

RLH
6/2000

THE MUGELNOOS

May 2000

Issue # 759



The group at the Baboon Lks, ltr:

Maciek, Randy, Mark, Russ, John, Doug, Jim, Richard, Mike, Bahram, Terry, Ruth, Craig, Reiner.

POWELL and THOMPSON May 27-29, 2000

by Reiner Stenzel

This outing was a joint SPS and SMS trip, which included peak climbing and ski mountaineering. We had a great turnout of 14+1 participants, climbed both peaks, skied our hearts out, and enjoyed three days of sunshine in the beautiful Sierra Nevada. "We" means Mark Goebel, Bahram Manahedgi, JimDeRose, Russ Haswell, Randy Lamm, Maciek Malish, Richard Geist, John A.DiGiacomo, Doug O'Neil, Craig Connally, Susan Connally (private trip), Michael McDermitt from the Bay area, Terry Flood from the San Diego area, and Ruth von Rotz von Truckee. We met on Sat, 5/27, 6 am, at Sabrina Lke, arranged our common gear, shuttled our packs from the remote hikers parking lot to the trailhead, signed our lives away on all the restricted trip forms, and left by 7:30 am.

Of course, it started with hiking, since the snow line was much higher than Lke Sabrina (9,128'). To the fishermen we must have looked pretty weird walking in big plastic boots and heavy packs with skis up the trail on a summer-like day. After an easy mile on the trail, we crossed a gushing stream by balancing carefully over slippery logs and submerged rocks without falling into Bishop Crk. Patchy snow started near Blue Lke (10,400'), and past Donkey Lke (10,600') the trail vanished under the snow and it was time to ski or to posthole. By noon we reached the Baboon Lks (10,976') where we took a long lunch break. The large group had become spread out but we had radios to keep in contact. The Baboon Lks were partially open and I could not resist trying out my fishing gear. Two trout later we had a long discussion about our planned base camp at Sunset Lke (11,464'). The vote was for staying at the sheltered and scenic Baboon Lks instead of a barren, frozen, high-altitude lake. Since this was further from our peaks we agreed on an Alpine start next day. So we had a long afternoon free for skiing the local slopes and reviewing some mountaineering skills. Mark held a practice session for the proper use of ice axe and crampons, I set up snow anchors with skis, everyone tied into the rope and was belayed. Later we climbed on the ridge between Sunset and Baboon and carved many pretty turns into the soft spring snow. By 5 pm we regrouped at the community snow kitchen for dinner. Brook and rainbow trout were

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Meetings

3d Tuesday each month – November – May (except December) 7:30 PM Griffith Park Ranger Station Auditorium 4730 Crystal Springs Drive, Los Angeles, CA

SMS WEB PAGE

[HTTP:www.angeleschapter.org/skimt/](http://www.angeleschapter.org/skimt/).

Slide Show, Five years of trip reports, backcountry links and much more. Check it out.

Avalanche Beacons and SMS Historic Video For Sale

- SOS F1-ND Avalanche Beacon, 457 KHZ, \$168
- SMS Video of members skiing in the Sierra in the 1960s, plus rare skiing footage of Section founder, Walter Mosauer in 1932. \$10.00 (only 3 left)
Contact Mark Goebel: 714-963-9384

Avalanche info for Eastern Sierra

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The New SMS Board

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GPS

Clinton Administration Decides to Discontinue Selective Availability

Commencing May 1, 2000 the Clinton Administration decided to discontinue Selective Availability (SA), the intentional signal degradation in the Global Positioning System (GPS). SA was a method whereby the government had "jammed" the satellite transmissions to the GPS units rendering them accurate to no more than 200-600 ft. It had been a concern that terrorists might use a more accurate system as a guidance system for missiles or other craziness.

Termination of the SA will allow users to see a definite improvement in position and speed accuracy. Users of differential GPS (DGPS) will see accuracy within 1-5 meters. GPS receivers will automatically adjust to the termination of SA, no software upgrade or hardware changes are needed to enjoy the benefits.

