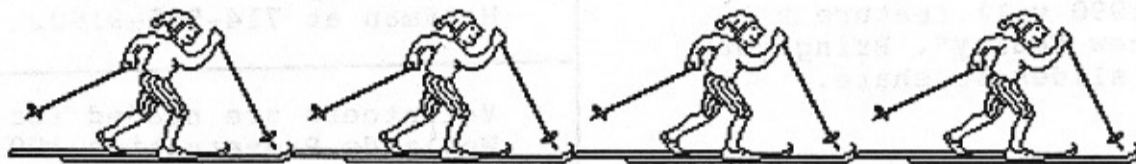


March 20, 1990 - No. 678

A six page issue

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 90266. \$7 per year due in October. **SUBSCRIPTION COST IS NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE AS A CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION.**



SMS Telemark Races and Race Clinic Feb 24-25, 1990

I arrived at Keller Hut by 5 PM Friday. The driveway we share with two other places had been plowed, but access to the hut parking lot was impossible. It took Lehel Liedloff and I quite some time shoveling enough of the heavy snow so that my Trooper could park at the entrance of the hut's main parking area. While I finished shoveling, Lehel headed over to Snow Valley to see if they would help us with our parking dilemma. The management at Snow Valley gave us permission to use their lot Friday and Saturday evenings. This created a healthy hike carrying all our gear to the hut. There were 17 of us altogether, 15 aged to perfection and 2 underage (Britt Kaufman and Emma Angevine).

Saturday morning, we left Keller Hut at 8:00 and carpooled 11 miles to Snow Forest Ski Area in Big Bear Lake. At the ski area, we had made arrangements for a 4-hour clinic with Ernst, a professional telemark race clinic instructor, to improve our telemark skiing skills using specific racing drills, practice courses, and gates. Unfortunately, Friday evening Ernst was in a car accident on Hwy 18 and was in the hospital. Snow Forest was unaware of this until later that morning, as we patiently skied while waiting for Ernst to arrive. Eventually, the disaster was made known, but there was a glimmer of hope when Snow Forest indicated that Ernst's friend, Steve, would fill in for him. Snow Forest did not communicate well with Steve, who showed up in Alpine gear. Of well, the best plans . . .

Meanwhile, the snow had softened and most of the group took all this in stride and went to explore Lynn Mountain which is serviced by a 3,000-foot triple chair lift with no lift lines!

When Steve returned with his telemark gear and set up the course, we finally got to race; but it really wasn't the race clinic we had envisioned. It was certainly fun skiing the course, and the competitive spirit was aroused in most of us. Pete Matulavich left Nancy Gordon in his wake. Marcia Male and Rose Lynch must have crossed the finish line together by prior mutual friend's forever agreement. Lisa Freundlich smoked the course. Paul Harris had the most awesome variety of excuses for flailing on more runs than any other racer, probably the most legitimate was being paired off with Karl Eggers. Mark Angevine got beaten by his daughter Emma, who used Alpine gear. Britt Kaufman (Alpine gear) beat Nancy by three gates! Dan Anderson, Bob Tomlinson, Anna Zordan, and Lehel Liedloff all made excellent runs. Edna Rey sacrificed her body while taking out one of the gates. Fortunately, she was okay. Larry Bigler tore up the course and seemed very intimidating with those Raymer self-arrest grips.

MUGELNOOS STAFF

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Mugelnoos Chair.....Dick Smith
Mugelmailer.....Pat Holleman
Reporters.....Rosemary Lynch,
Pete Yamagata, Nancy Gordon,
Craig Dostie.

NEXT MEETINGS

April 17, 1990 will feature
"Skiing to the South Pole" by
Ron Milnarik

May 15, 1990 will feature a
"Slide Show Medley". Bring your
favorite slides to share.

