



# MUGELNOOS

MAY 21, 1996

Number 728

## March, '96 Ski Mountaineers' Trip to Mt. Baldy

I arrived at the Mt. Baldy parking area with anticipation looking forward to my second trip with the Ski Mountaineers. My first trip was the previous month at San Jacinto which was memorable for bagging the peak and my first snow camp on skis but conditions prevented us from getting in many downhill turns. I was now hoping the Baldy Bowl would live up to its reputation. Our group included leaders Mark Goebel and Paul Harris, Pete Matulavich, Diann Gill Fried, Reed Morse, Lisa Freundlich, Keith Himes and Dave Baron. As we headed up the road it was obvious I had some things to learn about packing light. I appeared to have twice as much gear as everyone else! Too bad I wasn't planning on staying a week.

We made the climb to the Hut in good time and were greeted by howling wind and cold temperatures. We stowed gear, had a quick brunch, and got ready for skiing. Russ Haswell showed up and joined us. We headed up the center of the bowl kicking steps into the softening crust. The wind soon died and, except for now being overdressed, we had perfect spring conditions for the climb to the peak. The frozen crust was just that on top so we had lunch and waited for the sun to do its work. The southwest face seemed to be softening first so we made the first descent there. Good spring corn had everyone smiling after a fast run down. The climb back to the top seemed disproportionately long and steep and I blamed the group for my toughest skiing day ever. Back at the peak we were greeted by the sight of a white sailplane looping around the summit as it worked the thermals coming up off the Mojave. We could hear the wings vibrating in the wind as it flew right over our heads. After lunch we headed across the ridge and down Baldy Beach encountering some icy crust at the top and more turnable conditions further down.

Back at the hut we soon had water boiling for dinner and had some pretty sumptuous meals. Dinner was followed by a relaxing evening sharing stories of ski trips, gear-talk, and what other SMS members had been doing. The day was topped off with Paul sighting the comet as it became visible to the north.

After breakfast and cleanup on Sunday, we headed across the base of the bowl and up the west ridge. Having taken numerous falls on Saturday I knew I had to work on some fundamentals to get back in control. I stayed on the top of the west ridge to ski on a gentler slope while the group headed up to the summit. They crossed to West Baldy and descended the southwest face. They climbed back up to the west ridge where we rejoined and reported excellent spring corn conditions. After a break we dropped into the west bowl and carved turns down and across all the way to the rock garden. I had realized a dream I'd had since I first heard of nordic downhill skiing, to carve turns down a big, back-country bowl. It felt great!

cont. pg 3

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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
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
Oct. ?	SMS Pot Luck Dinner	Andy Fried

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**SAN ANTONIO SKI HUT WORK PARTIES  
 June 1-2 & October 5-6, 1996**

The SMS has enjoyed many fine days at the Baldy Hut, and Section members are urged to attend a work party so we can do our part to keep this wonderful hut in shape for next season. Come up one or both days. Call Jerry Held at 714-751-8805 for additional details.

Ski Mountaineer's Peak Remains Elusive

April 20-21, 1996

Gerry Holleman Ldr. Marcia Male Asst. Ldr.

For the second year in a row, Ski Mountaineer's Peak remained a tantalizing prize that was just out of reach. Last year bad weather diverted us to Baden Powell where the weather was also bad; this year the choice was going to be Mammoth if the weather was bad again. Two feet of new snow fell during the week, but the weather forecast looked plausible Thursday night. Ten of us met at the South Lake roadhead under sunny skies on Saturday morning with hopes for repeating successful climbs of 1993 and 1994.

We parked near Parcher's Camp and walked up the road which was plowed nearly to South Lake. At the dam we dropped down onto the frozen lake and crossed large cracks which had formed at the edge of the ice when the level was lowered to provide room for the spring runoff. The lake surface was smooth and solid as we skied across the center over an island to the far end where a stream enters from Treasure Lakes, our campsite destination. So far so good, but the sun was getting warm enough to make the fresh snow sticky.

The ascent up the drainage to Treasure Lake is short, but awkwardly steep in a couple places, and the soft new snow made the task of breaking trail more difficult than usual. With some trail breaking help from Sam Adams, Marcia Male (in from Moose, WY to see if Sierra skiing is like she remembered), and Reiner Stenzel, we soon reached the bench below Treasure Lake, and proceeded to a campsite in trees on the east side below the lake where a stream provides access to running water.

