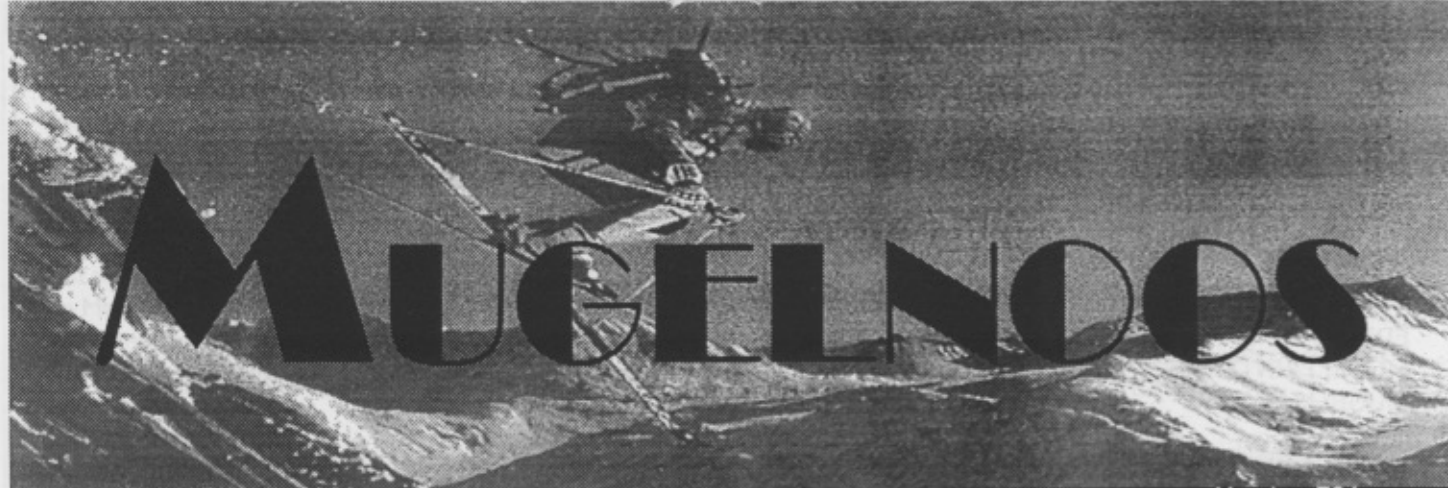


RCT 776



MUGELNOOS

JANUARY 16, 1996

Number 724

PSIA-Nordic Fall (?) Symposium and Destruction Derby

by Owen Maloy

Mammoth Mountain, January 10-12, 1996

The Professional Ski Instructors of America, Western Division (PSIA-W) held its "fall" Nordic Symposium in the winter, preferring to ski rather than hike. This consisted of a number of clinics conducted for the benefit of nordic downhill and track instructors, known these days as Nords. You can tell them from the alpine variety because they have longer hair and little if any respect for rules and regulations. Also, the back end of their bindings is missing, often a topic of conversation with concerned alpine skiers on the lift.

For readers not familiar with the nordic side, the difference is mainly that a nordic downhill skier can do telemark turns in addition to parallel turns. All downhill techniques are available, at the cost of somewhat less boot support and precision. With the buckle boots used nowadays, I don't feel that I have significantly less control. Having the heels free does not reduce fore-aft stability; if you fall on your nose with latched-heel Alpine bindings, they will release anyway. You hope.

Elderly SMS members like your correspondent are becoming involved with the PSIA, hoping perhaps for income to supplement Social Security or to pay our orthopedic surgeons. Proselytizing by our friend Joe McCoy of Bear Mountain is also a factor. I'm not sure whether he's just lonely or needs mouths to stuff veggies with pasta into.

PSIA-W has about 2500 alpine instructors and 150 nordic instructors. The alpine side is exclusive, because there are so many alpine wanna-bes. They exclude anyone not working for a ski area as an instructor. On the other hand, membership on the nordic side must be open, because clubs and federal and state agencies have instructors and guides who must be certified. We don't need no stinkin' lifts!

