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MUGELNOOS

JANUARY, 17 1995

Number 715

A NIGHT ON SENTINEL DOME - NEW YEAR'S 1995

Our trip to Ostrander was canceled due to a "temporary" closure of the hut for the 1994-95 winter season due to the unsafe fecal coliform reading of the lake, the waste disposal system not conforming to the Uniform Plumbing Code standards, and the unfeasibility of a temporary retrofit. The thought of not being in Yosemite to start the New Year was depressing. Options were explored and discussed, but nothing seemed right until Eric and Erin Klostermann graciously invited Marcia Male and I to stay with them at their home in Yosemite West for as long as we wanted. With Marcia leaving for Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in January, all her friends are clamoring to spend some time with her before she leaves. This was a wonderful opportunity for that last ski sister bonding experience.

We immersed ourselves in the creature comforts of showers, indoor plumbing, and the usual amenities that come with a cozy home environment while we visited, skied Badger Pass, skated the groomed Glacier Point Road, and skied the tracks and trails leading to points of interest off the Glacier Point Road.

We had planned a Sentinel Dome skipack to ring in the New Year. And on December 31st, five adventurous ski souls left the Badger Pass Ski area with back packs loaded with tents, stoves, sleeping bags, party je ne sais quoi, and skied nine miles to Sentinel Dome. For Adam Lazear and Maria Falconieri, this would be their first skipack. For Craig Dostie, Marcia, and I, this would be a proper skier's greeting of the New Year with thoughts of skiing LaConte Gulley New Year's Day.

We parked in the overnight parking area of Badger Pass, got our backcountry and parking permits at the Ranger's A-Frame Headquarters next to the Badger Pass Ski Resort, hefted our packs on our backs, and started skiing down Glacier Pass Road. Marcia skied the new short, fat, waxless Catamounts, Craig skated on his old Karhus with wax for grip on the up hill, Maria skied waxless Karhus, and Adam had some heavy duty Alpine boards mounted with a cable binding which he waxed for grip on the up hill. We skied, skated, and basically ended up doing the Sierra Shuffle until we stopped for lunch at the Clark Range viewpoint. We could see Horse Ridge, Mt Starr King, and the entire Clark Range. Marcia shared the experience of her last year's ski trip into the Clark Range pointing to the places she skied with Eric Klosteman, Ken Deemer, and Reiner Stenzel, as she whipped out her lounge chair and set out the proper accoutrements for an impressive dining experience. We were all pretty bored with the excessive mileage skiing the road even though we were surrounded by majestic mountain views

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of a winter wonderland. We welcomed our arrival at Taft Point because we left the groomed track of Glacier Point Road finally. Touring among the trees and rolling terrain, we followed approximately where the summer trail leads to Sentinel Dome, skirting the dome on the east side and ascending it from the northeast.

The last weather report we heard indicated the impending storm was dissipating. The skies appeared non-threatening and, after a brief group discussion on the dangers of being on the dome if a storm should hit, we decided to camp on top of Sentinel Dome on New Year's Eve. The place where we dug out snow platforms for our tents was within 20 feet of the famous twisted pine tree that majestically claims the summit. All three tents placed their tent doors facing northeast with a spectacular view of Half Dome. To the north, we looked down at the Upper Yosemite Falls. To the northwest, we looked down on El Capitan. Can you think of a more awesome and picturesque place to be?

At dinner time, it was a chilly 28 F. Nancy celebrated New Year's as if she were in Dublin, Ireland. There were giggles and conversation well into the New Year. The star-studded sky and lack of wind was reassuring considering our exposure on the dome at 8122 feet. Waiting for the sun to rise over the mountains to the east took longer than expected due to a cloud band on the horizon. Gray tones lightened the sky instead of rosy-fingered dawn. But, the undaunted sun finally poked through by 0715. After a quick cup of hot chocolate, Nancy tiptoed over to Marcia's skis to borrow them for a prebreakfast run down the powder-laden northeast slope of the dome. None of us discussed New Year's resolutions. I didn't think I was lacking anything or needed to make changes at that particular moment. I was in the most beautiful place on earth doing what I love doing. Happy New Year!
Happy Ski Year!

LaConte Gully did not have enough snow in it to be skied, we probably wouldn't have skied it without checking it very thoroughly with binoculars from the Valley post office. The thought of a hot shower and dinner pointed our skis back to Badger Pass. We had a very wonderful and memorable New Year's Eve.

One sad thing about this year is Marcia Male's departure for Jackson, Wyoming. She is moving into a new skiing world. May the finest snowflakes fall in her path!

-Nancy

Gordon

Ski June for just \$10

Due to the huge success of two \$10 ski days earlier this ski season, June Mountain Ski Area is now planning seven more days during which skiers and snowboarders will be invited to ski and ride for just \$10 each.

Lift tickets will \$10 on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month for the remainder of the season. Dates include: Jan. 11, Jan. 25, Feb. 8, Feb. 22, March 8, March 22 and April 12.

"We're a mountain on a mission," -said June Mountain's Paul McCahon. "It gives us great exposure and puts a smile on a lot of faces."

McCahon said the \$10 ski days have been a great tool to introduce locals and visitors to June Mountain.

"We had so much success with the \$10 days that Kandi McCoy has let us expand it," McCahon added. "They were very successful. We had a lot of skiers."

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Winter in the Sierras

Above -main street (Hwy 203) Mammoth on Thursday, Jan. 12 1995

Right -View from a front porch in town on Friday. 1-3 feet of additional snow was expected to arrive before Monday January 16.

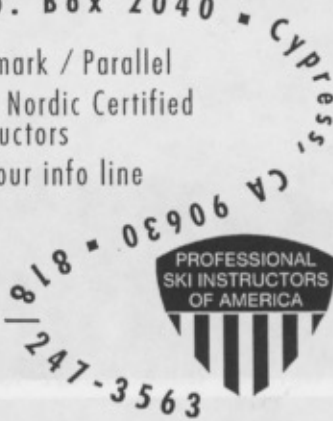


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