



MUGELNOOS

MAY 18, 1993

Number 703

Mammoth Introductory "Tour," March 13-14, 1993

by Owen Maloy

We could not tour because the assistant leader could not attend, so we skied June and Mammoth instead. Under the arcane rules of the Angeles Chapter and the SMS, this makes the activity a "conducted" outing, not requiring rated leaders.

Six participants skied both days in what amounted to a two-day telemark clinic. Joe McCoy, our resident skiing gorilla and telemark instructor, assisted. The participants who engaged in this event were Dan Brosnahan, Seth Clark, Gary Embrey, Carol Kucel, Linda Novik, and Scott Ogden.

Scott, an expert downhiller, contributed the most memorable comment skiing on Gold Hill (Chair 9). Cranking a tele through the deep slush, he said "Now I understand why you telemark! I've never had so much control in this stuff in my life!"

And that is indeed why we telemark. Alpine ski technique and equipment evolved from racing on icy courses. To ski the backcountry, use equipment and technique intended for the purpose.

Hilton Creek Day Tour, April 25, 1993

by Owen Maloy

Dan Brosnahan, Gary Embrey, and Owen Maloy skied up the Hilton Creek road that goes by the BLM campground south of Crowley Lake and ascends to the mines on Mt Morgan (N). We skied up the prominent gully and lunched below the mines at about 9200', then skied down on perfect corn. On the north side of Morgan there is a short slope with a vertical of 800' or so, covered with expert telemark tracks including side-by-side demo turns. We skied that too, and then returned to the car. This is a superb area for spring corn; the chutes on Morgan are as steep and long as anyone could want, but there are many acres of easier skiing as well. The same route was used the following weekend for the scheduled SMS trip.

Five Psychos Down Snow Creek

-Peter Green

In a good snow year, California abounds with great spring skiing. In a great year like this one, enticing tongues of the white beckon from even more slopes than usual. Seen by millions from Interstate 10, the north face of Mount San Jacinto displays a steep bowl leading to the narrow canyon of cascading Snow Creek. The topo reveals a direct, fairly steep line, with a very steep entrance right off the summit. It is also clear from the map that a lot of time, vertical and miles will be spent off-trail getting down to the desert floor where cars await the adventurer, some 9500' below the top.

cont. page 3

THE MUGELNOOS IS 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 PAYMENTS ARE NOT TAX DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.

MUGELNOOS STAFF

EDITOR ANDY FRIED
MUGELPRINTER ANDY FRIED
MUGELMAILER PAT HOLLEMAN
MUGELPROOFER DIANN FRIED

NEXT MEETING

FALL, 1993 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

NEXT ISSUE: OCT., 1993

ISSUE DEADLINE SEPT. 22, 1993 ALL PHOTOS, SLIDES, AND ARTICLES (TYPED OR 5 1/4" DISKS WP OR ASCII) 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:

May 22-23 Mt Conness and Mt Dana Reiner Stenzel Scot Jamison
May 28-31 Mt Shasta via Hotlum-Bolam Glacier Bill Lingle Nancy Gordon
May 29-31 Mt Ritter, Thousand Island Lake Reiner Stenzel Howard Schultz

Dec 4-5 Demo Days Bear Mt. Keller Hut- Gordon, Harris

PROGRAMS

SMS POTLUCK OCT. 1993 EXACT DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED.

ROSTER CHANGE: DIANN FRIED
4141 PICASSO AVE
WOODLAND HILLS, CA 91364
(818) 887-3402

1992-1993 Ski Mountaineer Leaders

Walt Boge 13260 Cumston St Van Nuys 91401 818 781-4576	Bill Lingle 23660 Baltar St West Hills 91304 818 884-3269
Kathy Crandall 1864 Foothill Blvd La Canada 91011 818 790-9252	Marcia Male 1459 Westgate Ave, #1 Los Angeles 90025 310 479-0758
Craig Dostie 6438A Penn St Moorpark 93021 805 523-0413	Owen Maloy P O Box 2083 Mammoth Lakes 93546 H 619 934-9511 W 619 934-4553
Mark Goebel 9522 Innsbruck Dr Huntington Beach 92646 714 963-9384	Pete Matulavich 126 Calle Candida San Dimas 91773 714 599-6148
Nancy Gordon 6550 Ellenvue Ave West Hills 91307 818 884-8065	Ken McEivany 2058 Shorewood Upland 91786 714 982-4780
Paul Harris PO Box 70765 Pasadena 91107 818 577-4800	Eddie Nunez 296 Chesterfield Newport Beach 92660 714 644-0527
Gerry and Pat Holleman 1638 6th St Manhattan Beach 90266 310 374-4654	Don Pies 1606 Haynes Lane Redondo Beach 90278 310 318-6251
Scot Jamison 2517 King Way Claremont 91711-1720 H 714 626-1712 W 818 963-41 01	Howard Schultz 17045 Burton St Van Nuys 91406 818 344-8313
Greg Jordan 22633 Ticonderoga Rd Calabasas 91302 818 222-7466	Reiner Stenzel 519 Almar Ave Pacific Palisades 90272 310 454-9787

