

MUGELNOOS

DECEMBER, 21, 1993

Number 707



Skiing Kelso Dunes

By Dan Anderson

This past November a group of 20 skiers from the San Diego Chapters Cross-country Ski Section skied at Kelso Dunes in the Mojave Desert. This was our fifth trip and may be of interest to others as a pre-season warm up.

Kelso Dunes is part of the proposed East Mojave National Park between I-15 and I-40. Kelso Dunes are 550' high with the leeward south face steeper than the north face. The dunes were formed at the last Ice Age about 14,000 years ago. Wet sand is very similar to snow for skiing. If it rained recently, ski the north side, which stays wet longer. If it hasn't rained, ski the steep leeward side. Dry steep sand requires special technique. Either ski straight down or make very shallow turns. If you don't you'll loose momentum.

When the sand is very dry, you can generate sounds. Kelso Dunes are known as "barking" or "booming" dunes. I think of the sound as a low pitched airplane engine. For the best sound, ski in a wide snowplow position to move maximum sand. Surprisingly, sand skiing does not hurt the ptex base. Don't ski off the dunes, of course. Use hard wax to make gliding easier. Use stitched, not glued boots, as heat loosens glue. Sand skiing is also tough on your heels, so bring moleskin.

To get to Kelso Dunes, drive 78 miles east on I-40 from Barstow. Exit on Kilbaker Rd. and drive 14.5 miles north to the Kelso Dunes sign. Turn left and drive 3.5 miles on a dirt road. The Dunes are on your right a mile away. No campground, but you can camp anywhere. No nearby facilities, so gas up before hand and bring water and food. For more information, call the Bureau of Land Management at (619) 256-3591.

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 DEDUCTABLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS.

May 7-8	Ski Mountaineers Peak	Gery Holleman / Paul Harris
May 14-15	Mammoth Lakes Touring	Andy Fried/ Nancy Gordon
May 14-15	Hilton Lakes Ski Camp	Scot Jamison / Larry Tidball
May 17	Griffith Park Ranger Station	"Members' Favorite Slides"
May 21-22	Cloudripper Peak, Inconsonable Range	O. Maloy / T. Marsh
May 21-22	Basin Couloir and Who Knows?	Craig Dostie / N. Gordon
May 28-30	Ritter Range Ski Camp	Reiner Stenzel / Eddie Nunez
Jun 4-5	Rock Creek	Reiner Stenzel / Pete Matulavich
Jun 25-26	Mount Baldy Bash, San Antonio Ski Hut	Gordon / C.Comm.

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NEXT MEETING

DEC. 21, 1993 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

NEXT ISSUE: DEC. 21, 1993

ISSUE DEADLINE DEC 13, 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.

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UPCOMING TRIPS:

Date	Location	Leaders / Program
Dec 21	Griffith Park Ranger	
Dec 31-Jan 2	Ostrander Hut, Yosemite	Nancy Gordon/ Eddie Nunez
Jan 8	Local Introductory Tour	Paul Harris/Walt Boge
Jan 15	X-Country Downhill Clinic, Local Mt.	H. Schultz/ Mark Goebel
Jan 16	Local Introductory Tour	Eddie Nunez/Paul Harris
Jan 15-17	Mammoth Introductory Tour	Owen Maloy /Nancy Gordon
Jan 18	Griffith Park Ranger Station,	"Offbear Skiing" - Dave Wyman
Jan 22	Mt San Jacinto	Pete Matulavich /Reiner Stenzel
Jan 28-30	SMS Training Camp, Keller	Paul Harris /Mark Goebel
Feb 5-6	Mount Baldy, San Antonio Hut	Marcia Male/ Pete Matulavich
Feb 5-6	Mammoth Condo Weekend	Owen Maloy/ Kathy Crandall
Feb 12	Local Introductory Tour	Mark Goebel /Don Pies
Feb 15	Griffith Park Ranger Station,	"Epic Ski Descents" - Craig Dostie
Feb 19-21	Pear Lake Ski Tour, Sequoia Nat. I	Park R. Stenzel Nancy Gordon
Feb 26-27	XC Downhill Practice, Keller Hut	Nancy Gordon Paul Harris
Mar 5	Local Mountain Ski Tour	Tom Marsh/ Pete Matulavich
Mar 5-6	Snowshelter Course	Reiner Stenzel / Howard Schultz
Mar 12-13	Mount Baldy, San Antonio Hut	Marcia Male/ Nancy Gordon
Mar 15	Griffith Park Ranger Station	"Mount Everest" - Randy Danta
Mar 19-20	Kaiser Wilderness Ski Tour	Tom Marsh/ Howard Schultz
Mar 19-20	Beginners Snowcamp, Local Mts	Todd Yuen / Nancy Gordon
Mar 26	Local Mountain Ski Tour	Ken Deemer/Mark Goebel
Mar 26-27	Dunderberg Peak/ Buckeye Hot Springs	R. Stenzel /P. Matulavich
Apr 9	Snow Creek, San Jacinto	Craig Dostie /Howard Schultz
Apr 9- 10	White Mountains Ski Tour	Owen Maloy /Eddie Nunez
Apr 16-17	Piute Pass	Ken Deemer/ Gerry Holleman
April 19	G. P Ranger Station, "Ski Traverse of the Monashees"-	M. Goebel
Apr 23-24	Bodie Ghost Town Tour/Snow Camp	K. Crandall / N. Gordon
Apr 30-May 1	Lamarck Col	Don Pies/Eddie Nunez
Apr 30-May 1	South Mount Morgan (13,748')	Scot Jamison / Larry Tidball

