

MUGELNOOS

APRIL 21, 1992

Number 693



White Mt. See Page 3

Mammoth Tours April 4-5 1992

On Saturday we skied into the Valentine Lake area. We were able to drive the Sherwin Creek road from the Sheriff's substation to the gully just north of the creek that drains Laurel Lakes, open the gate, and drive to just under 8000 feet. on this route, follow the gully up to 8600 feet; do not climb the moraine too early, because the terrain is rugged with many rock ribs. Our objective was the huge bowl on the east side of the Sherwins just south of Pyramid peak. We did not get up on the plateau until noon, even though it was only about 1400 feet up from the cars. The bowl was clearly too far and I was concerned about wet snow avalanche hazard, so we skied the northeast chute on the unnamed 11,300 foot peak north of Bloody Mountain. our tracks were clearly visible from downtown Mammoth later. The snow changed very rapidly; when we reached our lunch spot in a cold wind it was firm, but half an hour later the snow snakes were out.

The return trip in the gradual gully was difficult because the snow was rotten; typically one or two good turns were followed by a faceplant. This is one of those years for rotten snow; we had only a little snow in march, and it was typically wet and slushy. We had started too late. At this time of year one should leave the trailhead at 6:30 AM Standard Time and get out in early afternoon. The Valentine Lakes area has interesting skiing but it is a long way.

Start at dawn or even earlier. It is 5 miles from the Sherwin Lakes trailhead to Valentine Lake. our route was shorter and is recommended, but one must ski a mile or two across several rock ribs left by the glacier to reach the bowl mentioned above. A good backpack loop trip would include skiing the peak and bowl mentioned above, and then down from Valentine Lake into the Convict Creek drainage.

Having learned our lesson about starting early, we left the Twin Lakes parking area on Sunday at 7:30 AM Daylight Time after being awakened at 4:30 AM PST by Nancy, who pointed out to the bewildered sleepers that we had not set the clocks ahead. We skied to Ti bowl, which we reached at 9:45. We were able to ski across both Lake George and TJ Lake. Snow conditions in Ti bowl were good, except on the south side where the snow in shadow of the ridge had not consolidated. Everyone had enough skiing by 1:30 PM, and we were back at the condo before the lifts closed at 4:00. In returning, we skied down the gully which drains TJ Lake, but the next gully to the east is wider. Ti bowl makes a good tour, because not too much time is wasted in the approach. Because of the wet conditions we carried beacons and shovels both days on the advice of the local experts, but did not ski anywhere where I felt they were needed.

Owen Maloy

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NEXT MEETING

MAY 19, 1992 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

NEXT ISSUE: MAY 19, 1992

ISSUE DEADLINE MAY 12, 1992 ALL PHOTOS, SLIDES, AND ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT TO: ANDY FRIED, MUGELNOOS EDITOR, c/o TEC GROUP 10727 WHITE OAK AVE. SUITE # 205, GRANADA HILLS, CA 91344. IF YOU WISH TO HAVE PHOTOS RETURNED AFTER PUBLICATION INCLUDE A SELF ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST PHOTOS.

UPCOMING TRIPS:

APRIL 25-25 SAT-SUN ONION VALLEY
LEADER : HOWARD SCHULTZ (818) 344-8313
ASST: NANCY GORDON

MAY 2-3 SAT-SUN LAMARK COL
LEADER: EDDIE NUNEZ (714) 723-6266
ASST : DON PIES

MAY 9-10 SAT-SUN PIUTE PASS
LEADER: SCOT JAMISON (714) 626-1712
ASST: MARCIA MALE

MAY 16-17 SAT-SUN SAN JOAQUIN PK-CARSON PK
LEADER: EDDIE NUNEZ (714) 723-6266
ASST: NANCY GORDON

MAY 22-25 FRI-MON MT.RITTER-THOUSAND ISLAND LAKES LEADER:REINER STENZEL (310) 454-9787 ASST: OWEN MALOY

White Mt. Trip to Mt. DuBois Canceled

We must cancel this trip for two reasons: First, the sugar snow we encountered in the Mammoth tour April 4 indicate that snow conditions are likely to be poor this year in the Whites. When snow lies on the ground for a long time in relatively thin layers, it rots from the bottom ("Thermal Gradient Metamorphosis"). The desert mountains that get less snow are particularly subject to this, as we have found on previous tours. Without a heavy snowfall in March, the Whites are not a good bet. We had little snow in March; we are presently showing only 67% of normal at Mammoth Pass, the same as last year.

Second, the leader is scheduled for eye surgery on Monday morning.