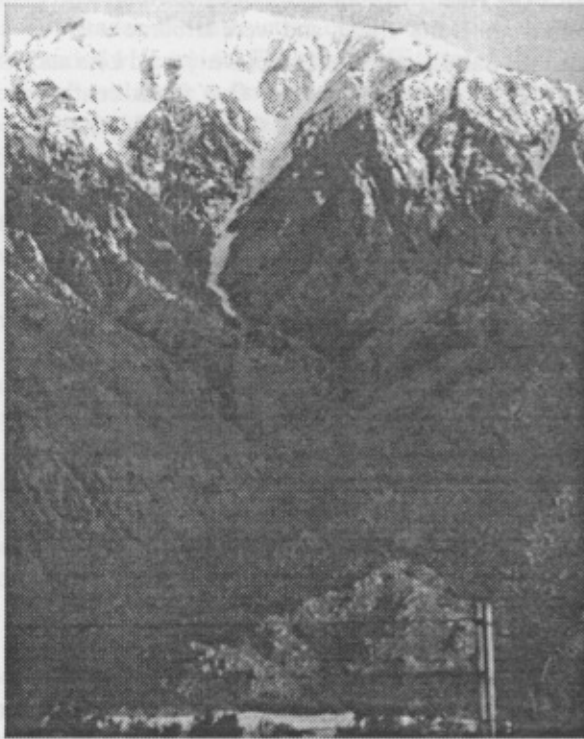
SKI FREE

Find out how in the pages of..

le Chronicle du
Couloir
The backcountry skiers magazine

Available at Sport Chalet and R.E.I.

Snow Creek cont.



Last year, Stew and I joined Craig Dostie and 5 others for his third consecutive year making the trip. It was the first time he reached the water company access road before dark. This year, Stew took his only day off writing his thesis and helped me organize both of the other die-hard members of the Caltech Backcountry Ski Team (CBST) for the outing. Rich Henke, fellow Ski Mountaineer and double honorary member (DHM) of the CBST, came along to tele the route and spare me from feeling like the old man of the group. Three generous friends came to enjoy the round trip from the Tram and perform the car shuttle for us.

Disembarking the first tram at 8:15am got all of us to the top by 11:15 where strong winds were blowing. After a long, restful lunch in the lee of a tree, we put on beepers, buckled or laced as tight as we could, and scooted up to the summit. The giant boulder there was nearly buried in the tremendously deep mid-April pack. Winds whipped ice grains up the gully as we chose our entry points. Rich detoured a hundred yards East to take a saner start while we struggled in the interleaved boilerplate and foams of various consistencies. Ground-level blizzards and stinging skin made the 45 degree steep entry more stimulating than necessary. Though it wasn't pretty, we all made it alive, and after the first 100' of hell, enjoyed stretches of packed powder down 500' or so to where Rich's gully joined the main draw. Thanks to the exceptionally deep snow, the upper part of the gully was not as terrifyingly steep and narrow as usual. Last year, one fall led to a 300 yard tumble.

A long stretch of tricky steep stuff led to the mother lode: Iowa, tilted at 35 degrees. Corn as far as the eye could see. Rich, who had years ago contemplated ascending this route, was an instant convert to opening his egg from the other side. "Does it stay like this for a while?" he asked me. I don't have enough teeth to grin the reply properly. Thanks to the year, obstacles were fewer, narrow spots wider, and the run even a little longer than in a 'good' year. (I cannot imagine attempting the run in a poor year.) The three youngsters in their buckle boots knew what to do. Jack jumped precision sequences like the NMR pulses he works on for his PhD. Stew flicked graceful curves like the semi-synthetic proteins he folds. Chris, our pacesetter, had been training hard for this; caught up from the sleep deprivation common in grad school, he laid down sets of tracks like a burst from his picosecond laser. Rich and I followed competently, savoring every kernel on the ear.