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Clark Range Excursion

May 2-9, 1992 By Ken Demer

Four Ski Mountaineers, Marcia Male, Reiner Stenzel, Eric Klausterman, and Ken Demer spent a delightful week last spring exploring the Clark Range of Yosemite National Park. We left LA Sunday at 5:00 am (yeach). Marcia, Eric and I met up with Reiner at the Badger Pass parking lot. We were loaded and on the trail by 1:30. There was plenty of snow on the road.

After leaving the road at the Ostrander cutoff, we carried our skis and bushwhacked to Horizon Ridge. We slogged up the ridge in silence, by now each convinced that our packs were much too heavy! It was here that Eric began to experience problems with lose skins that were to plague him throughout the trip. With dark approaching, we camped on a saddle below the ridge (8 mi. 1000' for the day). After dinner, Reiner lit a fire to roast his socks. Though weather reports called for a storm Monday and Tuesday, we slept under a clear, star filled sky.

Monday, we awoke to a symphony of birds. It was clear and sunny. We stopped for a brief rest at Ostrander (which had closed the week before), then headed across Hart Lake. Signs of life were everywhere. We passed a recently vacated bear den and saw numerous tracks - including a mountain lion.

With beepers on, we ascended Horseshoe Ridge. Reiner immediately peeled his skins and enjoyed a silky run. The rest marveled at the views of Yosemite Valley - Starr King, Half Dome and our route into the Clarks, obscured by clouds. Unfortunately, the planned exit route was bone dry, leading us to consider alternatives such as a base camp then retracing our tracks.

With Reiner in the lead, we contoured just to the west of Buena

Vista Crest. The crest itself was sheer rock with major overhanging cornices. The other three caught up with Reiner as he was peeling his skins and preparing to cross just below a particularly nasty overhang and some rather recent looking slides. This route was shorter than ascending the ridge itself or dropping down into the trees and giving the area a wide berth. Marcia, Eric and I were very leery. The area was clearly avalanche prone with recent slides and drooping cornices. Reiner was not overly concerned since it was late in the day and the snow was firm. We deferred to his judgment and elected to continue, well spaced apart. Reiner crossed without incident, and Marcia followed. Midway into the traverse, the cornice snapped and came crashing towards her. As the rest looked on in horror, the slide came to a stop, obliterating Reiner's tracks, less than 50 yards in front of Marcia!

Marcia's only option was to return to where Eric and I waited. Reiner was cutoff. She retraced her tracks, visibly shaken. The three of us were experiencing a mix of adrenaline, relief and anger that we had failed to listen to our instincts. Now our only option was to regain the ridge, but we had lost valuable time and it was getting late. We had no way of communicating with Reiner and no rendezvous plan.

At this point, Eric began to have serious problems with his skins. We tried duct tape to make them hold, but with little success. It was cold and the wind was coming up. We elected to make camp while there was still light. Fortunately, the three of us were traveling as a unit, sharing a tent and stove. Reiner was planning to leave a day early and was carrying his own gear.

There were no flat spots for a camp. We dropped to the east of the ridge to find shelter from the wind and spent considerable time digging a platform for our tent. Before long, we heard a shout and looked up to see Reiner coming to join us. He had

circled back to find our tracks. We spent the next hour trying to outdo one another in the construction of snow walls to protect against the wind. Day 2 was about 7-8 mi. and 1500' of gain.