Being a downhill type I took all downhill clinics, but others took track clinics from people like former US Women's Champion Nancy Fiddler. Nancy has been known to outrun a snowmobile on skating skis.

Cont. page 3

New owners for Mammoth Mountain.

Jan 19 Mammoth Mountain Web Page announced that Intrawest Corp of Vancouver Canada had purchased one third of Mammoth Mountain operations, and Mammoth-June Mountain real estate. Intrawest own and operates Blackcomb and Panorama mountains in British Columbia, Tremblant in Quebec, and Stratton Mountain, Vt.

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3RD TUES EACH MONTH NOV THRU MAY EXCEPT DEC. 7:30 PM GRIFFITH PARK RANGER STATION AUDITORIUM 4730 CRYSTAL SPRINGS DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA.

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UPCOMING TRIPS:

Date	Location	Leaders / Program
Jan 20	Mt San Jacinto	Ken Deemer, Pete Matulavich
Jan 26-28	SMS Training Camp	Nonie DeSurra, P. Harris, M. Goebel
Feb 3	Mt. San Jacinto	Reiner Stenzel, Howard Schultz
Feb 3-4	Mt. Baldy, San Antonio Hut	Ken Deemer, Mark Goebel
Feb 10-11	Snowshelter Course	Reiner Stenzel, Howard Schultz
Feb 11	San Jacinto Tour & Fun Race	Ken Deemer, TBA
Feb 17-19	Rock Creek, Mosquito Flts Yurt	Reiner Stenzel, Tom Marsh
Feb 24-25	XC Downhill Clinic Keller Hut	Nancy Gordon, Paul Harris
Mar 2	Mt. Pinos-Abel Traverse	Reiner Stenzel, Howard Schultz
Mar 2-3	San Gorgonio Snow Camp-Climb	Mark Bailey, Don Pies
Mar 9-10	San Jacinto, Intro. trip Snow Camp	Ken Deemer, Don Pies
Mar 16	Local Peak Day Trip	Mark Bailey, Pete Matulavich
Mar 16-17	Rock Creek Mosquito Flts Yurt	Reiner Stenzel, Owen Maloy
Mar 22-25	White Mountains Ski Tour	Tom Marsh, Paulette Woodward
Mar 23-24	Mt. Baldy	Mark Goebel, Paul Harris
Mar 30-31	Onion Valley-Sardine Canyon	Reiner Stenzel, Howard Schultz
Apr 13-14	Pear Lake, Sequoia N.P.	Ken Deemer, Mark Goebel
April 20-21	Ski Mountaineers Peak	Gerry Holleman, Paul Harris
May 4-5	Mammoth Lakes Touring	Mark Goebel, Andy Fried
May 4-5	Elderberry Can, Mt. Tom	Ken Deemer, Reiner Stenzel
May 11-12	Hilton Lakes Ski Camp	Keith Martin, Owen Maloy
May 18-19	Mtrs Route Gully, Mt. Whitney	Reiner Stenzel, Howard Schultz
May 25-27	Horton Lakes Ski Camp	Keith Martin, Tom Marsh
May 25-27	Mt. Lassen	Reiner Stenzel, TBA
Jun 1-2	Rock Creek Ski Camp	Pete Matulavich, Reiner Stenzel

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NEW SMS MEMBERS

The following new members joined the Section during the past year:

- AL CHRISTENSEN- SEAL BEACH
- MICHAELL BRATKOWSKI- VAN NUYS
- MARCIA BURTON- SAN GABRIEL
- PETER MASON- LONG BEACH
- MARJORIE KRUEGER- MISSION VIEJO
- ALAN WADGE- CORONA

cont from page one.