This development will have obvious benefits for mountain navigation of the type we do, though a compass is still needed to determine direction and in the case of malfunction. And we spent a long time learning how to use those damned things.

Mugelnoos Editor Position Open

Anyone interested in volunteering for the editor position for next year should contact members of the new Board or the current editor for information. All you need is a computer, a desktop publishing program, and a little creativity. Printing is handled at the local photocopy shops.

Mountain Guide Joke Column

This Canadian heads down to Washington to climb Mount Rainer and heads into a high altitude pub where a lot of locals hangout. After a few watered down beers "Hey Bartender" says the Northern Alpinist " You want to hear a stupid Mountain Guide joke".

This hulking brute of a being turns to the climber " before you go too far I think you should know that I am a Mountain Guide, see that guy at the end of the bar chewing the top of his bottle, Yep, he's a guide. See those two guys behind you arm wrestling, You got it, guides. Now do you still want to tell that joke".

"Hell No!" says the Canadian climber " Then I'd have to explain it four times"

Q. How do you get a mountain guide off your front doorstep?

A. Pay him for the pizza.

http://www.mountainguide.com/Jokes/mountain_guide_jokes.htm

CHICKS ON STICKS

The Softer Side of Pear Lake

4/24 - 4/28

Joy Goebel and Dianne Fried

A two-woman contingent of Chicks on Sticks, Joy Goebel and myself, gathered together camping stuff, ramen, bagels, power bars and a little moxie and headed out to Pear Lake to act like women. A quick stop at Moro rock at sunset (recommended), then to the Ranger station to self register and camped free at Lodgepole (free until April 27).

The bears were quite active that night. Three campsites down a sedan had its rear door peeled down plus a dumpster had its lid peeled back (the kicker is that you will also be fined \$500 for bear enticement, even if the bear only wanted to lick the seats). If I hadn't heeded Joy's advice, the bears might have broken into my car to use the sunscreen, lip gloss, and lotion. (I'm sure much needed after a winter's hibernation). In case you need to leave food, there is a bear box in the parking lot in Wolverton.

After explicit directions from Indian Guide Mark Goebel, we found that the trees had sprouted golden arrows to guide us on our way.

After much chit-chatting and groaning we arrived at Pear Lake hut (closed). We set up our tent after a feng shui consultation as to the most desirable orientation and location and set off skiing.

We skied the eastern facing slopes in the late afternoon. The snow was not quite consolidated (it had snowed heavily 1 week before) and a bit wet/heavy thus requiring our utmost concentration to prevent those infamous telemark face plants. But, we set tracks we could admire from our tent door. After a less than gourmet dinner of unadulterated ramen

(planned for each night - obviously we need help here - where is Bahram when you need him?), we were snuggled in our bags by 7, and, with no men to do the dishes, we left them. Under the pretense of keeping warm, we ate Snickers bars at midnight (How often can you do that and not feel guilty?). It was light enough to read until 8:30 and while I transported myself back to 14th century England with the Canterbury Tales, Joy read and reread the Sequoia Park paper. She can now recite all the Park rules and regs AND the location of each and every bear box within the park. (There is a big hint here!)

Next day we skied to the top of winter Alta (where I could have used a bit of Reiner's testosterone). We traversed the ridge to find more consolidated snow and had a wonderful ski down. Still not satisfied, we skied the slopes behind our tent. The next day, we toured to the Tablelands to have a closer view of the Western Divide. We met 3 scary looking sun-fried guys and a dog from Colorado (I think the guys were from Colorado too) at the end of their Trans-Sierra. I am sure that the pot they were carrying was big enough to stew the dog in case they ran out of food!

Meanwhile, back at the Goebel camp, Mark was busy rescuing the frog, lovingly raised from a tadpole to frog kit, from under the dishwasher (which his son had flooded to keep the frog comfortable). Just to give you an idea of things at home with 2 small boys and mom off skiing for the week. Good work Dad!