The soft snow required a lot of packing to make a firm tent platform, but our kitchen required digging into a hard layer below the two feet of new soft snow. The weather was still nice enough for Al Christensen to consider sleeping out without a tent, but a few clouds were visible. After lunch we headed up the powdery north facing slope to the lowest Treasure Lake, and over to a long slope that comes down to the southwest corner of that lake. By now the sun was gone, and RJ Secor agreed that conditions were not good enough for his plan to climb Mt. Johnson that afternoon. In addition, the east facing slope on the west side of Treasure Lake was kind of crusty, but it never seems that bad on the way up.

Marcia, Reiner, Sam, and I climbed about 2/3 of the way up the slope southwest of the lake under peak 12047, while Lawrence Pallant and Al observed from farther down. Reiner made the first turn, and fell; Sam the second, and fell; me the third, and fell. That left Marcia, who didn't fall in the soft crusty snow thus proving the benefit of skiing every day in Jackson Hole. On the way back the crust turned to powder when we started down the 200' slope leading to our camp, and we could suddenly ski again which we did with accompanying whoops and hollers.

Snow showers started at about 3 p.m. and continued through the dinner hour to 8:30 or so. Pat and I joined Sam and RJ for a cozy meal under their pyramid shelter. The next morning the weather was clear for a leisurely breakfast while we prepared to go out early. Two weeks later our beloved corn snow was perfect in this area, but this weekend was at least a week too soon after the new snow. The variable snow didn't get any easier with full packs so about half the group negotiated the steep terrain back to South Lake with skins on. At the dam, a couple fisherman were anxiously awaiting opening day which was still a week off.

Overall it was an enjoyable trip with lots of beautiful scenery. Our one newcomer, Nora Papsian, had survived difficult conditions, and agreed with the rest of us that just being there was worth the effort. Only Mark Goebel was less than totally enthusiastic, and his problem turned out to be chicken pox which he had managed to avoid in his youth. Gerry

cont from page one.

Back at the hut we had lunch and enjoyed the sunshine. Reed couldn't get any takers on his offer to return to the summit so we finished cleanup and started down. The trail was dry below the Hut and the return hike was pretty quick. At the cars I bid farewell to my new friends. I was really tired but deeply satisfied as only a trip to the wildness can provide.

P.S. Some suggestions from a beginner's point of view. Everyone on the trips I attended was very friendly and helpful but some additional orientation on gear and trip details beforehand would have been helpful. How about the idea of doing some packing and gear demonstration at the monthly SMS meeting for new members? Or maybe the more experienced members would contribute some of their favorite back-country tips in the newsletter. If these were solicited from our members and compiled I am sure there is a wealth of wisdom available.

Jim DeRose

### SMS INCLUDED IN SAN GORGONIO HISTORY

A few weeks ago while hiking towards the snowy slopes of San Gorgonio, I paused atop Poopout Hill, located at the wilderness boundary on the Southfork Trail, to admire the view and noted two new signs constructed by the Forest Service. One is a chronological history of recreation on San Gorgonio that includes: 1931 - first ski ascent; 1934 - Ski Mountaineers of the Sierra Club founded, and San Gorgonio is a frequent location for outings; there is a late 1930's photo of skiers at the top of the Big Draw; and an early 1940's photo by Robert Frampton (an SMS founding member) of SMS members hiking to San Gorgonio carrying skis over their shoulders. The view of San G's imposing north face and bowls is well worth a detour to the Poopout Hill view point, and you can easily imagine those early skiers carving turns on those distant slopes. Sixty years later, and we are still hiking to San Gorgonio for our turns with our skis on our shoulders.

M. Goebel



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### Trail Permits Abound in Inyo Forest

The Inyo National Forest Wilderness Reservation Service is moving into its second month of operation and the phone traffic is beginning to slow down to a more normal Pace. As of April 30, 6,217 people have reserved permits to hike Mt. Whitney on overnight trips and 8,226 people have reserved permits for the rest of the quota trails.