Tuesday, we again awoke to sunshine and clear skies. Eric's skins were thoroughly dry and stuck well. We proceeded along the Buena Vista Crest, with intermittent walking and scrambling among the rocks. There were large fracture lines extending several feet from the edge.

About mid day, we reached a large SE facing slope just west of Merced Pass. Conditions were just too good to ignore, so we ditched our packs and, grinning from ear to ear, enjoyed a delightful run well into the trees below. After a leisurely lunch, we continued across Merced Pass, along the crest toward the basin below Merced Peak. In mid afternoon, we descended a short but icy saddle to a small, unmarked lake to the west at about 9500'. This was judged an ideal spot to establish a base camp for a few days (we had come another 6 mi. and 1000' of gain). We were now clearly within the Clark Range and looked forward to a couple of days of exploring the peaks and bowls without heavy packs.

Wednesday morning, Reiner and Ken set out early to climb Merced Peak (11,726). We left our skis just above a small col and had an easy 500 ft climb to the summit. Although there were tracks of a party preceding us, they evidently did not locate the summit register because we were the first entry since October '92.

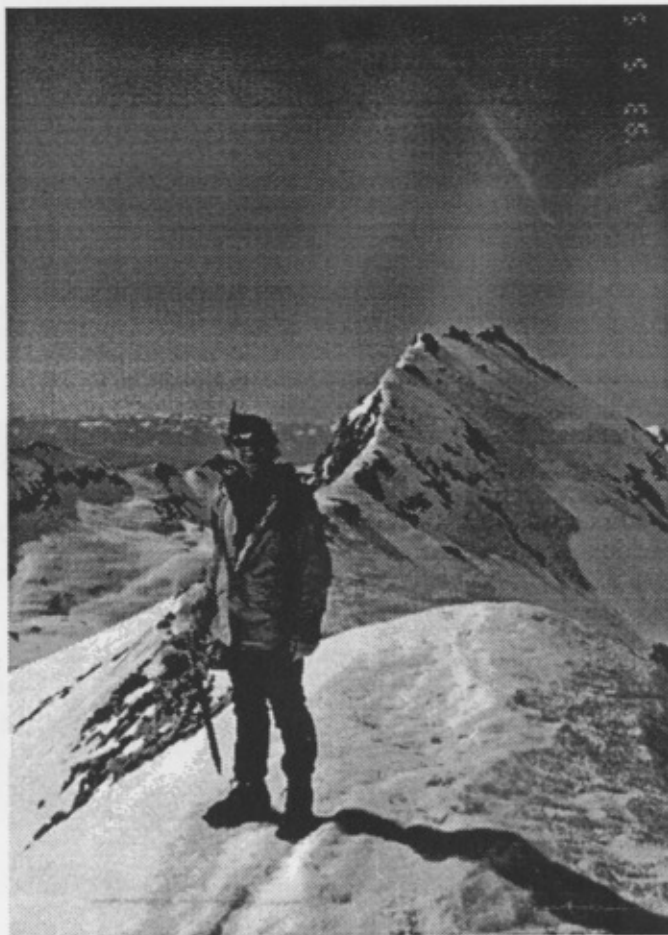
The views from the summit were amazing. We could see for at least 100 miles! The coast range was clearly visible as were Tioga Pass and northward, Ritter, Banner, the Minnarets, and the vast central Sierra. Both of us wished we had arranged a pickup in Mammoth so we could just keep on going.

Hidden from our camp, but now just across, loomed Triple Divide Peak (11,607). The SE face was wide and looked eminently skiable. Without losing much elevation, we were able to ski traverse the large bowl below Merced Peak to Merced Pass. Here we were treated to vistas of the East side of the Clark Range and our originally planned route. We carried our skis up the third class ridge to the west of Triple Divide and were able to ski the last few hundred yards to the summit. It was now just after noon, and the snow was perfect! Though it lasted but a few moments, we had a fine run down the SE face and left some enviable tracks behind. Not content to retrace our route, we instead continued slicing our way down a series of benches and lakes to about 9700'. Although it was a very long slog back to camp (9-10 mi. and 2500' round trip), we both agreed that it had been a most excellent day.

Meanwhile, Marcia, we discovered, had been systematically carving up a delicious slope near camp. An entire face was neatly carved into perfect S turns, as if a hundred synchronized pinheads had made one simultaneous run!

Back at camp we had a well earned dinner, shared some brandy and built a fire which burned a three foot pit in the ground. Reiner roasted his socks and prepared for an early morning departure (since he had a wedding to attend on Saturday).