During this event I broke more equipment than I normally break in years. It all began at the Tamarack Lodge, when I proffered my Mammoth season pass to the lady at the desk to photocopy my personal map of Ireland for my Tamarack cross-country pass. Oops; she thought it was last year's pass and cut it in half to get the picture. A call to Mammoth Mountain fixed that; their new pass system, using a video camera with a computer-controlled pan-tilt head, is so slick even the same rotten picture was on file. Hit Ctrl-P for Pass...

Now to the clinics themselves, which were interesting. Understand that the PSIA, even the nordic downhill side, deals mainly with what they call the "Centerline," which teaches people to do pretty turns on groomed snow. There is nothing wrong with that, but backcountry skiers need to cheat. I took the clinics for cheaters, taught by experts.

Tuesday Morning - Part way down from Chair 1 on the second run of the very first clinic I noticed that there were several metal objects on the snow and that my binding seemed to be loose, very loose. Hike to the Mid-Chalet, ride the gondola down, take the new tram, Dave McCoy's latest mechanical gadget, back to my car. Mammoth regulars call the tram "The Toaster," from the shape of the cars, which are named "Dave" and "Roma." Drive to my house, replace the broken pieces with spares I was lucky to have, jump on a nearby chair, and make it back to the Main Lodge for lunch.

Tuesday Afternoon - I missed the morning, because of the binding failure described above. The afternoon clinic, also taught by Urmas Franosch of Mammoth, was called "Off the Centerline." We worked on techniques no longer taught, such as the stem christie and the downhill stem (abstem), as well as the mono-tele, skiing with one ski always leading, so that half the turns are parallel, half telemark. This exercise teaches one to initiate off the rear ski, and thus make fast linked telemark shortswing turns. We experienced the difference between the classic snowplow and the gliding wedge. We also worked on Dick Hall's snowplow-step-back exercise for step turns, shown in his Workshop tape. My conclusion: if you can't do this stuff any more, you have a problem, probably with balance; work on it. Dick, contacted via email (telenato@aol.com) was happy that the PSIA was using his stuff.

Wednesday Afternoon - This clinic, called "Shredding the Green," was designed to review the downhill basics (balance, pressure, steering, edging). At Brian Head the following weekend, I found that my edge control had improved. We devoted two runs to each skill. We did everything in the tele position but could just as

well have used the parallel position and made an Alpine clinic out of it. We stayed on the beginner runs and rode the bunny chairs.

I found I could not get off Chair 6 because my fanny pack (containing, of course, the ten essentials) had gotten tangled with the chair (first time ever). If you look at chairs built in the good old days, you will see that the back supports are designed not to interfere with a fanny pack. But if Chair 6 were designed that way, we could lose a 3-year old through the aperture.

As I hung there 20 feet off the snow, the clinician, my fellow participants, and the lift operator discussed my fate at considerable length. It was eventually decided I could ride the lift around the bull wheel and down, there being no other alternative. I lifted my skis to clear the emergency shut off and whipped around the bull wheel.

Now the important part: if this ever happens to you, there are three things to remember: move to the inside, but DO NOT put your hand on the inside hand rest, and tell the operator to run the chair at slow speed. I was sitting on the outside, and the chair started at full speed. This caused the chair to pendulum; it crashed into the tower, and instantly amputated the lower half of my (expensive) carbon fiber poles. If my hand had been on the inner rest, my fingers would have been hamburger.

Wednesday Morning: Urines taught a steep and mogul clinic. The snow on top was bumpy and very inn, as they say now to distinguish the conditions from water ice. I don't do this very well, but did do a world-

PSIA NORDIC EVENTS
Items of due to late arrival of snow

- Jan. 9, 10, 11 Fall Symposium at Mammoth, Track & Hill Clinics
- Jan 19 "Teaching Telemark to Alpine Skiers" Clinic at Mt. High
- Jan 20 "Level 1 Exam Prep" Hill Clinic - Bear Mtn. "Progression Developer" Hill Clinic
- Jan 21 "Level 2 Exam Prep" Hill Clinic - Bear Mtn. "What Turn-When, Where & Why" Clinic
- Feb 9 "Tactical Skiing" Clinic at Snow Crest
- Feb 16 "Level 1 Exam Prep" Hill Clinic - Bear Mtn. "Ski Improvement" Hill Clinic
- Feb 11 "Level 2 Exam Prep" Hill Clinic - Bear Mtn. "Teaching Progression" Hill Clinic

Must Pre-register - Contact PSIA (916) 587-7542 FAX (916) 587-4273

We hope to schedule more clinics as the demand arises and at other local ski areas, so please stay in touch. We also plan on doing back and rolling clinics this season.