Camera-less, Chris was here to ski. While others caught their breath, he would remark, "I'd love to chat, but..." and reel off another couple dozen turns. And another, and another, and another, and another.... This goes on forever, until you realize you have already dropped nearly a vertical mile and are below snowline. Thanks to the power of gravity during and after the storms, avalanched snow fills the narrow, boulder-choked canyon down close to 5000' elevation. Lumpy snow, with increasing numbers of rocks and parts of trees, completes the run. Rich termed the bumps 'backcountry moguls.' The breezes spared us soft muck this year. In a poor year, a 75' rappel is needed to pass a chockstone; we had so much snow it was not clear where we skied over it. About 2 and a half hours from the top, we were putting away our skis, and



preparing for the crux of the day. Happily well ahead of schedule, it was only 3pm. I will describe a few pointers for fellow psychos interested in the bushwhacking. (And for those attempting the ascent, these landmarks in reverse order -may be useful.) Drink up and refill your canteens. Gravity will no longer be your guide. Seek tiny cairns, broken twigs, footprints and disturbed soil. It may help to have a disturbed mind.

Once boots and skis have overloaded and unbalanced your pack, refresh your bouldering skills and follow the Babbling Brook (Snow Creek) down almost to where it begins a series of waterfalls. Exit right and traverse (slightly upward) through Candyland (dead trees) towards a small, gentle shoulder. From here you can first see the route to the wide, grassy ramp which you must reach. Striking orange rocks about a half mile NE and some 600' below you mark the point where you wish (really wish) to gain that sloping meadow. Impenetrable vegetation and impassible terrain abounds here. Drop down Beginner's Gully (Hell Canyon) and the drier boulder-choked stream-bed it leads to and look for Peaches and Cream Traverse. A tricky spot down the gully where you must slab a huge boulder around the right side also marks the start of this tan colored, sand/dirt section. Work across, sometimes down, small slopes for a while, crossing a faint shoulder and aiming for the lower part of the band of dark-green, deceptively inviting vegetation guarding the ramp/meadow. When you can see the whites of their eyes, you are approaching Lollypop (Psycho) Forest. (The bushes with white foliage are particularly difficult to penetrate.) Hopefully, you have brought someone who knows the way, or have been lucky to follow the route. (We smashed as much as we could for you!) Lean forward and charge.

When you reach the orange rocks on the other side, take a break and check yourself for ticks. Put away your heavy-duty bushwhacking gloves; though most of the descent still awaits, the worst is over. We made it here in an hour and half from the snow, and took another two and a half to the cars. Follow the ramping meadows and enjoy the sparser bushes and smaller boulders. Traces of animal trails can be found. Near the end of the ramp, bear left to find the beaten trail that winds through a surprisingly long and steep boulderfield to the paved Desert Water Company road just below their water tank. Beware of rattlesnakes and the caretaker's vicious Dobermans. Limp down the road and celebrate surviving one of the great ski descents in the universe.

The Selkirks, British Columbia, Canada

April 2-11, 1993

Participants: Larry Bigler, Lisa Freundlich, Diann Fried, Nancy Gordon, Reed Moore, Don Pies, Reiner Stenzel, and Howard Schultz

April 2 (by Nancy Gordon): Six of us converged at LAX, boarded our Delta flight, and were airborne at 0710 headed for Salt Lake City. There, we joined Lisa and Reed, our San Diego contingent. Our flight continued. We arrived in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, at 1130; passed through customs; and, due to Don's incredible efficiency, soon were loading our gear in and on top of a GMC Safari van, which immediately brought our group much closer.

The Transcanadian Highway led us through the magnificent, soaring Canadian Rockies. We stopped for dinner in Golden, located in the Columbia Valley. This city has a sawmill, a railroad station, and an interesting history as a residence for Swiss mountain guides. Approaching the Selkirks created shivers of delight and anticipation. We pulled into the Best Western in Revelstoke, British Columbia, at 1900 hours, having endured that indignant ordeal of fanny fatigue for 410 kilometers.

April 3 (by Don Pies): It's an alpine start. Well, at least the giggling has started at 0400. Numerous body parts and joints are taped and wrapped to protect against re-injuring wounds inflicted over more than 100 years of accumulated self-abuse by our group of eight starry-eyed skiers. I feel like a pro (This is Don's second Selkirk experience!), this time I remembered to pack the full bottle of Advil. Something doesn't seem right; we're getting all expedition minded, yet we're comfortably sitting here in a motel.

Breakfast at 0630, and a 0700 shuttle pick-up for the helicopter departure drags on to 0900 as the clouds hover low over our heads. The pilot's hand radio cracks and a Swiss accent chirps "'dis clear skies here at da chalet." Nancy, Reiner, Lisa, Diann, and I are soon soaring above the town of Revelstoke, which now looks like a department store window display at Christmas complete with snow and train set.