PRIVATE TRIP-MT. SHASTA

TIM RYAN NOW LIVING IN THE BAY AREA IS LOOKING FOR SKIERS INTERESTED IN CLIMBING MT. SHASTA MAY 22-25. FLY TO BAY AREA AND DRIVE FROM THERE. CALL TIM AT (415) 324-6197

SMS SLATE FOR NEXT SEASON

KEN DEEMER, NANCY GORDON, GREG JORDAN, HOWARD SCHULTZ, AND REINER STENZEL ANY OTHER NOMINATIONS WILL BE OPEN, CALL PAUL HARRIS AT (818) 577-4800.

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PATRIARCH GROVE - WHITE MTNS

Eight skiers planned to meet at the Sierra Viewpoint on the White Mtn Road but encountered a few snowbanks along the road which could not be overcome by city cars. Luckily, our local participant from Bishop, Catherine Laben, came equipped with a proper 4WD truck and offered to shuttle us for the last 5 miles. She skillfully maneuvered across the deep snowbanks and when her car got stuck the shovels went into action. By 9:30am we were all ready to take off from the locked gate at Sierra Viewpoint (9280'). After a few hundred feet the road was completely covered with snow and we could move on skis until we returned. With one exception, we had non-waxable, metal-edged, double-cambered touring skis which allowed us to kick and glide at a good pace through the rolling terrain of the White Mtns. By 10:30am we were at the Schulmann Grove. The view over of the Sierra Nevada in the West- was impressive. However, the sky looked gloomy and there was a ring around the sun, consistent with the forecast of an impending cold front. We were wondering what we would get into. We followed the untracked road until we reached a straight power line which led into Wyman Canyon. There we left the road and followed along the lines through a long valley until our shortcut met the winding road again near Silver Canyon. In a wind protected place we had a well-deserved lunch break, but by 2pm we were back on skis heading toward Big Prospectors Meadow. A cold wind blew over the open plains. Our goal, the Bristlecone Forest, was so clearly visible, yet one easily underestimates the distances in the Whites. By 4pm we passed Campito Mtn and entered the Ancient Bristlecone Forest just South of the Patriarch Grove. We set up camp in a wind protected depression surrounded by spectacular bristlecones some of which may have been several thousand years old. Dinner at a common snow table was enjoyable but as the sun disappeared the temperature dropped into the teens. We had skied about 15 mi and were ready for a good rest. Although it was windy and cold at night (10 deg) the storm did not materialize. Sunday morning we made a short tour without packs through the Ancient Bristlecone Forest. We enjoyed telemarking around bristlecones on good snow. The time scale of these trees is difficult to comprehend, likewise the vast untouched terrain in the Whites is amazing. Caught in a white-out, navigation

MAR 14-15, 1992

would be a difficult job. By 10am we were packed and began to ski out. Gliding over the open plains was a real joy. We followed the road which climbs high above Wyman Canyon. After many a break we arrived at Sierra Viewpoint at 3pm. The afternoon snow was excellent and we skied to within 100 yards of the gate. Again Catherine helped us shuttle our gear and some tired bodies for the last 5 miles to the cars.

We were very lucky on this trip with the weather, the snow conditions, the transportation, and an excellent group of strong skiers. These were Catherine Laben, Lisa Freundlich, Tom Marsh, Ken Deemer, Mike Rector, Reed Moore, Greg Jordan, and Rainer Stenzel. Greg's patient assistance was greatly appreciated, and Mike's heroic effort to cover 30mi on klistered Tuas will not be forgotten.

Rainer Stenzel





THE 10TH MOUNTAIN TRAIL - NORDIC SKI TOURING SECTION

February 29 - March 7, 1992

The air was crisp. It was snowing lightly. There was a foot of new snow beneath our skis and fresh bear tracks. Huge paw prints and a massive body line through the aspen grove down a 45 degree slope, across a creek and right across our trail. The trail was part of the 10th Mountain Hut System between Vail and Aspen. The fourteen huts were built and are maintained via donations. They were begun by Fritz Benedict and local ski tourers in 1980. The trail was developed for the intermediate tourer, but give the right snow conditions, a highly conditioned group may find a bivy necessary after breaking trail on steep bottomless snow. Hence avalanche awareness, safety, and rescue techniques must be a well developed skill amongst participants. The huts are under permit with the White River and Son Isabel National Forests, which are full of 13,000 and 14,000 ft. peaks. Unlike California huts, no one is stationed in them to monitor and prevent vandalism and theft. On occasion guides move through the huts, but amazingly the system works. There are battles between the Bilers (snowmobilers) and backcountry skiers for use, those bilers haven't got a chance, as evidenced by the darts on biler pin-ups. The name of the hut system comes from the 11,000 U.S. Army troops from WWII, trained in mountaineering skills in this area. Many of these vets returned to Colorado and began the immense ski industry that now exists in Summit County