The days were warm and sunny and the nights windy until our departure. A heavy wet pea soup fog lifted from the valley and enveloped the area. Keeping our eyes on the spaces between the trees, we were able to crank turns (really!) to just above the trail at 8000 feet. What fun thru the trees and around the boulders with an almost full, still too heavy pack. We were delayed an hour on the road out of Sequoia because of road construction. And, being hungry and cold, we whipped out the stove had a tailgate party of ...yes, Ramen.

San Joaquin Peek Tour, May 6, 2000

Mark Goebel

This outing will be remembered for memorable snow and weather. The snow reports sounded good, and the forecast was for settled weather. Well, it was all true to a degree. Ten skiers and two boarders met at the June Lake turnoff and following a short drive to the Fern Lake trailhead, we were hiking up the trail by about 8:30am. The trail traverses most of the first 1000', but finally it became lost in the snow and we kicked steps up the remaining 400'. Continuing over intermittent snow and through the forest for another half mile brought us to Fern Lake, 9000', and our first view of the route ahead, another 2600' of up between high canyon walls to a broad plateau and the final summit cone.

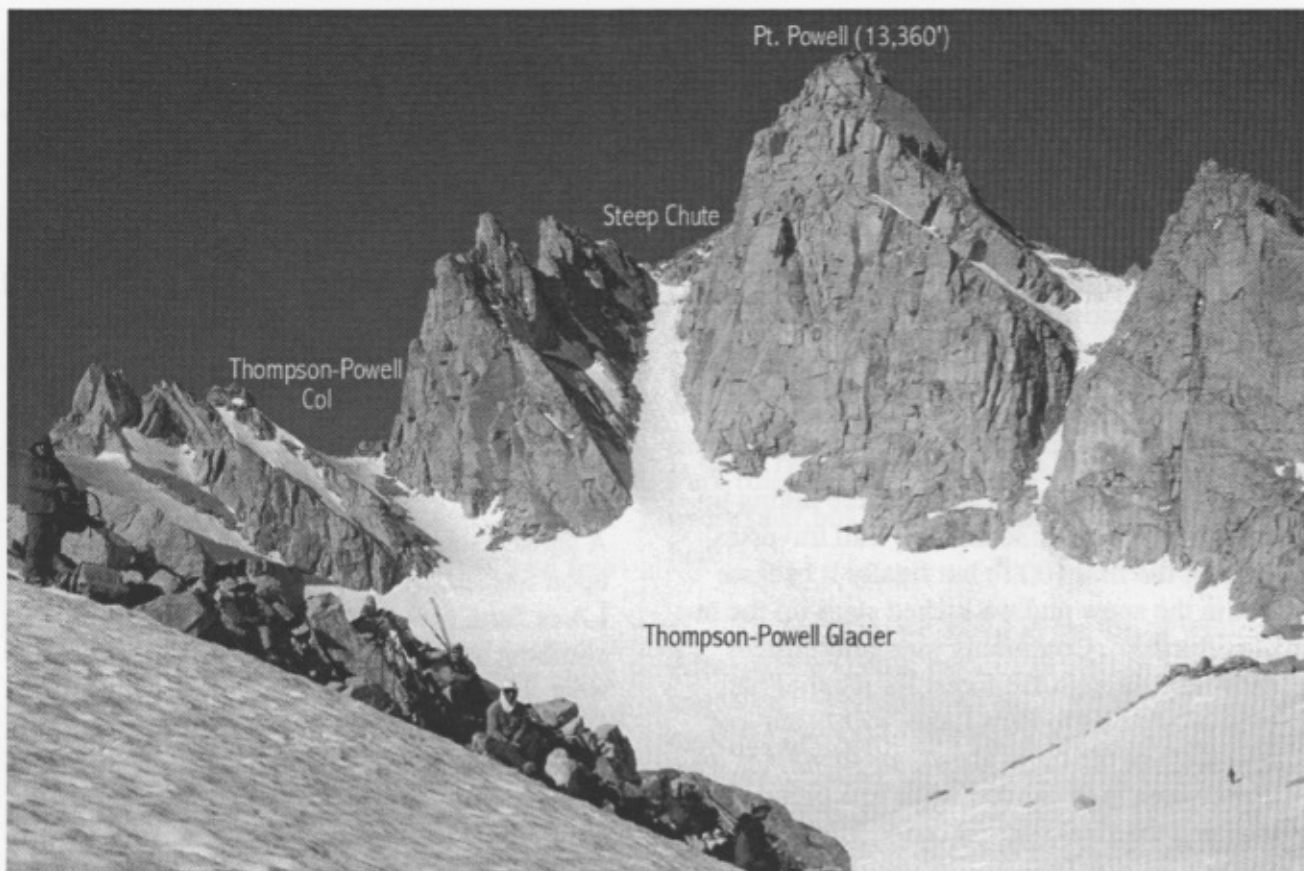
From the lake, most decided to skin up, except for one who had forgotten his skins. Fortunately, the snow was firm. The boarders each had a slightly different method. Wally, a veteran from the Eldeberry Cyn. trip, carries his board and skins up on short approach skis. Bill has a split-board that separates lengthwise to become like skis with super wide skins attached. Due to their width, Bill had a little difficulty traversing a section of steep, hard snow during the climb. Going down is of course no problem, and if the snow is very soft or crusty, it is easier to board than ski. On the flats, the boarder must start walking, or switch back to touring gear. Many boarders use a soft boot which might be less secure if they have to kick steps or climb on hard steep snow, but so far this has not been a problem.