I win the coin toss and get the religious experience of flying up front with my feet resting in the plexiglass bubble. We pass the huge Revelstoke dam and shoot up the frozen Columbia River before clipping the tree tops en route to the chalet. This Bell Long Ranger is a great machine—it's smooth and each of us gets two-way headphones which make it easy for the pilot to tell us about the scenery. The 14-passenger work horse Huey I took up here a couple years ago was quite a contrast from this bird. I know what I want the next time I have three million dollars burning in my pocket.

More than a dozen faces greet us at the Durrand Glacier Chalet, which commands a majestic 360* view of endless, wild, pristine skiable terrain. These skiers have just finished seven days with Selkirk Mountain Experience (SME). Noses and cheeks are fried, but smiles extend from ear to ear. "Climbing" magazine editor Michael Kennedy is part of this group from Colorado who are short one friend that couldn't make it, Yvon

Chouinard.

Three heli-shuttles and an hour later puts us in Pieps 101 under the instruction of French Canadian guide Martin and Swiss guide Thomas. SME uses \$500 "Barryvox" avalanche radio beacons, unsurpassed in ease of use. It's comforting to know where SME's priorities are.

We skin up and are off on a short tour in the Canadian cream. The snow quality is mixed, and faces show both smiles and gritting teeth. I remember the soft landing in this stuff from two years prior and just go-for-it. I try a high speed ride on some small roller coaster knolls and get a big surprise when the back side of one is missing; but who cares, didn't we jump off things to make holes in the snow as kids?

The group is now grinning in unison as we leave the slopes and get introduced to pro cook, Laura. Within minutes, the Sierra Club's Canadian Chapter of "Overeaters Anonymous" is formed. It's off to bed and sweet dreams of big time fluff for tomorrow.

April 4 (by Lisa Freundlich): During the night, 4-6 inches of light, dry powder fell, blanketing the glittering powder slopes. Snow is to ski junkies as cocaine is to drug addicts. The slopes beckoned us. But first, at 0700, we enjoyed a delicious, nourishing, energy-sustaining breakfast. At 0800, we departed for an ascent of the imposing Tumbledown Mountain with head guide and SME owner, Ruedi Beglinger, setting quite a challenging pace. It snowed lightly throughout the day, with intermittent sun warming us and providing breathtaking glimpses of the rugged Selkirks. It was a feast for the eyes as we skied through the glacial ice formations. We gained 2,200' to the summit, then descended the northfacing Tumbledown Glacier for nearly 3000', floating through the soft, luscious snow. We thought we'd died and gone to heaven! Turn after glorious turn, a quick lunch at the bottom, then up again to the summit area. Ruedi challenged us to follow him down the exciting labyrinth of the Needle Ice Fall. Skiing down the incredibly steep, narrow passageways weaving through jagged seracs got the adrenaline flowing; some crevasses opened into a deep, dark, cold abyss below. The ice falls were a cool turquoise blue, an art piece vastly more beautiful than anything man could create. At 1615, we arrived back at the chalet to savor some irresistible, freshly baked pastries. We'd skied a total of 5,500'. After a sauna and a group back massaging session, we engaged in stimulating intellectual conversation, debating whether or not there are muscles in our fingers. The chalet library provided a great variety of books, many of which were related to skiing and the area, as well as photo albums from the construction of the chalet and many trips. At our day's end, we witnessed the phenomenal sight of the moon rising on the horizon. This was truly a divine skiing and ski touring day, refreshing to the soul and the source of marvelous dreams.

April 5 (by Reed Moore): 0700. Up for a breakfast of yogurt, mueslix, fruit, and muffins. Weather report: white out conditions, noticeably colder, but no wind. What will we do in these conditions? This is not a good place to get lost or ski off route.

The other group (alpine touring gear skiers) is off at 0800 headed for the Moloch Hut to the northeast. We leave at 0830 headed toward Forbidden Peak. I'm apprehensive about the conditions. Maybe the sun will come out by the time we get to the summit. On the other hand, maybe we'll be skiing-by-braille right into who knows what?

Just as we leave, I remind everyone not to fall today. I, of course, make it 50 yards before breaking my own edict. Up through the ice-fall we go weaving our way along yesterday's path until Martin runs into a section scraped clean to hard ice. About-face! All I see are the tails of Howard's skis. And with this visibility, I'm not about to lose sight of them!

At 1000 hours we crest the icefall and reach the flat terrain of the Durrand Glacier. Can't see a thing. The pace is slower than yesterday's—thank heaven—since Martin is skiing on instruments, map and compass in hand, stopping frequently. Does he know what he's doing? Nobody says a word.

We traverse a long way seeing nothing but ourselves until we finally reach some rocks protruding from the base of Forbidden Peak. Is this the right way? Must be. The slope steepens. It's starting to snow. We cross one spooky section of crust and depth hoar. Martin goes very carefully across. Conditions improve and so does the visibility. We're on the summit by noon. Lunch break. I'm not crazy about this descent, will my knee hold up? Will it be crash and burn the whole way?

