

RF 495

MUGELNOOS

FEBRUARY, 21 1995

Number 716

INCREASE YOUR AVALANCHE AWARENESS AND STAY ALIVE

WOULD YOU PLAY RUSSIAN ROULETTE? NO WAY, FAR TOO DANGEROUS, RIGHT? YET, WHEN YOU SKI THE BACKCOUNTRY YOU MAY BE AN UNWILLING PLAYER OF AVALANCHE ROULETTE, AND NOT EVEN BE AWARE OF THE RISK UNTIL SUDDENLY IT IS TOO LATE. HOWEVER, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY, THE SMS CAN HELP YOU GAIN SOME SKILLS THAT WILL IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF AVOIDING SNOWY TROUBLE.

FIRST, THE SMS NOW HAS AVAILABLE TO ITS MEMBERS A 30 MINUTE VIDEO ENTITLED, "AVALANCHE AWARENESS-A QUESTION OF BALANCE". THIS FILM COVERS THE FUNDAMENTALS OF AVALANCHE SAFETY, AND DISCUSSES THE THREE FACTORS THAT AFFECT SNOW STABILITY - WEATHER, TERRAIN AND SNOWPACK. YOU LEARN BASIC TECHNIQUES FOR RECOGNIZING, EVALUATING, AND AVOIDING AVALANCHE HAZARDS. ALSO INCLUDED ARE IMPORTANT SAFE WINTER TRAVEL, ROUTE FINDING, AND RESCUE TECHNIQUES. WE PLAN ON SHOWING THE VIDEO AT LEAST ANNUALLY AT A MEETING, AND IT MAY ALSO BE BORROWED BY CONTACTING THE SMS SECRETARY, MARK GOEBEL, 714-963-9384.

SECOND, ON MARCH 25-26, THE SMS HAS ARRANGED FOR AN AVALANCHE COURSE TO BE CONDUCTED BY NORM WILSON, A VERY WELL KNOWN AVALANCHE CONSULTANT. THE COURSE WILL BE CONDUCTED IN THE SHERWIN BOWL AREA OF THE SIERRA, NEAR MAMMOTH LAKES. SMS LEADERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND, AND WILL RECEIVE A REDUCTION IN THE COURSE FEE. EVEN IF YOU HAVE TAKEN THIS OR ANOTHER COURSE BEFORE, A REFRESHER IS VERY MUCH RECOMMENDED. CONTACT EITHER NANCY CORDON, OR HOWARD SCHULTZ FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND TO RESERVE A SPACE.

WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T BE MISLEAD IN YOUR THINKING THAT AVALANCHES DO NOT HAPPEN HERE IN CALIFORNIA, OR ESPECIALLY IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BECAUSE THE SLOPES ARE FAIRLY STABLE HERE. THE RECENT AND TRAGIC ACCIDENT IN THE MT. BALDY AREA TELLS US THAT THE SLOPES CAN AND DO FREQUENTLY SLIDE HERE. TWO SKIERS WHO WENT OUT-OF-BOUNDS DURING A STORM FROM THE SAME SKI AREA IN 1993 WERE ALSO CAUGHT AND KILLED. MOST AVALANCHE VICTIMS SET OFF THE AVALANCHE THAT COVERS THEM. ONCE YOU LEARN TO RECOGNIZE AVALANCHE SIGNS, YOU WILL BE AMAZED AT HOW MANY YOU SEE, AND THE POWER AND FORCE THAT SLIDING SNOW CAN EXERT.

MARK GOEBEL

SEE PAGE TWO FOR LEADER ADDRESSES

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.

MUGELNOOS STAFF

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 MUGELPRINTER ANDY FRIED
 MUGELMAILER PAT HOLLEMAN

NEXT MEETING

FEB. 21 1995 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

NEXT ISSUE: FEB. 21, 1995

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UPCOMING TRIPS:

Date	Location	Leaders / Program
Feb 24-26	XC Downhill Practice	P. Harris, N. Gordon
Mar 4-5	Mt. San Jacinto Snow Camp	K. Deemer, H. Schultz
Mar 11-12	Mt. Baldy, San Antonio Hut	M. Goebel, P. Harris
Mar 25-26	Avalanch Course Sherwin Bowl	N. Gordon, H. Schultz
April 1-2	Jump tum Clinic Mammoth	C. Dostie, H. Schultz
April 8-9	Onion Valley Car Camp	T. Marsh, H. Schultz
April 22-23	Day Tours Mammoth Lakes	P. Harris, N. Gordon
April 29-30	Pear Lake Snow Camp	M. Goebel, G. Holleman
May 5-6	Rock Creek, Treasure Lake	K. Deemer, R. Stenzel
May 13-14	Ski Mountaineers Pk	G. Hollman, P. Harris
May 27-29	Mt. Ritter/Banner Ski Camp	R. Stenzel, K. Deemer

SCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETING SPEAKERS

Tues. March 21 A ski Traverse of the Northern Selkirk Mountains. Mark Goebel shows slides of his spring 94 ski traverse of the Northern Selkirks in British Columbia. Now is the time to begin planning your spring trip.
 Tues. April 21 Tentative: Celebrating SMS's 60th Anniversary Old Videos/ Movies/ and open slide night (Bring your 10 best ski/snow slides, prints or vidios to show).

**Leadership Training Course
 Registration Underway**

Interested in leading club trips? LTC Course starts Sat. March 18, 1995 At the Griffith park Ranger Station. Send a SASE (business size) to Alice Danta, LTC Registrar, 12452 Woodlawn Ave., Tustin, Ca. 92680-2435 prior to March 4, 1995.

Ski Mountaineers Central Committee
 Chair -Ken Deemer Vice Chair- Nancy Gordon
 Outings/Safetey Howard Schultz Sec.\Treas-Mark Goebel
 Programs-Dana Pearce Mugelnoos Editor- Andy Fried

Ski Mountaineer Leaders

- Walt Boge
13260 Cumpston Street
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- Kathy Crandall
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- Todd Yuen
10635 Lynn Circle
Cypress 90630
714 220-2599

Southern California Expedition To Dhaulagiri I, 1994

In August 1994, 8 Southern Californians traveled to Nepal to climb the sixth tallest peak on earth. SMS members Rich Henke, Peter Green and Alois Smrz will present the slide show together with a closer look at organization and equipment selection of this immensely successful expedition. Slide show Tuesday, March 14, 1995 Griffith Park Ranger Station, 4730 Crystal Springs Dr. 7:30 PM

XC DOWNHILL PRACTICE - JANUARY 21, 1995

The January storms forced postponement for a week, but still 11 skiers turned out looking for help with their turns. The storm clouds had departed, and as we drove towards Mt. Pinos, new snow covered the hills above Gorman, and we then knew that we could expect good snow. To prove it, we noted a set of figure eights coming from high on the mountain. The road was open only to McGill Campground and after a short tour beyond the gate, we found some nice practice slopes among the pines.

I have found that some time spent in "grooming" the slope will enhance the learning curve for students. With everyone sidestepping the slope, we soon had a large packed area, and separated in to two groups. Howard Schultz took one, and I took the other, and quickly skiers were wedging and teleturning down the hill. Up until this point, the weather had been very mild, but by afternoon, clouds quickly rolled in and it wasn't long before little white flakes were falling from above. Practicing continued until about 3 P.M., when we commenced our return to the cars. Those that were able, enjoyed some fun turns in the powder, and regardless of abilities, everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves and learned a little more about the mysteries of skiing.

Mark Goebel

SKI MOUNTAINEERS 95 SCHEDULE

FEB 24-26 FRI-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS

T-. Cross-Country Downhill Practice: Stay at Keller Hut Fri and Sat nights. Sat fine tune Your telemark turns with instruction and practice at nearby Snow Valley, Sun tour or downhill practice. Metal edge skis, prev experience reqd. Fee

includes hut l lift ticket, Sat dinner- Send sase, \$65(SMS) to leader: NANCY GORDON, Asst: PAUL HARRIS and NONIE DESURRA

Mar 4-9 Sat-Sun SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Mt San Jacinto: Sat take tram to Long valley, ski 3 miles, 2400 ft. to Round Valley, and set up camp, Sun (lo area tours to Jean Peak, San Jacinto Peak, possibly others. Good snow camp experience. Limited to strong intermediate skier's with skins, metal edged skis, and basic telemark skills, Send sase w/exp, phone to leader: KEN DEEMER, Asst HOWARD SCHULTZ.

MAR 11-12 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Mt- Baldy, San Antonio Hut: Hike 2 mi to Balcly Hut (2000 ft gain) and ski the best corn in So. Ca.. See Feb 4-5 write up. Strong interimed or better skiers only. Send sase, phones

to leader. HOWARD SCHULTZ. Asst., TBD

MAR 25-26 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Avalanche Course: Norm Wilson will conduct a basic avalanche course for ski mountaineers at Sherwin Bowl near Mammoth. Limited, preference given to leaders. \$60 fee, \$30 for leaders. Intermed or better skiers,. Metal edges, skins, beacons required. Send sase, fee and exp to Leader. NANCY GORDON, Asst: HOWARD SCHULTZ.