Our route continued up the canyon's headwall in a series of steps. Clouds had been gathering during the morning and a strong wind sprang up as we climbed to the more open upper slopes. Over the final half mile to the peak, the snow became hard and crusty, the

clouds thicker and darker, I was wondering if we should continue, but the group pushed for the top. From the summit we could look over to Mammoth Mtn, and to Mts Ritter, Banner and the Minarets with their summits in dark clouds. While the views of snowy peaks, particularly north towards Yosemite were grand, I was concerned about the incoming weather and encouraged everyone not to linger too long before starting down. Finally, skins were off the skis, Wally headed down a different way, and surprise, surprise, the snow was smooth and just got better and better.

A short distance below the peak, we came upon SMSer, Masiek Malish. He left home in LA at 5am, drove to the trailhead and started climbing at 10am. Looking none the worse for wear, he summited and caught up to the group as some reskied one steep section of silky corn. With many fun turns behind us, we were too soon back to Fern Lake. Continuing down through the woods with skis off and on, then over the brink on steep patches we finally regrouped on the trail. As we hiked the trail down to the cars, light rain drops were felt and clouds lowered over nearby peaks. Nearby OH Ridge campground was selected for Sat. night. Plans were made to meet at the Tioga Pass turnoff Sunday morning for a ski of Mt. Dana, but the weather had other ideas. Wind and rain increased and continued all night. New snow fell down to 8000'. In the morning we drove up towards the Pass only to find many large rocks on the roadway, with continuing poor weather, rain, wet snow, and poor visibility. Turning south, enthusiasm waned as conditions did not improve, and by Bishop, a late breakfast replaced thoughts of skiing for John, Mark, Keith, and Bahram, followed by a visit to East-side Sports and the Independence Museum.

Thanks to Keith Martin for filling in as Assistant Leader. Participants: John Anderson, Bahram Nanahedgi, Bill Seaman, Jim DeRose, Jan St. Amand, Wally Drake, Mike Seiffert, Lorene Samoska, Gene Drabinski, and Craig Connelly.



(Continued from page 1)

fried in butter, together with onions, potatoes, tomatoes and a twist of lemon, a real delight. We dined and talked in our tight, but cozy kitchen until it got dark. Spring time is such a delight, no mosquitoes, and no bears to worry about.