Reservations must be made at least 6 months in advance. The larger the group the more difficult it is to link huts. They sleep 16 at \$20 a head with the money going toward maintenance. This particular trip was via the insight of NSTS leaders and PSIA instructors J. Reeb and T. Yuen. They created a 5 day, 4 night adventure between Fowler-Hillard and Jackal huts. Fortunately they planned a 2 night acclimation in Silverthorne (Alpen Hutte Hostel) at 6,500 ft, and then in Leadville (Delaware Hotel) at 9,200 ft, prior to sleeping at the 11,500 ft huts. We selected to ski Copper Mountain for our warm up day, mostly to get \$28 tickets and no lines. With 2800 ft of hard packed mach-90 runs, one story moguls, and an occasional burst of "good" crud, we were all smiling and ready for the slog to the huts. My dear friend Howard had made my day. As I was celebrating another birthday in the mountains. He had hidden 2 glasses with strawberries and a bottle of champagne in the snow in the woods and then had me climb up 50 feet to see "something in the snow". We popped the cork, sipped all the bubbly (at 12,000ft mind you) and then outdid all headplants on the way to lunch. I've yet to see the first day of a trip start before brunch in spite of the good ol' college try the NSTS made the SMS'rs feel right a home by not putting our skis on until 1030. The usual delays: car shuttle, too much food, group gear selection, and avalanche beacon/rescue review by Howard and myself. Our starting point was at PANDO Resolution Rd. #702, via McAllister Gulch. No sooner that 100 yards, the skis were off for a tricky creek crossing and remained off for the next 5 miles of road grade to

within one mile of Fowler-Hillard. Bummer. Some wilderness adventure. But with no snow in three weeks we silently slogged up the steep, hard packed, nose to toes type trail. Near Resolution mountain we could still hear the joyful cries that fell with lovely linked tele-turns around us from powder days gone by. All we were left with was hard crusted bottomless holes that were great for head-plant competition. Where's all that famous Colorado powder?...I paid money for this stuff....But as soon as your skis hit the front porch, all that was forgotten. (6 miles, 2000 ft up, 200 ft. down , 6.5 hours). Our gang moved in, elated to be "home", only to find 4 other ski bums from Santa Barbara (who play a mean game of Hearts). Diann and Louis were endless balls of energy, stoking the fire and melting snow all week long. Todd and Jeff supplied and cooked all the dinners and breakfasts. And a fine job they did! Salmon rice balls, burritos, spaghetti with homemade sauce, and a 15 bean chili to die for (especially at altitude). There were hundreds of pancakes with brown sugar syrup. Not a soul went hungry, not a one ever complained. A risky adventure, cooking for 10 famished folks...

With tenuous snow and moderate avalanche hazard on all southern slopes, Howard led a snow pit seminar comparing the south's granular snow sandwiched in two crusted layers, to the north's more consistent, but with bottomless holes of snow. The north won and so did Ptarmigan Hill, 2 miles away. The trees are tight in Colorado, so a hunt for glades and meadows was the trick to good skiing. We found the trees harbored deep holes even 4 feet away, but we did find sex on skis between them. Oh, this place has potential! By the time we returned to the hut it had started to snow. The deep starry heavens from the night before, with lots of wishes on falling stars, would not be visible for the rest of the trip. Our fears of 2000 ft of terror (down) and 2000 ft of stress (up) to the next hut were allayed when we awoke to a foot of new snow.

Rebel Reeb lead us through a pleasant stormy day in the woods. There are more blue diamonds to follow here, and a faint old trail. The route was 8 miles, 2000 ft up and 2000 ft down, taking 6.5 hours. There were lovely aspen groves, creeks, lots of new snow, and bear tracks. Quite a different day than our first. We even met Tanya, a blond labrador being trained as the only search and rescue dog for the 10th Mountain Trail. We arrived at the Jackel Hut, 11600 ft, early in the day. Hopping Howard, Leaping Louis and Rocking Ron dazzled us with their energy as they yo-yo'd alongside the hut linking turns that ended in spectacular blasts of snow about their faces. It was Louis' figure-levens that beat em all out including himself. The roars and applause from the hut was enough to awaken every bear in the valley.