APR 1-2 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Jump Turn Clinic: Come to Mammoth Mtn, and learn jump turns with the Jumpmaster on Scotty's Bowl, Chair 23, Wipeout, and other steep runs. Send sase, exp., to leader: CRAIG DOSTIE. Asst: HOWARD SCHULTZ

APR 8-9 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Onion Valley, Kearsarge Pass: Sat, we'll do a long tour (8 mi, 3800ft gain) to Kearsarge and return via Sardine Canyon. Shorter tours possible. Sun, short tours and return home. Strong intermed or better skiers only, metal edge skies, skins reqd. Car camp. Send sase, phones and exp to leader: TOM MARSH. Asst HOWARD SCHULTZ

APR 22-23 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Blue Couloir, Sierras: Day tours around the bowls of Mammoth Lakes area, Intermed or better skiers, skins, metel edges reqd. Send sase and exp to Leader. PAUL HARRIS. Asst: NANCY GORDON

APR 29-30 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Pear Lake, Sequoia Natl Pk: Ski pack 6 mi. and 2300 ft to snow camp at Pear Lake. Enjoy best corn snow in Sierras. Limited to strong intermed or better skiers only. Send sase, exp to Leader.- MARK GOEBEL- Asst: GERRY HOLLEMAN.

MAY 6-7 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Rock Creek, Treasure Lake.- Ski pack 4-6 miles (1600 ft gain) to snow camp near lake. Intermed skiers. Optional ascent of Bear Creek Spire. Metal edge skis, skins reqd. Send sase, exp to Leader: KEN DEEMER Asst. REINER STENZEL

MAY 14-15 SAT-SUN SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Ski Mountaineers Pk: Bag the peak, that bears our name (6 mi, 3800 ft gain). Strong intermed or better skiers, metal edges, skins reqd, Send sase, phones, exp, rideshare info to Leader: GERRY HOLLEMAN. Asst: PAUL HARRIS.

MAY 27-28 SAT-MON SKI MOUNTAINEERS
Ritter Range Ski Camp: Skipack 5 mi, 1500 ft from Agnew Mdw to Lk Ediza camp. Sun climb Ritter(13,157'). Strong ski/mountaineering ability, metal edges, skins reqd, Send sase, phones, exper, rideshare info to leader: REINER STENZEL. Asst: KEN DEEMER

SEE PAGE TWO FOR LEADER ADDRESSES

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ALPINE BOARDS FOR FREE HEEL SKIING

Cheaper, wider, bigger selection, alpine skis tempt the free heel skier into mounting them up for free heel skiing. This is currently a hot topic, though a few pinners have been doing it for years. Pinner purists, pure as the driven snow, wouldn't even consider such blasphemy. There are many newcomers, some from the universe of locked down heels, unfettered by such purity, who ask "Why not?" I'd like to present some of the factors I'm aware of to aid you in your decisions.

Alpine boards have traditionally been wider, have more sidecut, are heavier, shorter, all with the target of making turns. Nordic metal edged single camber skis also have the same target. Starting as "skinny skis", they've slowly changed to look more and more like their alpine brethren. Double cambered skis are not under consideration here.

WIDTH: Width aids the ski in floating over unpredictable snow. A wide, short ski also provides the same surface area, thus flotation, as a longer skinnier ski.

A wider ski requires a more torsionally stiff boot. On the hard pack of lift groomed runs, wind pack, ice, and frozen granular snow, the pressure on the ski is mainly on the inside edge. Imagine trying to edge a ski 12" wide board on a hard surface. It's much harder than edging an ice skate. The same applies to skis. If you are using really stiff boots, such as the Terminator, T2, Merrill Super Comp, or other equivalent elephant stompers, alpine width skis won't overwhelm the boot.

Anything less, and the boot will twist, resulting in lost edging power. In powder, slush or any snow where the whole ski is under the snow, the pressure is over the whole ski, requiring less torsional stiffness from the boot.

A wider ski is harder to push through deep snow while climbing than a narrow ski of the same surface area.

LENGTH: The shorter a ski, the easier it is to pivot on the snow or in the air.

WEIGHT: Not all alpine skis are heavy. Most are, though. The weight aids in dampening vibrations. It also makes for more work on the way up, and the ski harder to pivot.