At: Griffith Park Ranger Station
Auditorium
4730 Crystal Springs Drive
Los Angeles, CA

NEXT ISSUE: April 17, 1990

COPY DEADLINE: April 10, 1990

PHOTO DEADLINE: April 5, 1990

NEXT EDITOR: Rosemary Lynch
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Culver City, CA 90232

UPCOMING TRIPS

- Mar. 24-25, Morrison Canyon
Marcia Male/Kathy Crandall
- Mar. 31-Apr. 1, San Gorgonio
Marcia Male/Mark Goebel
- Mar. 31-Apr. 1, San Joaquin Mtn.
Bil Oliver/Reiner Stenzel
- Apr. 7-8, Mt. Gould/Onion Valley
Greg Jordan/Scot Jamison
- Apr. 7-8, Mt. Baldy
Pete Matulavich/Reiner Stenzel
- Apr. 28-29, Ski Mtneers Peak
Gerry Holleman/Paul Harris



"And now, standing at my side, I give you the man who conquered Everest, the Matterhorn, Killimanjaro..."

The next overseer training for Keller Hut is scheduled for Saturday, April 28th. The training will take place from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at Keller, and lunch will be provided. You are encouraged to participate in this as the SMS uses the Keller Hut each year; send a SASE to Claudia Collier, 13061 Chaplet Place, Tustin, CA 92680 714-730-7716

Sponsors/cooks are also being solicited for work parties at Keller Mar. 24-25, May 19-20, June 16-17, July 14-15, Aug. 18-19, Sept. 20-21. Call Erwin Hoffman at 714-545-9190.

Volunteers are needed for Wetlands Preservation '90. Call: Mark Conte Productions 213-871-5066



W 90
PRESERVATION

SIERRA CLUB, ANGELES CHAPTER
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HORTON LAKE SKI TOUR AND SNOW CAMP

FEBRUARY 10-11, 1990

Steve Thaw, Ed Ross, and I met in Bishop Friday night for what Steve and Ed believed to be a climb of Mt. Tom. I was fairly convinced that they wouldn't make it, but seeing how I was mainly along for the ride, I didn't try to stop them. This would be a super warm weekend, which I could see when my water didn't freeze at our carcamp at Mill Pond. Saturday morning, we drove up in Ed's 4WD over 2-3 miles of snow on the Buttermilk Country Road to the turnoff for the road to the regular trailhead.

Starting by about 10:00 a.m., Steve and Ed used waxless skis with skins, while I started with extra blue, then purple, and then applied a red kicker. We followed the road for the whole distance. Elsewhere, lots of brush and rocks stuck out. Arriving at the Hanging Valley Mine (10,000'), Steve and Ed immediately took up residence in the open cabin (now with two spring mattress frames and windows). I chose to sleep in the open in the moat next to the cabin. We met two snowshoers and one skier here. After observing the roseate pink glow over the White Mountains, I had another long night, with several layers of clothing making it hard to scratch an itch!

One of the other snowshoers took off the next morning at 6:30 a.m. for his attempt on Tom. He came back by about 8:30 a.m. with reports of steep and loose snow. Indeed, several slides were visible near the mining road route up. Steve and Ed then took off, and postholed about 10 minutes before calling it. We talked and lounged around before the 3 hour ski to the car. Ed had only been out on skis three times before, so he did a lot of walking. Steve and I waited after about every mile or so. Finally, we reached the car, and thus enjoyed a pleasant end to a nice weekend.

PY

(cont. from p. 1)

Barbara Kaufman shone above all of us with her positive "go-for-it" attitude; keep an eye on her, she won't be a beginner for long! Having fun was the point, and we did have that. Videotaping is a good idea, but it's easier to follow one racer than it is to follow the dual action. In retrospect, I wish we would have been individually videotaped telemarking the course.

The cost of scheduling this activity (instructor - \$100, course fee - \$50, plus lift ticket) makes it more expensive than the usual SMS outing. The disappointment of not getting what we paid for created much heartache for the leader, who communicated this to the management at the end of the day. We should be getting a rebate.

After skiing, we returned to the hut for a community potluck dinner. We feasted on salad, bread, lasagna and spaghetti, wine, and a multitude of fine desserts. It was a weight-watcher's nightmare! Besides viewing our own ski racing video twice, we viewed the Wasatch Telemark Races, the North American Telemark Races, and the breathtaking and inspiring back-country and mountaineering skiing video - "Revenge of the Telemarkers."