The quota for the Mt. Whitney Trail is 69 percent full but the rest of the quota trails combined are only 1 percent full. During the quota period, there are 2,967 daily trail quotas that can be filled, not including the Whitney Trail. As of April 30, 31 of these quotas have reached capacity. Hikers are reminded that wilderness permits are not required in the Inyo Mountain Wilderness, the Boundary Peak Wilderness or the South Sierra Wilderness unless the destination is inside the GoldenTrout Wilderness. There are also a number of trails within the Ansel Adam's, and John Muir wildernesses which do require permits but are not on the quota system. On the Inyo National Forest there are 29 non-quota wilderness trails for which permits can be reserved at any time. Currently 37 trails have quotas applied to them.

Unreserved permits on quota trails are available at ranger stations the day before and day of entry. The Mt. Whitney trail is the only trail which requires a day-use permit. Day-use Permits for the Whitney Trail can be reserved through the Wilderness Reservation

(cont. next page)

### BALLARD STREET By Jerry Van Amerongen



Randy's the kind of skier who gives the fall line its name.

permits cont.

Service or picked up at the Ranger Stations on the day of or day before entry. Mt. Whitney day use permits are required only if the hiker is going further than Lone Pine Lake and only during the quota period of May 22- Oct. 15. The quota for Mt. Whitney day-hike permits has not been reached on any day so far.

For Wilderness permit Reservations, call the Reservation Service at (619) 938-1136 or toll free at (888) 374-3773. (from Review Herald, Mono County)

## Gear Acquisition Disorder

By Brad Rassler (Mammoth Times)

Why do we backcountry types collect so much crap? My theory is that it stems from our fear of death. By surrounding ourselves with magic fabrics of impenetrable fibers and charmed accouterments which we carry into battle, we're playing out an Arthurian drama which conjures images of mail jerkins and enchanted swords. The dragon we set out to slay each time we set foot on a mountain trail is our own fear of the unknown, of dangerous terrain and of uncontrollable weather.

It's one of the great paradoxes of outdoor pursuits: we use gear made of the most unnatural stuff to make more comfortable our communion with the natural. A certain amount of this fascination with technology is healthy and acceptable. After all, we can't walk around like savages can we? Just as we wouldn't show up for work one Monday clad in a mere loin cloth, we would be foolish to step into the woods with no more than an umbrella, a hope and a prayer. Indeed, there's a place for gear in our lives. It's just when that gear starts to make our lives more cluttered that it's a detriment.

But enough of the whys and wherefores. The angle of this piece is not to rail against the ills of conspicuous consumption; to do so would be an exercise in hypocrisy. I've already hoisted on my own petard; so be it. If it glides faster, lasts longer, carves easier, carries more comfortably, feels more natural, I'll take it. Like Bellow's Henderson, I want, I want. Just build a better-wicking layer and I'll beat a path to your door. If I'm defying death by arming myself to the teeth with stuff, then so be it. It's damn fun.

But it's also space consumptive, time constraining and expensive. I've got backcountry loot spilling out of my storage closet, and sharing space with my breakfast cereal. I can't pass by a gear store without stopping to drool over the latest gewgaws. And if the truth be told, on a ski instructor and freelance writer's wage, I can't really afford most of the stuff. It's when I buy it anyway that I

know I'm suffering from that dreaded affliction - Gear Acquisition Disorder.

There's a certain satisfaction knowing that I'm not the only one with the pox; after all, misery loves company. Best to cop to it and get on with life. But copping to our "issues" is much harder than to simply go on living in denial. And because those who frolic in the back of beyond won't easily admit to this most odious of maladies (ah, the shame in being called materialistic). I've constructed a little quiz to shock you out of your gear-consuming ways. After all, it's best to call a spade a spade before family intervention becomes necessary. Add up your score and see where your GAD angle of repose lies:

1. Your favorite topics of conversation involve inanimate objects. (4 points)
2. You can outfit three out-of-town friends head to toe for a backcountry trip with three generations of Gore-Tex. (6 points)
3. Your domicile contains at least one "gear room." (16 points)
4. You'll work for minimum wage as long as you get pro deals. (7 points)
5. Your idea of casual reading is perusing the annual buyer's guide of your favorite outdoor rag. (3 points)
6. When someone mentions titanium, your pulse quickens. (8 points)
7. You are hypersensitive when specialty store salespeople know more than you. (4 points)
8. You purchase gear based on a cost/weight ratio; the higher the better. (12 points)
9. Road trips are just excuses to air your excess gear. (9 points)
10. You mark time by recalling the year's in "running shoe models: "We met in '83; I remember because I was wearing the Adidas Infinity." (10 points)
11. You become maudlin when reminiscing about "classic" gear. (8 points)
12. When playing Scrabble, you look forward to drawing the letter "x." (13 points)
13. You own shoes and boots (or several of each) for every conceivable athletic exigency (and your friends call you Imelda behind your back). (7 points)
14. You file away hang tags for future study. (6 points)
15. Your mountain bike is worth more than your car. (12 points)
16. Road trips require at least three prominent modes of transportation on the roof rack - bikes, windsurfers, surf boards, kayaks, skis, etc. (15 points)
17. You attend outdoor trade shows for the sole purpose of bagging a great deal on gear. (20 points)
18. You're bummed because your "sig other" won't let you bring your new titanium-frame bike to bed. (25 points)
19. You bought this year's 4x4 mainly because of the

slide-out beverage holder. (30 points)

0: You're either an ascetic or have recently recovered from GAD. Congratulations. You've convinced yourself that it's chic to be retro - you proclaim wool the fabric of the '90s, ride a Schwinn Continental and claim to be happy. Go back to your self-flagellation, and no letters to the editor, please.

<15: Definite tendency to nibble at the fringes of gear consumerism. However, you're probably still healthy; put yourself on a gear diet for a few months, and you'll be just fine.

15-50: It's just a little character disorder, nothing to worry too much about. However, take note when you start bragging to your friends that you never, ever pay retail.

50-100: Addicted. However, it's nothing a little 12-step GAD recovery program couldn't cure.

>100: Beyond the pale of equipment neurosis, you're bordering on the psychotic. You've got one of two choices: Become a retailer or become an ascetic.

## GOING LIGHT

On our recent Hilton Creek trip I noticed that most folks who were newcomers to the SMS were carrying far too much weight. The more junk the equipment industry can sell the more money it makes. Suppliers compete on features, not performance. The results are 7-pound dome tents (not counting the poles) and ridiculously heavy first-aid kits. Maybe the leaders need to carry a little more, but participants need to cut their weight down and go faster to embarrass the leaders. Years ago, peakbaggers and skiers went to the extremes of cutting the handles off their toothbrushes and the metal ends off their shoelaces to reduce weight. We need to get back to that point of view. Speed is safety, and therefore lightness, not weight, is safety. One of the purposes of the SMS, stated in the bylaws, is to enhance safety by touring with a group. Every person does not have to be able to camp in ultimate comfort alone, because we don't ski alone.

A spartan reference on going light is the article by Bela and Mimi Vadasz in the Couloir (vol VII No. 2, Dec-Jan '94/'95). They say that a pack for a group multi-day trans-Sierra trip should weigh less than 20 pounds, with food. They suggest some heroic measures (floorless tents, for example) but those who are carrying 50-pound packs for a weekend trip should read this article. I find it hard to get my pack under 25 pounds, but a little work (and money) will get it closer. It is essential to share equipment, and the equipment has to work (my MSR Whisperlite died on the last trip). There is no need for a tool kit, maximum first-aid kit, stove, and tent for every person.

Ten Essentials: You need them all, but make them light. Don't carry all the maps and the maximum compass unless you are the leader. Put the maps in a ziplock bag, not a map case. Carry the lightest flashlight or headlamp you can find (with one spare bulb and battery set). The experts use penlights or tiny headlamps, not 3-D-cell spotlights. Extra food should be just a little more than you need (a couple of Powerbars, not gourmet meals for two days). Extra clothing should consist of maybe one extra top layer, not a whole change of clothing (but extra socks are essential). It escapes me why every person in a party carrying several gallons of gasoline needs to carry candles as firestarters. Somebody must be weak on the concept. Remember that in warm weather you can melt snow in your water bottle (always leave some water in it when you add the snow).