Thursday the overdue storm finally arrived. Not screaming wind and cold, but dead calm with light, fluffy flakes. There were



occasional hints of blue, but we were basically socked in all day. A good time to catch up on sleep, reading, practice Tai Chi and clean our fingernails. Not so for Reiner, who skied all the way to Badger Pass that day (20 mi., 14 hr.) He heard a number of cornice-triggered avalanches and stayed high on the ridges. Even there, navigation in a white out was tricky. Descending the corniced Buena Vista ridge was too risky, so he made a detour around Buena Vista Peak. Luckily, near Ostrander Hut, the sun broke through the clouds and route finding became easy again.

Friday Marcia, Eric and Ken were up and off; retracing our route and following Reiner's tracks from the previous day. Stronger and lighter, we reached Horseshoe Ridge by late afternoon. The descent to Hart Lake was such a delight, that we dropped our packs and climbed back to the ridge for another run. Our last night was spent at a beautiful site overlooking the lake. We had come 7-8 mi and had another 10 to Badger Pass.

Saturday was a bit of a slog. We spent an hour or so chasing good turns (and learning not to trust Marcia's sense of direction) before reaching Horizon Ridge. Then we discovered that there had been a great deal of melting during the week and we trudged through considerable muck before reaching the road. All agreed that the road was somehow much longer than on the way in and we were grateful to finally reach the parking lot by mid afternoon. Eric's wife, Erin, was waiting with refreshments. After cleaning up at Eric's cabin, we headed down into Yosemite valley for alcohol and cholesterol. After living with nature's rhythm for the past week, it was a strange time warp back to the present. Wandering among the throngs on the valley floor, our eyes wandered to the snow filled chutes above and thoughts of trips to come.

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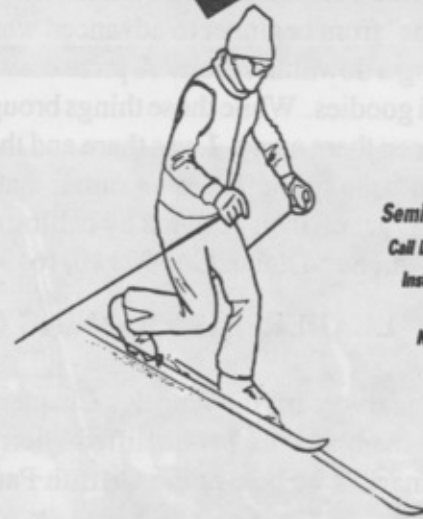
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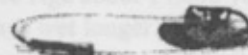
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Telemark Demo Days

The second annual Telemark Demo Days organized by Norpine Mountain Sports, San Diego, was held at Bear Mountain in Big Bear on Dec 4,5. This was an event not to be missed by the cross country skier with any interest in XC downhill. A hundred free heel skiers from Santa Barbara to San Diego were there each day!. What brought them there? The chance to test out ("demo") skis from Black Diamond, Tusa and Kazama, Black Diamond's all plastic Terminator and Terminator II telemark boots, and Alico's leather telemark boot. One hour "mini-lessons" from beginner to advanced were given by PSIA instructors. The incredible sight of free hill skiers invading a downhill resort. A prize drawing was held for boots on Sat and skis on Sun along with plenty of other ski goodies. While those things brought them there, the \$40 cost (which included the lift ticket) certainly didn't keep them away. I was there and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It's gratifying to know there's so many into the sport. There's a rumor that there will be a spring event this year. If you want to hear about these events, get on their mail list by calling or sending a post card to Norpine Mountain Sports, 1022 West Moreno Blvd., San Diego, CA, 92110, (619) 276-1577. - Todd Yuen -

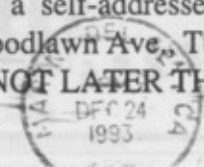
LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE AVAILABLE

Registration is underway for the Angeles Chapter's Leadership Training Course, a program to prepare Chapter members to be qualified Sierra Club outings leaders. The course begins with an all-day seminar to be held at the Griffith-Park Ranger Station on Saturday, April 9, 1994.

All applicants must be Sierra Club members and have participated in at least five Club hikes or trips. Club members wishing to enroll in the course should send a self-addressed, stamped business-size envelope to Alice Danta, LTC Registrar, 12452 Woodlawn Ave., Tustin, CA. 92680. Completed application forms must be returned to the Registrar **NOT LATER THAN March 31, 1994.**

THE MUGELNOOS

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~~Time to RENEW for 1994!!~~

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