For an update, more information or any questions on local clinics - please call on:

Joseph A. Dennis (909) 585-1688
 Darren (213) 874-4146

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Special Events
 • Jan 7-Feb 4 "Learn to Turn" Seminars: Telemark & Telemark Clinics
 • Mar 10-21, Patrick's Telemark & Fun Race to
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Information
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class self-arrest demo on the face of Dave's, with several flips and a loose ski (prerelease, no doubt). Urmas said I was becoming a true Mammoth telemarker, but that the truly qualified slid the whole face. We then spent time sideslipping down and pivoting on top of "inn" moguis.

Thursday - John Moynier, assisted by Allan Bard, conducted an all-day backcountry clinic. Allan and John, whom most active SMSers know, are among the leading professional ski-mountaineering guides in the Eastern Sierra, with years of experience in steep hairy terrain. First we practiced classic backcountry skills: more sideslipping, kick turn and traverse, carved wedge or "power wedge." The carved wedge differs from the snowplow in that the inside ski glides to keep it from catching on anything, and from the gliding wedge in that the outside ski is edged and weighted heavily so it carves. John then took us to find typical backcountry snow on Chair 9. He covered travel in avalanche terrain, and we skied the run though half-frozen mashed potatoes and frozen gullies.

In the afternoon the emphasis was on tour leadership and safety. We did some more sideslipping and wedges, and skied Chair 14. The instructors from the west side who had never been to Mammoth were blown away by the view from Silver Peak to the Minarets to the San Joaquin Ridge. Major points of emphasis:

Ski Skills: Both Allan and John said that they would rather take somebody who can do what amounts to the 4th Class test on any terrain than a hot parallel or telemark skier with no backcountry skills. Allan said that in cases of doubt he has taken people to the top of Mammoth Mountain and asked them to demonstrate skiing down the face runs with only wedge tums, kick tums, and traverses. After all these years, Walter Mosauer's 4th Class Test (published the month I was born) is still valid.

Professor Bardini demonstrated his reverse telemark. This is a parallel turn (uphill ski ahead) but with the rear (outside) ski trailing. He likes it for crud. John and Allan also emphasized the importance of the short lead (only a foot or so) and the scissoring motion (sliding the inside ski back) for stability in the backcountry. The old style kneeling telemark, that looks like the skier is taking communion from the Pope, is unstable. The modern telemarker skis with only slightly more flex than a parallel skier on the same terrain. Because the inside ski is only slightly back, it is easier to flatten the edges and glide into a new turn without a lot of hopping around.

Avalanche Safety: Always take beacons and shovels, always practice their use. John and Allan carry dual-frequency beacons. With the new 457 kHz single-frequency standard, leaders need to check in advance that the beacons to be carried by participants are compatible. If you have to cross a mountaintop or go to the other side of

a valley to stay away from a trigger zone, do it.

Group Control: In the backcountry, keep tight control of the group to avoid waiting and looking for mislaid people, and to prevent accidents. Explain the ground rules up front. Send people down one at a time or in pairs or threes so they don't collide. Make sure that everyone understands where they are to ski and where they are to re assemble; look people straight in the eye and make sure they grasp the instructions. Keep groups together uphill. Do not tolerate failure to follow instructions; somebody who skis where he or she was told not to ski can trigger an avalanche.