Miraculously as we prepare to leave, the sun starts to pop through the overcast sky. Just like yesterday. Great timing. Martin does some test jumping on the north slope heading toward Forbidden Glacier, just to be sure it's safe. Then one odd thing flashes through my mind: everyone wears high tech beacons, but we have no shovels. I hope Martin knows his stuff. Off we go, shredding the thigh deep powder, rooster tails flying up from behind. Thighs begin to burn. I must catch Lisa! Nope, down I go. Maybe next time.

We reach the flats of Forbidden Glacier, catch our breaths, and skin up to go back up. We skip the summit and head back to the Durrand Glacier. Again the sun comes out just in time for our descent. The snow turns heavy and tricky down lower. My knee starts to complain. At 1530 we arrive back at our cozy chalet and fire up the sauna. The skies slowly clear for a spectacular sunset. What a place!

April 6 (by Diann Fried): Symphony (8960'), Snowcap (9100'), Allalin (8600'), and the Canadian Challenge 1993: We awoke to clear skies (our first in three days), cold temperatures, and the moon setting over the Monashees. A hale and hearty breakfast of oatmeal, pancakes, and

bacon fortified us for a truly incredible day. We left the chalet at 0730 to take advantage of the frozen avalanche strewn slope we needed to negotiate heading for Durrand Col. Traversing this steep frozen avalanche debris served as a reminder of the hazards of ski mountaineering. Our Barryvox avalanche beacons seemed very precious as we traversed, kick-turned, and traversed up this difficult, steep slope to the ramp that would take us to new terrain. The trek to Symphony was through untracked snow that sparkled like diamonds for over a 1/4 mile. In the background were scenic panoramas of previously unseen peaks which we had climbed the last two days.

We climbed 3000 feet to bag Symphony, stopping only briefly (this was not an SMS trip) for a quick snack. Symphony has a slope of 35-40 degrees with heavy deep powder which ran out to perfect knee deep powder 1500 feet below. Skiing off the summit, the Canadian Challenge began and ended for most of us, instant infamy. The challenge was to be the last person to fall on this day. At stake was fame and fortune (a sizeable money pot arranged the night before). Left in the running for the Canadian Challenge after the ski down Symphony was Power Howard and the two guides, Martin and Thomas. After lunch we headed back up for more: more summits and more skiing down differing degree slopes of perfect powder. Along the way, our hero Howard finally ate it with the ignominy of a perfect SMS face plant on relatively gentle terrain. Martin and Thomas appeared visibly relieved. But the Keyhole was yet to come!

The Keyhole was a narrow 50 degree slide slip between rock bands (our only option). Below the Keyhole was that horror of horrors, breakable crust, where we saw both guides fall for the one and only time. Awaiting us at the hut was hot chocolate, vegetables and dip, and a delicious fruit nut torte, a sauna, then dinner of rouladin, vegetables, and topped off with a blueberry pie and Selkirk glacier water ("It tastes as good as it skis." -Reiner Stenzel). Outside was blue-white twilight, shimmering snow, and a nearly full moon. What a day - 5000 awesome feet, feat, and fete!

April 7 (by Reiner Stenzel): As usual, we got up before 0600 to prepare lunches and have breakfast by 0700. Today, we would head out to the Moloch Hut. Our packs were heavier with three lunches, group food for breakfasts and dinners, and extra clothing. Two inches of new powder and cloudy weather greeted us for the 0800 start. Within an hour, we were up on the Durrand Glacier via the Needle Icefalls. In the whiteout, we heard voices and soon ran into the other group returning from the Moloch Hut. After some chatting and the addition of Richard as our second guide, we continued via compass bearings to Mt. Fang (8900') where the sun broke through the clouds and provided beautiful views of Philharmonic Peak. Since it was only 1100, Martin took us for a "fun" run down a ridge of the Juliana Glacier. It turned out to be a thin layer of powder above breakable crust which only could be skied in two ways: float above

the crust, which light-weight Diann mastered, or crush it with high-speed jump turns, which was Richard's specialty. After returning to Mt. Fang, the group continued to Fang Col where we descended to the Concordia Glacier. The Moloch Hut which sits on top of a knoll, was visible in the Moloch Valley, right next to Dismal Glacier. En route, we passed a behemoth crevasse where many pictures were taken due to the spectacular scenery. Several steep descents followed which were either side slipped, jumped by Howard, raced down by Richard, or somehow survived by the rest of us. At a 1330 lunch stop below a 30* slope, Richard re-climbed the slope to provide inspirational entertainment; nobody else had the strength to climb and ski with him. By 1430, we arrived at the Moloch Hut (7,300'), a warm, cozy place with magnificent views of surrounding glaciers and impressive peaks. We settled into our new home, enjoyed hot tea and appetizers, and relaxed. Martin prepared a fine dinner of salad, onion soup, pork chops, cauliflower, rice, and cake for dessert. He called for an early rise next morning for a ski tour to Mr. Graham. Card games ended another great day.