Sunday, we diversified as usual. Some skied cross-country to Green Valley, some returned to Snow Forest, some skied Snow Valley, and some drove home early. The hut was left in immaculate shape thanks to everyone's help.

I want to thank the entire group for their support and cooperation, and their understanding of the unusual circumstances that occurred during this outing. A special thanks goes to Pete for helping to videotape the races and to Paul, my assistant, for his reassuring words and his easy going EGBOK manner.

-N.G.

EQUIPMENT: The Pros & Cons of Alpine VS Nordic Ski Gear

In the beginning there was man, woman and much snow. And a vision came to the man and he sculpted a ski and it was good, for it allowed him to travel great distances on top of the snow that he might visit his woman and not be so dad-gum tired from post-holing the many miles between them so that he might enjoy her company rather than merely collapse at her doorstep exhausted.

When man realized that skiing was in and of itself an invigorating exercise many things began to happen. Most significant was the development of the rope tow, and subsequently, the chair lift. Suddenly the sport wasn't merely for the few willing and able bodies who would and/or could ski up a hill or mountain. Suddenly anyone who might afford it, could enjoy the rush of schussing down a slope.

With the proliferation of lifts, skiing grew and specialized. The disciplines that emphasized downhill proficiency became known as variations of "Alpine" skiing, while those that optimized skills for cross country became known as "Nordic" skiing. For many years all the development was in the arena of Alpine skiing. Millions took to the slopes for the fun and excitement. In the mid-70's the sport began to go full circle. To avoid the millions, thousands took up cross-country or Nordic skiing. Of the thousands, dozens couldn't shake the attraction of downhill, nor the wonderment of the wilderness. Call it what you will, I'll call this last category Backcountry skiing.

As the sport of backcountry skiing has evolved over the past decade, characteristics that used to be confined to a particular category of gear began to show up in the other. Alpine gear used to be distinct in its weight, stiffness, and safety release capability. Nowadays those skinny Nordic skis may have metal edges, may be nearly as wide as alpine skis, may have releasable 3-pin bindings, and the boots may also be a very heavy, stiff, leather-plastic combination. Cost used to be an easy point to differentiate the two classes; not so anymore. The good news is that with progress the lines of distinction have blurred, but the bad news is that boundaries (in peoples heads) remain.

Before I go any further, let me define the remaining distinctions separating Alpine and Nordic gear. These distinctions can be seen in the skis, bindings, boots, and skiing styles used.

Alpine skis are the wider of the two. They have a flex, taper, and width similar to skis used by "normal" downhill skiers at ski resorts. If the skis are wide enough to allow climbing skins at least 62mm wide without covering the edges, those are alpine skis. Alpine touring bindings provide for the ability to lock your heel, as well as a safety release. The boots may be your favorite pair of frankenstiff plastic resort boots, or a modified version known as an alpine touring boot with a slightly less stiff, less heavy, plastic shelled buckle up boot with a vibran sole added for



Gary Longaberger, 1st day on Randonee'

(cont. on p. 5)

Duck Pass in Winter

As sacrifice to the recalcitrant 1990 snow gods, seven warm blooded mammals of the SMS lay prostrate on the banks of Skelton lake, foiled by howling winds and loads of snow in their attempt to cross Duck Pass. The gods were pleased, and 1½ feet of Colorado powder fell upon the skiers while the skied and while they slept. Owen Maloy and Nancy Gordon led the eager mob including Rose Lynch and Larry Bigler as well as three outstanding (and may I add handsome) new members of our section: Mark Angevine (with a very comfy van that seats 7), Lehel Liedloff (with a stash of European chocolates to die for), and Karl Eggers (with a shovel big enough to dig us all out in one scoop).

Sunday morning awoke to 80 temperature and the sound of the avalanche cannon at Mammoth. So we deferred increasing our altitude in favor of the slopes we knew lay below. We sought the steepest slopes as the powder billowed about our knees. The weather stayed cold all day, so extra blue wax was ideal for the tracks on the way out. Thank you, Owen, for your hospitality friday night.