Safety Equipment: Allan said he always carries spare hats and gloves, a steel plate to fix a broken ski, a drill capable of drilling through a metal top sheet, epoxy and screws and spare 3-pin bindings, a tarp, and a 1 -pound sleeping bag if it is very cold. He also carries a pole repair kit consisting of a pair of 90-degree aluminum angles and hose clamps. An extra pair of adjustable poles, one with the leader, one the assistant, would be an expensive but effective alternative.

This entire clinic was brightened by the usual flow of war stories and wit from Professor Bardini. He once had a lady on a tour who could get no kick from her wax, so he mixed all the waxes in his pack. The color was ghastly but she had a kick like a mule. When asked what he called this mixture, he said, "Ultra Brown."

Allan, Carol Broberg, and I celebrated the end of the symposium by shredding the mountain from the Top of Three to the lodge. Try that on your Fisher Crowns!

Good News! Fresh powder at Mammoth for Nancy Gordon's birthday January 17.

Dear Mugelnoos

January 10, 1996

We all wear a big badge that says, MAKE ME FEEL IMPORTANT".

The latest issue of Muglnoos helped put a little shine on my badge. I read about my photo appearing in the '96 Bear Mt.

guide and got excited. So I got a copy and checked it out. Low and behold there I was looking goofy. What an ego booster. After a rotten week and letting things get to me I open the mail and find mugelnoos which gets read first, of course, and spot this little piece on a photo of me in the guide. This may not sound like much but as a photographer who is always trying to sell photos, to see a shot of ones self goes a long way as an attitude adjuster. Self motivation some times only goes so far.

Thanks, to who ever spotted the photo and was cool enough to put it in our news letter. It made my week.

A salt water shoter waiting for SNOW.

Beat regards, Jim Valensi

Credit goes to Joe McCoy

THE SAN ANTONIO SKI HUT

(Some excerpts from my U.C.L.A. Ski Coach's article in the publication "le Chronicle du Couloir" Jan/Feb 1992)

BUD HALLEY

"The original group of So. Calif. skiers were largely UCLA students who also happened to be Sierra Club members. The group was led by Dr. Walter Mosauer, a herpetologist and biology professor at UCLA. It was common practice to hunt rattlesnakes in the desert after a day of skiing in the Sierra for the Austrian professor. Mosauer introduced the Arlberg technique and the word "mugel" to these early skiers.

After skiing on Mt. Baldy's upper slopes it was decided that ski life would be a lot easier and more pleasant if we had a hut at the bottom of Baldy's southern bowl. When we asked the Forest Service for a permit we were told we didn't have the necessary standing, backing or financial stability to qualify. So we transformed ourselves into a Sierra Club section, "The Ski Mountaineers Section," and gained permission to build our hut.

The catalyst who enabled us to transform our dream into reality was George Bauwens, a tough old German engineer and outdoor enthusiast. George was a slave driver who, by constant cajoling, threats and insults was able to meld our group of "loafers" into a productive unit.

Although I was called a "loafer" like every other member of the building and coolie crew, I think I never again engaged in physical labor as hard as this, nor ever again was in better shape. The hardest job was to carry the long 12 foot boards from the road up to the building site. Everyone had his or her special method of doing it. In my case, I stuck the boards through the shoulder straps of my rucksack, tied together the ends that stuck out in front of me, then created a tumpline out of a sweatshirt passed under the boards behind the rucksack and then knotted around my forehead. This created an ungainly but reasonably balanced load with one major disadvantage. Once you started out there was no way to sit down and rest; you had to make it all the way up Torture Hill and to the hut site before you could take the weight off your feet. After lugging up these loads, usually two trips per day, a simple rucksack load of 60-70 pounds of nails seemed like a vacation.

The original hut was built in 1936, and burned down the same year. Fortunately, we were rich enough to get burros to carry the big loads up for the rebuilding, which was completed in 1937.

New Owners for Mammoth Mountain.

Mugelnoos needs Articles, This is your Chance for Fame and Fortune, well there is no money involved, but your friends will talk about your exploits! Send articles and photos to the editor listed on page 2!



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