April 8 (by Larry Bigler): The day began as they often do with everyone getting up in turn from 0100 on, to find a head lamp, stagger down the stairs, put on the rubber boots, and go to the outhouse. At least we did not have to climb down to the outhouse like two years ago. (This is Larry's third Selkirk trip!) It would be better, I think, to set an alarm for 0100 and all go out at once, rather than spread the noise out over an hour. Accusations of snoring are indigenous to hut sleeping arrangements. My ear plugs worked well. Diann turned down my unused spare pair; she was afraid she wouldn't be able to get them out of her ears.

We got up around 0600 to blowing snow and limited visibility. We lingered over coffee, tea, Ruedi's bread, oatmeal, and Martin's scones before setting off for Mt. Graham (9880') at 0900. The wind was blowing 20-30 MPH with occasional stronger gusts accompanied by snow and limited visibility. With skins, we climbed and traversed, traversed and climbed. The snow seemed a bit crusty in spots, creating my usual concern about the downhill.

We took a quick break in a notch on Mt. Graham. With skis on shoulders, we climbed up 10 steps, and over onto the shoulder of Graham. We zig-zagged to the shelter of a large rock near the summit where two waited while the rest collected the peak; it's on the Selkirk list.

After two traverses, the ski down was comfortable with mostly good snow moderated by limited visibility. We returned to the hut at 1230. While the wind and snow continued, we passed the rest of the afternoon enjoying companions, games of hearts, and National Geographics.

April 9 (by Howard Schultz): Mt. Moloch Hut, 0500: My alarm beeps only minutes after I fall asleep after a fitful

night trying to sleep through the wind shaking the building, a four-person chorus attempting to snore the Anvil Chorus, sore muscles and aching joints, and someone punctuating the chorus with loud farts. Don rolls over and proclaims in Army drill sergeant style, "It's five o'clock! You will rise! You will shine!" bringing laughter from the next room and groans from our room. Finally, I get up and close the window, and others start grousing around.

Martin and Richard have coffee ready, so I slowly get up, carefully stretching and straightening the sore, abused muscles and joints. My next movement is for the Advil. I nod grumpily at the others and lunge for the coffee. After breakfast of coffee, tea, scones, and jam, we load our packs, sweep out the hut, and step out into a 15-20 mph breeze driving fresh snow into our faces and down our necks.

It feels good to get on the skis and work out the stiffness. We ski around the bowl and stop below Fang Col while Martin skis ahead of us and checks the slope for stability. We maintain a 30-meter spacing up the slope so an avalanche won't wipe all of us out. At times, we get a glimpse through the clouds of some of the magnificent views available in good weather.

After ascending the Fang Glacier, we reach the Diamond Plateau and ski across it in a complete whiteout. Martin carefully snowplows a zig-zag course through the Diamond Icefall; and we follow, thighs and ankles on fire from the effort. Every couple of turns, we see a crevasse on one side of us or the other. Martin is really impressive; unerring, without hesitation, and with supreme confidence, he guides us through the icefall in zero visibility. I understand why Ruedi says Martin is "the best guide I have worked with."

After a long traverse, I begin to recognize some of the features we skied by days before. We ski down through the Needle Icefall, and the snow becomes like heavy, wet cement, sticky and difficult to ski. Most of us are very tired, and this snow is taking a heavy toll on us. Finally, we reach the foot of the icefall and the trail leading back up to the chalet. Diann proclaims adamantly that she is not going anywhere until she is good and ready; the rest of us depart, ascending the trail slowly to the comfort of the chalet, clean clothes, and some of Noline's fine cooking.

After we had drunk some tea and cocoa, the three SMS chicks on sticks donned their swim suits and skis for a playfully outrageous photo session on a snow bank near the rear deck. One can only imagine what the two Swiss guests thought as they came around the corner and saw our scantily clad gals romping in the snow on skis.

After the sauna had been warmed up, we all went out and soaked in the heat, except for Reiner, who came in 20 minutes later and remarked, "Whew! I smell the SMS!" Afterward, we celebrated our magnificent skiing week with a farewell fondue banquet. Rehydration in all manner of liquids—beer, wine, whisky, schnapps, and Selkirk glacier water—was undertaken in a most serious

manner.