-RL

walking convenience. In either case, the toe and heel welts on the boot are large enough to be used in a "regular" downhill binding. The typical turning style with alpine gear is known as the christie, or parallel turn.

Nordic skis come in many different sizes, shapes and styles. For the purpose of this article, let us limit our discussion to nordic skis with metal edges. Without metal edges you would be well advised to restrict your skiing to flat lands...not mountains. Quite simply, nordic skis are narrower than alpine skis. Climbing skins should be no more than 50mm wide for a nordic width ski. Metal edged Nordic skis may be designed primarily for downhill performance (telemark skis), or for a variety of terrain (double camber skis). Nordic bindings may be cable, releasable, or the traditional 3-pin, but they all yield a permanently "free" heel. Nordic boots range from light and flexible to stiff and heavy but they all provide infinitely more flexibility in the sole of the boot than an alpine boot. While skiing downhill, the traditional turn used is known as the telemark.

So what's the point? It is this. Backcountry skiing as a specialized sport has two forms of expression. One is better for you than the other. Which one depends on what you want to get out of it. Are you looking to expand your downhill experience, or your cross country experience? Do you plan on taking day trips, or expeditions? What level of skier are you now? are you committed to becoming? How much money are you willing to spend? What equipment do you already have? Most people tend to chose Nordic gear over Alpine gear for two reasons. First, it is more popular. Most people are not even aware of the existence of Alpine Touring gear. Secondly, most people are less interested in skiing mountainous terrain than they are in simply getting away. The cross-country aspect is their higher priority. For those who want to include downhill skiing in their backcountry experience I lean heavily towards getting Alpine gear. The differences in weight and cost can be reduced to ounces and the performance far exceeds that of Nordic gear for a given skill level. To make an analogy, it is easier to control a Porsche at high speeds than a Volkswagen. This is not to say that it can't be done, but the skill level of the driver is far more important to get the same performance from a Volkswagen. Furthermore, most people are not expert skiers. In simple terms, that means you will probably fall less with alpine gear and have more fun going down. Nordic pin-heads will piously argue that the climb up will be longer, and harder. Probably true, possible not, depending on the specific gear and "driver".

When asked what single word describes the key advantages of alpine or nordic cross country gear Bob Deberard said "SPEED". Indeed. Nordic is faster going uphill, due to its lighter weight and more flexible boot/binding combination, while alpine is much faster going downhill thanks to rigid plastic soled boots, locked heels and wide skis that yield greater control and hence greater comfort at higher speeds.

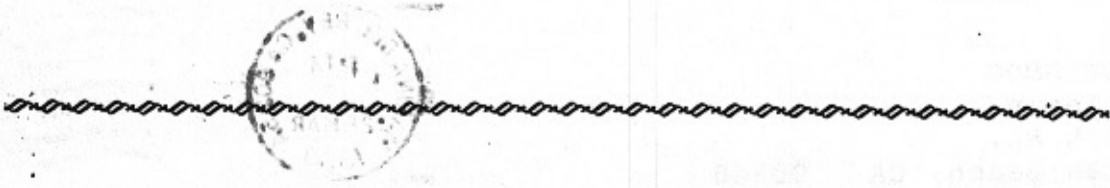
	PRO	CON	
Alpine	Performance	Weight	=> SPEED Going DOWN
Nordic	Weight	Performance	=> SPEED Going UP

The differences can be attributed mainly to the boots. The more flexible sole of Nordic boots yield greater foot comfort for more modes of locomotion than alpine boots. This is most evident when the boots are on their own without any skis attached. Ever climb a 5.1 pitch in Lange boots? Didn't think so! Hell, last time I tried a Class 3 climb in my Lange's I chose my cotton socks over boots for control. However, stiff soled plastic alpine boots yield greater control of your skis for downhill performance, as well as being far superior for kicking steps up a steep slope in a glacial environment.

In short, Alpine gear IS wider, heavier, stiffer, and potentially more costly. Those are the cons to alpine gear. Those attributes contribute significantly to the real PRO of alpine equipment, that being PERFORMANCE. For most people, downhill performance translates into safety. Floundering down a 30 degree slope with a full pack, skinny skis and free heels is courting disaster. Better to stack the odds in your favor, especially if you are not an expert skier. Damn the ounces, save your ass!

