Nordic skis at a downhill area with a pack on ever, found it "interesting" as rock climbers use that word: ("One grade harder than I care to lead at present.")

We set out clockwise from the 7:00 position, and reached the Lightning Spring area, about 9:00 position, by early PM. Here the first of the avalanche hazards was to be encountered as the road climbed the steep south face of The Watchman. As it was mostly cloudy and cooling rather than warming as the day progressed, we elected to traverse the slope above the road, just below the trees. Dressing appropriately for being buried in snow (i. e. too heavily and too sealed up for a climbing traverse with big packs on), spaced well apart and all Echo IIs transmitting, we passed the anticipated danger with no problem. Shortly thereafter, we observed a spot where a convex slope on top of a rock dome looked ready to dump a load of snow onto a place where the road had been blasted into a steep rocky wall. Wind blowing against and then up this wall had built up a vertical cornice, at the place where the guard rail should be, that looked like it might run if hit by the snow from above. After some discussion, we agreed to cross this short stretch singly, close in to the wall and off the cornice. Kathy and Tom did so without incident, but Steve, using more herringbone technique than the others, opened a big crack upslope of himself.

revealing that more than just the visible vertical cornice portion of the snow might be ready to run. After a few minutes of standing very still, he continued the climb, keeping tighter to the rock wall. On safe ground he checked out the seat of his polypro and the day had no further incidents. Tom went ahead on the last downhill, located as well-sheltered a campsite as the Merriam Point area (10:30 position) offered, and excavated a flat tent platform and a kitchen/dinette area by the time Steve and Kathy arrived with the remainder of the tent, stove and cookset. In spite of the nearly sheltered location, strong winds shook the dome tent all night, and new graupel snow fell.

On the second day, we were slowed by new snow on top of breakable crust and intermittent near-whiteout conditions, with 8.5 miles of trailbreaking involved in crossing the wind-drifted north rim of the lake. Occasionally the wind and snow lifted, permitting views of the spectacular scenery and occasional compass bearings on Wizard Island and Mt. Scott for position fixing. The second night's camp, well sheltered, was at Wineglass, at the 2:00 position. The second night was a repeat of the first.

The third day was again grey, wet and windy, but short range visibility was good until the snowfall got heavy in mid-afternoon. This morning consisted of a long slow climb from Wineglass to the back of Cloudcap. All voted to skip the two mile round trip to the Cloud Cap vista, as there would be nothing to see but a solid cloudmass over the lake. The view opened up conveniently as we passed scenic Victor View, then closed down again. Here the road left the rim and made a turn consisting of three sides of a square each about 3/4 mile long. The first corner was in an area clear of trees, and there was no sign of the road or ski tracks in the new and windblown snow. We therefore made the turn too wide, using occasional bearings on Mt. Scott to find our way back to the road. This included a long contour on a steep sideslope, where Tom and Kathy again crossed a spot that cracked under Steve's greater weight. By evening, we had regained the road and reached the beginning of the Dutton Cliffs avalanche bypass trail at Kerr Notch, where we found a sheltered camp in tall trees below the road. It did not snow as much once dinner was over, but it was colder that night. The next morning, we negotiated the Dutton Cliffs bypass, which is a near-bushwhack alternately traversing and switchbacking up a steep wooded sideslope following newly placed blue diamonds and orange streamers. It seems to take 2.5-3 miles to pass 1 1/4 miles of road on the NE facing cliffs. At lunchtime, we became concerned with the slow pace. The truck was at Rim Village, beyond a gate that would be locked at 6, two miles beyond Park HQ and possibly encased in new-plowed snow. It was therefore agreed we would cut short as much of the long oxbow turn at Sun Notch as was safe, which would avoid the severe avalanche hazard on the east side of Applegate Peak and save time compared to the Sun Notch bypass established by the Rangers. There was also an avalanche hazard, and a very steep sideslope, at the start of the turn, so we went the first mile of the east side by road. As soon as a moderate and tree-covered slope appeared, we dropped down into the head of Sun Meadow and traversed slowly up to the road past the Applegate Pk hazard. We were able to enjoy a gentle downhill run in fresh snow that the trees had protected from crusting. Once all were safely back on the road and going uphill on easy terrain, Tom went ahead, got the truck through the gate with half an hour to spare, and arrived at HQ simultaneously with Steve and Kathy. THJ

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