CAMBER: Alpine skis are built for parallel turns. This means boots with forward and backward stiffness, bindings locking down the front and back, and pressure all on the outside (of the turn) ski. A telemark turn is best done with pressure on both skis. (If you disagree, it's a topic best left for another article.) Parallel turns require a stiffer ski, since all the pressure is on one ski. For a tele ski to decamber (flex the tip and tail up) the same amount, it needs to be about half as stiff, since only half the pressure is on the ski. For a free-heel ski to both parallel and tele well, a compromise is struck.

The accomplished alpine skier also uses the boots and bindings to place extra pressure on the tip or tail during different phases of the turn. Ski designers thus make the ski stiffer

overall and the stiffness or flex is not uniform over the length of the ski. Flex one and notice that it doesn't form a perfect circular arc.

The "sweet spot" of an alpine ski is below the center of the boot. This is why a boot center marking is now on all alpine skis. The ski center and the boot center line up for the best performance. (Some difference between the centers can be used for people who have their body weight center different than the "average" skier.) When pressuring the rear ski in a tele, the boot "center" moves forward three to six inches when we pressure the ball of the foot. Even more in stiff boots that don't flex well at the ball of the boot, putting pressure on the boot toe. This calls for a ski with a larger sweet spot. "All mountain" alpine skis tend to have a larger sweet spot.

SIDE CUT: This interacts with the camber to enable the ski to turn. The side cut has the same sweet spot and tip/tail pressure considerations as camber.

The curve of the sidecut describes an arc, causing a ski to turn when you put it on edge. It also encourages the ski to decamber, further enhancing turning. You can verify this by cutting a sidecut into a piece of light cardboard, leaving the other edge straight. Lay the cardboard on a flat surface. Tilt it up on the straight edge. It doesn't bend. Tilt it up on the edge with sidecut. It will cause the cardboard to curve tip and tail up, or decamber. (If visualizing this doesn't come easy, I really encourage you to cut cardboard.) This is true on hard pack. On soft snow, curve of the side cut doesn't have much effect. The side cut does provide more surface area on the tip and tail than the middle, encouraging decambering.


TORSIONAL STIFFNESS: Without this, the sidecut would be worthless on hardpack. You can verify this with the cardboard model. Check out the differences between the 'economy' skis and the better skis by grabbing the tip and waist and twisting the ski. Better skis will be stiff.

IN SUMMARY, if you're bent on trying it, look for an all mountain ski with soft camber, shorter than your nord boards, moderate side cut, torsionally stiff and a color you like. For non-lift served skiing add light weight. If you're shopping the bargain rack or the used market, be patient and don't get something just because it's cheap.

Any alpine boards are probably a waste if you don't have elephant boots, unless you plan to ski only soft snow on them. The purists may stone me with snowballs, but yes, I've got a pair of alpine boards mounted up with 3-pin bindings. My first tele turns were pretty tentative 'cause I didn't know how they would react. They seem to work fine for lift served skiing on soft snow. My leather Merrill Ultra boots are a bit overwhelmed when they are skied on hardpack. -

Todd Yuen, Nordic Pro -

NORDIC PRO




XC DOWNHILL SKI LESSONS

Todd Yuen / Jeff Reeb

P.O. Box 2040

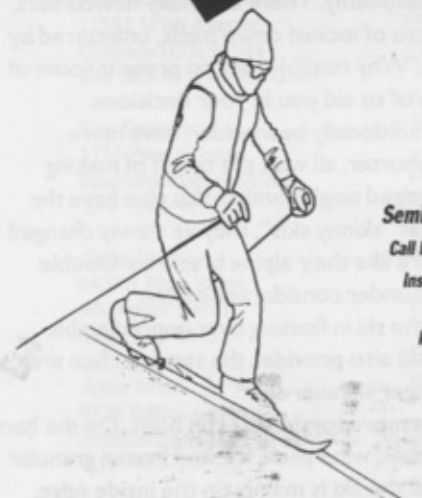
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JUMPTURN CLINIC, MT WATERMAN

Learn the turn that tames the steep. Nordic Pro's Todd Yuen and Jeff Reeb of the Mt Waterman Ski School will be giving a jump turn clinic Mar 5, at the regular group lesson rate. A logical skills progression that starts on the flat and progresses to the steep will be used. Suitable for strong intermediate to advanced skiers, be there by 9AM. There's also a bump contest if that's what lights your fire.

THE MUGELNOOS

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