On the otherhand, Nordic gear IS lighter, softer, more comfortable and retails for less. The result is VERSATILITY. Nordic boots work just as well on a snowless trail as they do bound to skis, maybe even better. Therein lies the rub. If you expect extreme skiing conditions, your body's performance will have to overcome the limitations of your equipment if you expect to survive unscathed. Maybe you thought I used the word extreme to indicate slope steepness. Yes I did, but I also meant things like rotten Sierra Cement, or breakable crust, things that you can encounter on mel-low slopes too, and quite often I might add. Remember, you're just a human, and the mountains don't care.

C-D.



PALISADE GLACIER: Sometime in APR/MAY

This one is a long slog in. The scenery is spectacular. The skiing likewise. For intermediates the Glacier has enough acreage to keep you happy for days. Sierra Chute Corps members will find ample challenge with the U & V notches. After last Memorial Days adventure we decided that this area deserves more than a weekend. My idea is to hire packers to take in 4-5 days worth of heavy, decadent, perishable food, booze and macho pack type gradoo. We'll set up base camp at San Mack meadow and take day tours up to or beyond the glacier. This will be serious fun. "Coping a 'tude" may result upon your re-entry into civilization after this trip. WARNING: Trips like this are performed by trained professionals. Please, do not try this at home!

*contact Craig Dostie - I'm going to!
Ed.*

RAMER AVALRT DUAL-FREQUENCY AVALANCHE RESCUE TRANSCEIVER

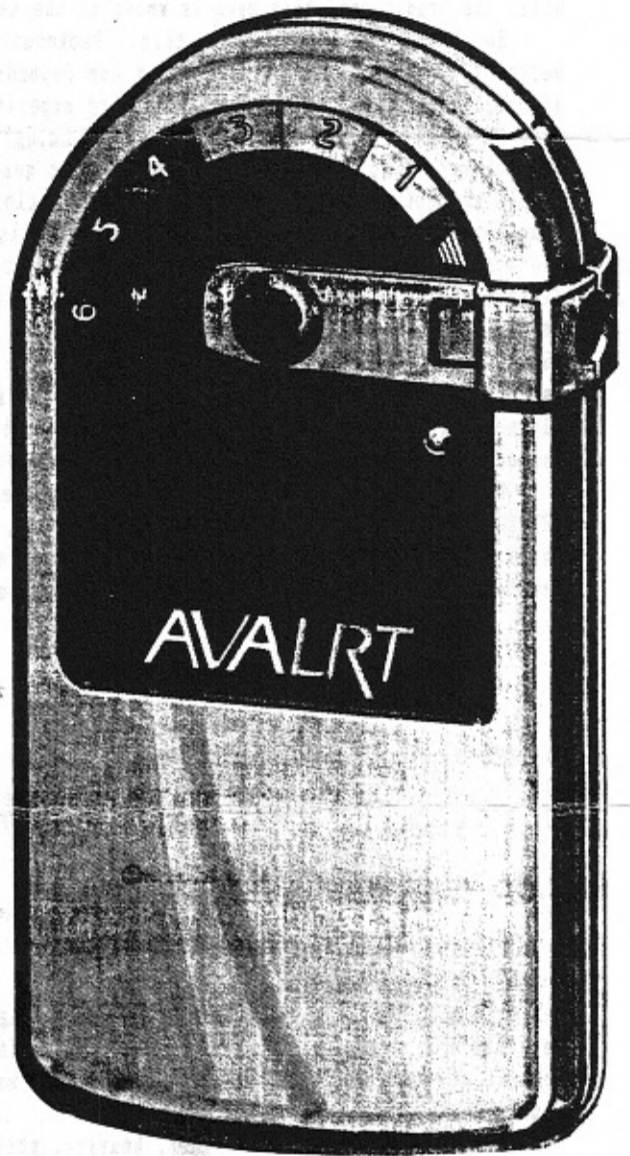
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