I am very tired and very glad I don't have to ski anywhere tomorrow!

April 10-11 (by Nancy Gordon): Today our skis will not ski Canadian powder, and we do not dress for skiing. We are awed and invigorated by marvelous memories of endless powder, magnificent mountains, and a superb ski mountaineering experience with good friends. I feel as if I'm floating, wrapped in the finest eiderdown comforter, immersed in a joyous inner explosion of sheer ecstasy as I gaze at the glittering, champagne powder slopes of these splendid mountains. I breathe deeply and savor the euphoria resulting from skiing more than 25,000 feet of downhill amidst the absolute, sheer beauty of the Selkirks. Despite how solitary the endeavor of skiing is, a special camaraderie has developed among those that have shared this unique, memory intensive experience.

The helicopter whisks us back to Revelstoke, where we stop to shower before heading for Calgary. A relaxing dinner-shopping spree in Banff is filled with playful joshing and light-hearted banter. We take the 0920 Easter Sunday flight from Calgary to LAX.

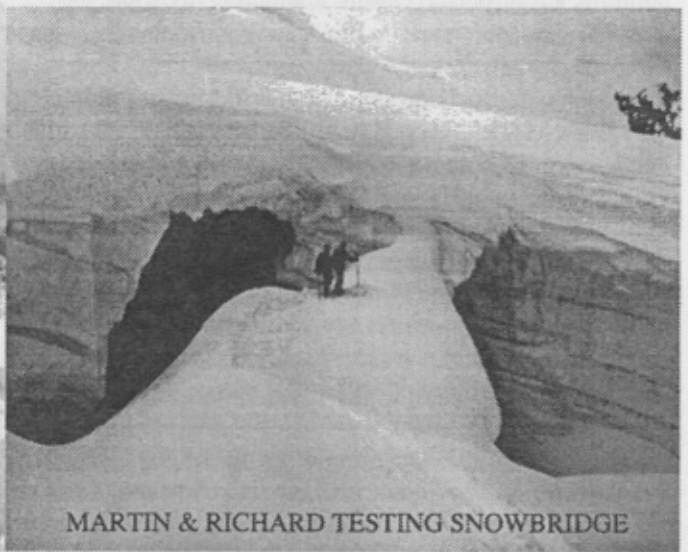
I am truly grateful for this most superexcellent adventure. Robert Service couldn't have put it better: "I'm glad there is always a Land of Beyond for us who are true to the trail, a vision to seek, a beckoning peak, a farness that never will fail"

The writing of this article has not come easy for us; we are among those who feel it is important to live and to experience life rather than to define it. Our motivation is not only to share our experiences with you, but to put it into the realm of your future goals and trip plans. If interested, it is important to make plans early and commit with a deposit no later than six months in advance. For a brochure and details write: Selkirk Mountain Experience Ltd., Box 2998, Revelstoke, B.C., VOE 2S0 Canada.