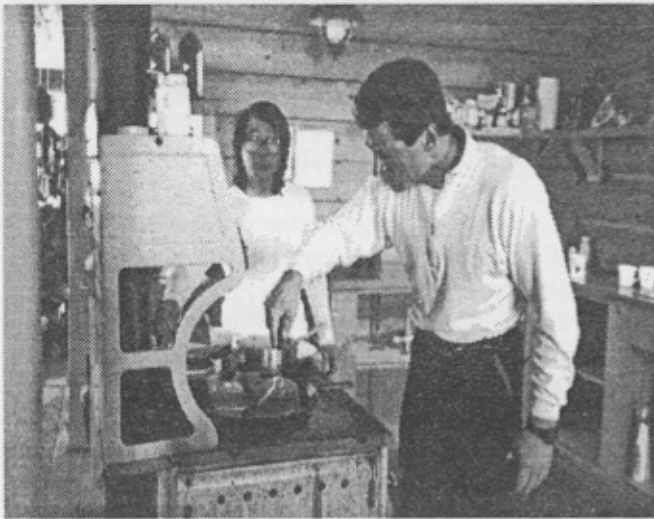
The following day our immune systems were constantly stimulated, as Pinning Patty pointed out, by rages of laughter. There were snow balls flying, head plants beyond your wildest dreams and fabulous powder runs in and out of series of glades. It was at Jackal Hut that the union of these Southern California pinheads and the

rockies was created. A strong group, easy to laugh, eager to save. It was here the Rockin Ron was born, along with Jumping Joann and Astonishing Andy. We saw glimpses of Dynamic Diann who insists she's Dawdling Diann. And these went Leaping Louis with his figure-levens again...Hot Stuff! Tele Todd always blew by us, as he hung low and hard on those crud turns...just like the movies. And movies we got as our fearless leaders did film it all on a cam-corder, stay tuned for rare footage of phenomenal attempts at Head Plant Avoidance. Hopping Howard won the jump turn award, often over his ski tips. But well executed. Doste would be proud.

We left the hut on a pristine morning. The clouds teasing with views of big white mountains with long white slopes. Eager to get to Camp Hale, the cars and onto the back bowls of Vail, we packed in dawns early light and got our earliest start at 0730. Vail's bowls were everything everyone ever said, with lots of skiable crud for us-it was just like the backcountry only thousands of feet more. Our last night was spent back at the Alpen Hutte to try and ski Loveland Pass on the way to the airport, but time ran out and we could only drool over tracks made by others. Oh, my heart pines for another winter away in a ski town, and Summit County is full of wonders...and good lookers...so when we goin' girls?

Thanx to all our participants for making this such a wonderful tour, and especially Todd and Jeff for the

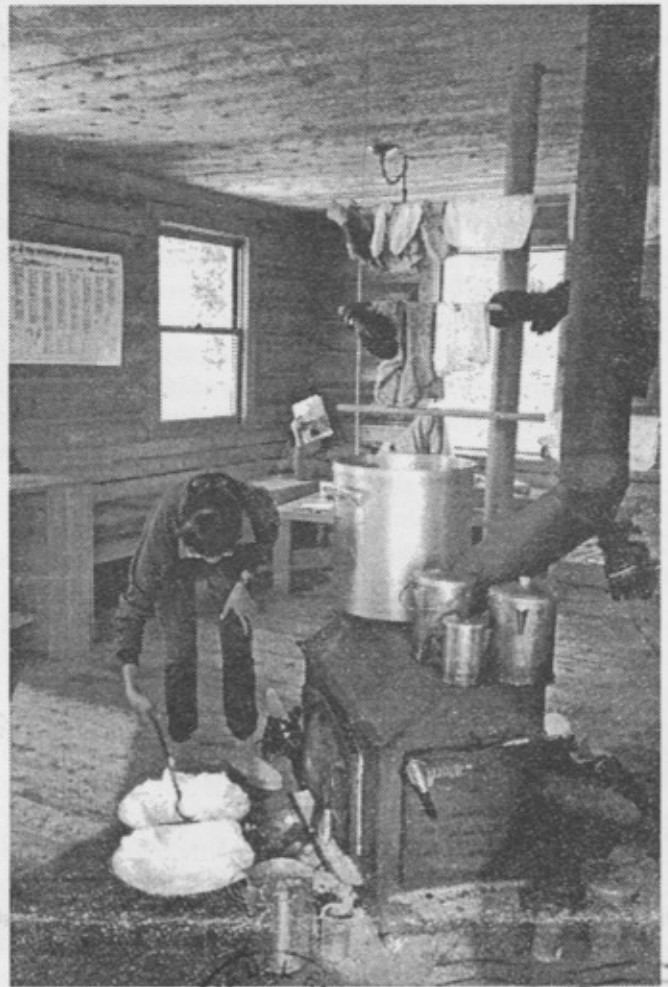




insight.

You can obtain all your topo maps, a book description of the routes, and avalanche info via: The 10th Mountain Trail, 1280 Ute Avenue, Aspen, Colorado 81611, (303) 925-5775

-----Marcia (aka Mighty M.)



THE MUGELNOOS

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 1992 RCS-R