Of all the ten essentials, first aid kits are probably the heaviest. Do not carry a leader's first aid kit unless you are one of the leaders. You do not need to be ready for abdominal surgery, and cannot hope to be absolutely sterile. You need bandaids (the 2-inch size as well as the little ones), lots of tape, maybe gauze, maybe an Ace bandage (for wrapping difficult wounds; an Ace is useless for an orthopedic injury, except as a restraint). If you have tape, you don't really need moleskin. You do need something to stop severe bleeding (sanitary napkins are fine, but a shirt will do). You need little else. The rest of it can be improvised, and it is better to take a wilderness first-aid course and learn how to improvise than to carry a maximum kit from a backpack store with a lot of unnecessary junk in it. For example, if you have a knife (as you should), you don't need scissors. My fanny pack contains bandaids, tape, and some gauze, in a ziplock bag. And, of course, the 5th food group: ibuprofen (but acetaminophen, non-generically known as Tylenol, is safer).

Packs: The suspension on the best modern internal-frame packs is wonderful, but the packs are far too heavy, up to six pounds, which is ridiculous. A pack should weigh less than three pounds, as the early Keltys did. Internal frame packs weigh more, partly because of all the straps they think you need that you can't take off. Creeping featurism again!

Tents: Aerodynamically, dome tents suck, and they weigh far too much. They present a huge cross-section to the wind, and because of their gradual curvature they have high downwind turbulence, which makes them the first to go in a blow. They are for casual backpackers and KOA campers, not mountaineers; are you out to ski or play cards? Tourist tents are not efficient tents. Mountain tents have minimum cross-section, present sharp trailing edges to the wind, and if made of Goretex do not need a rain fly, with its extra weight and trouble. My two-person Goretex Early Winters Light Dimension (unfortunately no longer available) weighs 4 pounds, with poles. Would you enjoy four days in the rain in it? No, but it never rains in California. That's why for weekend trips I use a 1.8-pound

Goretex bivy sack.

**Sleeping Pad:** Use a 3/4-length Ridge Rest or ensolite pad, and forget the Thermarest, which is for car camping. It probably leaks anyway, or will when you need it. If you carry a fanny pad you can put it, or your pack, under your feet.

**Food and Cooking:** Forget the gourmet foods if you want to save weight. You can pig out on the way home. Many experienced skiers use freeze-dried foods from the market, not backpack foods. Stick to what you can add hot water to that does not mess up a pot. It takes extra fuel to melt snow to clean pots. Get rid of all the packaging you can.

**Clothing:** Each piece of clothing should be multipurpose. Do not bring one jacket for evenings and another jacket for days. Multiple light layers work as well as a big parka. Mimi and Bela suggested long underwear, mountain pants, a pile jacket, and a wind/rain jacket - nothing more, for a four-day trip. If this makes you nervous take extra long underwear (but you probably won't use it). Of course you need a warm hat and gloves along with a sun hat and glove

liners. Neck gaiters are very effective. You do not need extra mittens if you have extra socks.

**Day Pack:** When you are out skiing, you do not need to carry REI's entire inventory with you. Here is a quote from Joel Hildebrand's 1935 Sierra Club Bulletin article, Ski Heil: "Always take your rucksack if you are going more than a mile from the lodge. Put into it your sweater, wind-jacket, woolen mittens, wax, a couple of straps, lunch, a can of tomato juice, first-aid for yourself and your skis, flashlight, and matches." To this add the other items in the ten essentials (sun protection, map, compass). When there is avalanche hazard, add an avalanche beacon and shovel, or (even better) stay out of avalanche danger, because "The best way to get out of one is to wait for the spring thaw." (Comment by Bob Brinton in the minutes of the SMS, 1938).

When your pack is light, you will enjoy the skiing more, and be able to crank turns where others must snowplow. Because you will reach the destination sooner, you will get more skiing in, will not be so tired, and will have more fun.

Owen Maloy



**SMS 1969 at "Bud" and Margie Halley's home in Whittier, Calif.**

**Top Row:** Geo. Blundell, Walter Hennies, Ray Ingwersen, Mary Brinton, Merlin Thayer, and the Hennies son.

**Down a Row:** John Mendenhall, Eleanor Blundell, Opal Sneed, Ed Madsen behind Bob Brinton, Mary Jane Edwards, nelda (Christy) Madsen, Mary Ingwersen, Bill Davies, Bill and Ernestine Voss. **2nd Row:** Bud & Margie Halley, Howard Koster, Nate Clark, Bob & May Frampton, Nelson Nies, Glen & Mary Helen Dawson, Dick Jones **Front Row:** Agatha Davies & daughter, Adrienne Jones, Ruth Mendenhall, Dean & Louise Ashcraft, Joan Clark, Helen Hennies