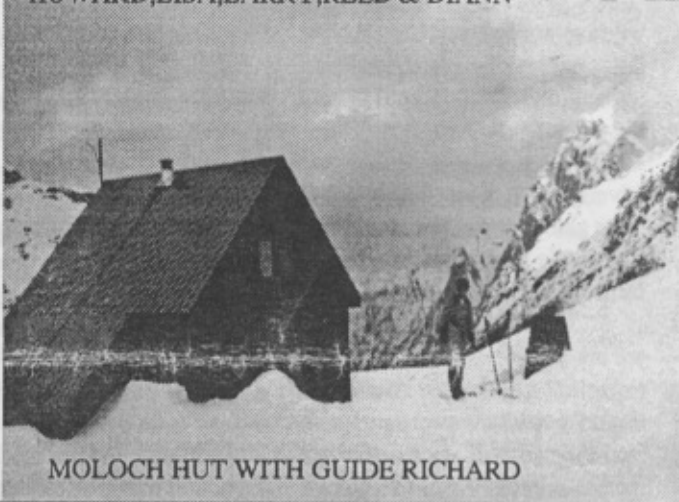




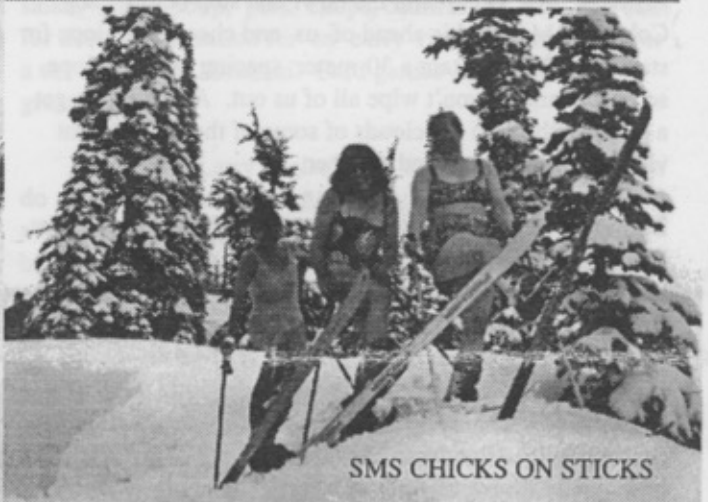
SUMMIT OF TUMBLEDOWN MT. L TO R: REINER HOWARD, LISA, LARRY, REED & DIANN



MARTIN & RICHARD TESTING SNOWBRIDGE



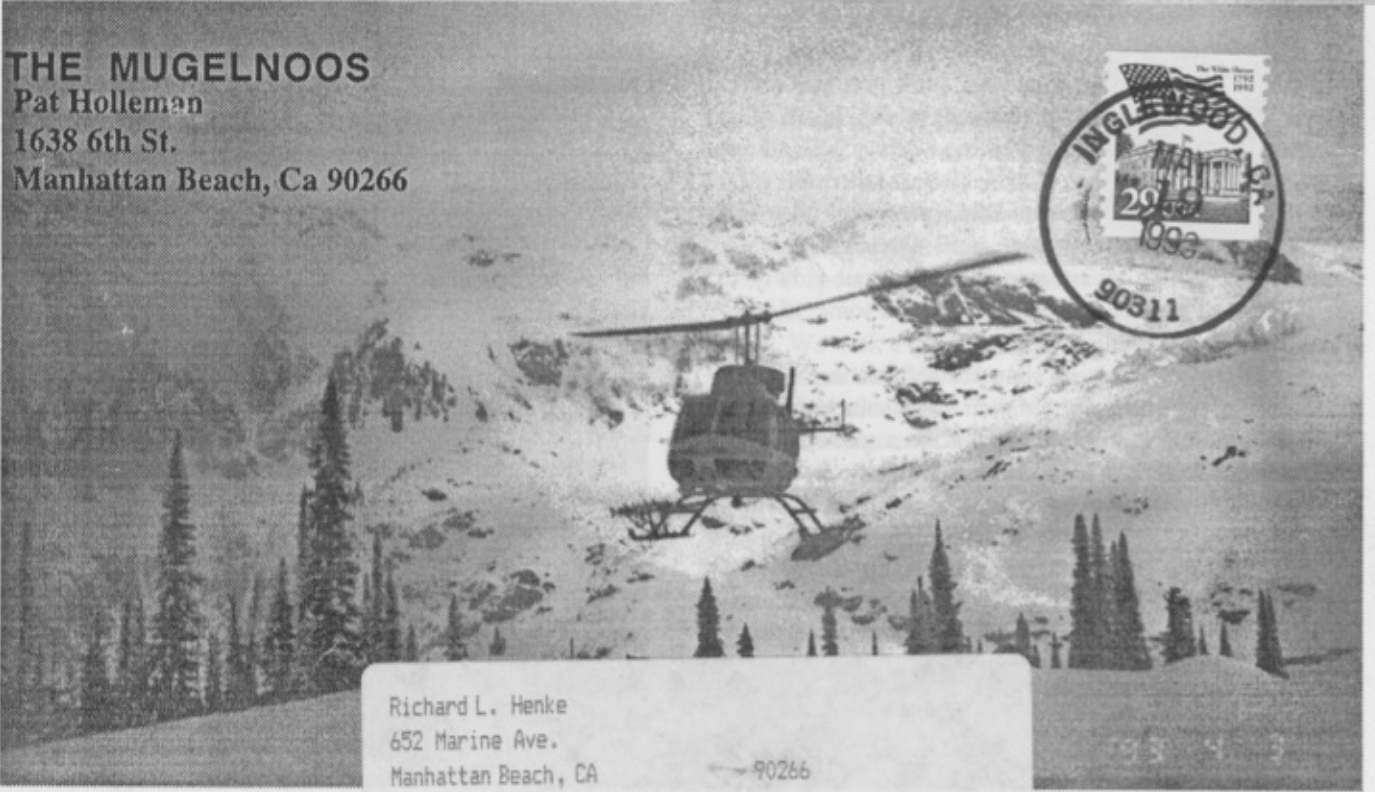
MOLOCH HUT WITH GUIDE RICHARD



SMS CHICKS ON STICKS

THE MUGELNOOS

Pat Holleman
1638 6th St.
Manhattan Beach, Ca 90266



Richard L. Henke
652 Marine Ave.
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
1993 SMS RCS-R