## EVOLUTION OF A YODELER

(#4 IN "BUD HALLEY'S "SIXTY YEARS OF SKIING IN SO. CALIFORNIA")

"THE ADOLESCENT EFFERVESCENT", title of issue #1 I figured would catch the eye of a few. #'s 2 & 3 seemed the best place for "THE BIRTH OF THE SKI MOUNTAINEERING SECTION OF THE SIERRA CLUB. Now, where do my earliest recollections begin?

In December of 1937 our boy's group, "Trailfinders" had a camp at Big Pines near the area now known as MT. HIGH. I did help carry construction materials for the finishing-up of the floors and wall panels to the Mt. San Antonio Hut in 1939, but the first stem turns were through the picnic tables of Big Pines. There were some hugh toboggan slides and ski jumps built there, and there was the "Big Pines Ski Club Hut" on Table Mt. ("Sunrise"), but Dick Springer had not yet built the first chairlift. We encouraged others to take up skiing as "far safer than those uncontrollable toboggans that were crashing everywhere!"

I was 15, and you don't learn as fast when you can only make a few runs after climbing to the top. I love to see these little tikes today scooting down the slopes with their fannies a few centimeters off the snow, but I also think, "O, only if I had had such wonderful gear. A ski boot could be hiked in; A leather strap went around the heel, and ski length was "as high as you could reach!"

Ski Mountaineers gathered at our Keller Peak Hut at Snow Valley on Oct. 8, 1988 for the 50TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY of its construction. We opened a sealed box hidden in the cornerstone. This reminded us that in those days there was only the begining of chair lifts and Poma-paddles like T-Bars, otherwise you had to learn how to gradually squeeze a fast-moving rope and be sure to disengage yourself soon enough when you reached the top!

Lynn Newcomb at MT. WATERMAN is a long-time friend. Before he put in his "chair" in 1942 we college boys as usual climbed to the starting gate for the downhill race to thd road.

BADGER PASS IN YOSEMITE had a kind-of "Angel's Flight" set-up where one tin-boatload of skiers was dragged up the hill and the other sled-boat descended. I skied with my Trailfinders there and in Sequoia and then in college we had inter-collegiate "Meets" there at Easter with UCLA, USC, CAL-TECH., PASADENA J.C., STANFORD, SAN JOSE STATE, CAL., OREGON, AND WASHINGTON competing in "Downhill, Slalom, Jumping, & Cross-country."

The UCLA TEAM was coached by Wolfgang Lert. We had "try-outs" for the team over Thanksgiving Day Weekend at MAMMOTH, where a dirt road led into Dave McCoy's place and we used the rope tow. Christmas vacation found us in SUN VALLEY where we competed with Dartmount, etc., and were able to ski the whole week for \$50! (That included the lift at \$10/wk., 4 men in room, meals, and the cost of gasoline for the 24 hr. drive there.)

On the slopes of "Baldy" I heard my first "croaks" some called yodeling, but it was at "Switzerland Restaurant" in Los Angeles (near the Coliseum) the Moser Brothers entertained us with the real stuff!. I began to imitate one of their 78 rpm records, and have quite a collection of "schallplaters" that my European friends have given me since. Our whole family spent a sabbatical year in Europe in 1958-59 and returning there several times since, I still have them stopping me in the midst of introducing a friend and saying, "Bud, Yodel!"

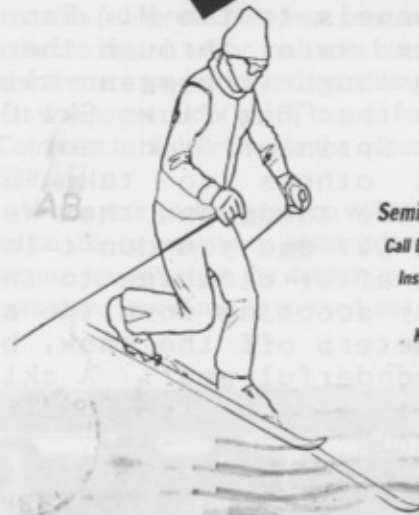




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