On Sun, 5/29, the alarm bell was ringing at 4:30 am. For a large group it usually takes a bit longer to get ready, thus by 6 am we were all on our way. We cramponed up the creek drainage to Sunset Lke, carrying our skis on light daypacks. Early in the morning, the lake was frozen solid and we could safely walk across it. After another ascent up a long moraine we were on the Thompson-Powell Glacier and had a clear view of our route.

There are two obvious choices to climb Pk Powell: A steep chute leading directly to the plateau and summit, and the gentler Thompson-Powell col (right side of two cols) which leads to the Southwest side of Powell from where one can ascend the plateau via easier chutes. I took 9 participants up the chute while Mark took 5 over the col. My plan was to continue from Powell to Thompson while Mark planned to climb Powell only. We left our skis close to the col where we would return from Thompson. In retrospect we should have carried our skis up the chute since there was more snow on the South facing slopes of Powell and Thompson than we had expected. Climbing the

snow filled chute in the morning presented no problem of rockfall or sliding. But it was a good workout, especially for the first person kicking the steps by frontpointing. We switched leads and when Maciek had his turn it became very quiet in the chute. On the plateau we enjoyed a great view of the endless range of snow covered Sierra peaks. Since Mark's group was still way below the plateau, we proceeded and summited Point Powell (13,360') by about 9am. [the SPS peak is not the same as Mt. Powell (13,364') on the Darwin topo map, see Echo #43, 1999].

It was a pleasure to sign the SPS peak register as the first group in 2000, particularly in half-filled booklet from 1964! We called Mark by radio and later rendezvoused with his group as they came up the Southwest slopes where we would descend. Since we had no skis the next best fun was a long glissade down to Lke 12,120'. After our numb rear ends had recovered we began the ascent of Thompson via a steep snow filled chute between 12,400' and the plateau at 13,200'.

On the second peak climb, the pace began to slow down, perhaps because energetic Russ was not leading. He had come down with food poisoning and waited for our return. But Jim was in top shape and helped blazing the trail. Mark spotted us from the summit of Powell and radioed that our group moving up the chute looked like flies on a window. But it was



The group at the dining table

more crawling than flying. Finally, by 1 pm, the first were on the top of the cl.3 summit block of Thompson (13,494'). A cold wind was blowing but the view on the cloudless day was superb. From Goddard to Darwin to North Pal, every major peak was in clear sight. A minor disappointment was that the peak register, a cast metal box with bottom lid, was empty. So we left a sheet with our names and a pen, took some pictures, snacked and returned.

We descended slightly different route, i.e., a snow-free chute filled with quartz, interesting green and black rocks, one of which now sits on my desk. After barely avoiding some rock releases we returned to the snow and plungestepped or glistaded down, then traversed and climbed back up into the Thompson-Powell col. The exercise of climbing two SPS peaks began to wear us out, even 200 hp Bahram fell behind. But the best was still to come: After exchanging ice axe and crampons for skis and poles it was a delight to telemark/parallel down the col and glacier, leaving many pretty tracks behind. At 3 pm the spring snow was getting pretty soft and the tracks were occasionally interrupted by holes. Conditions were just right for fat skis. Ski-less Terry continued his workout downhill. He wisely chose a detour around Sunset Lke since crossing a narrow snow bridge near the open shores was possible on skis but not on foot. More turns brought us back to basecamp at the Baboon Lks where we regrouped with the Powell climbers.

We were all satisfied with a fine day of ski mountaineering. Thanks to our early start it was only 4 pm and we could now enjoy a long relaxed

afternoon. Some rested, some took an icy bath, I pulled out three trout for dinner. We all gathered for dinner in the snow kitchen, which came with a source of freshwater: Apparently, we were so close to the lake that digging into the snow produced a nice waterhole. After sunset it became breezy and cool and we retired to bed by 9 pm, just after a beautiful moonrise over the Thompson Ridge. In the night gusts of wind shook trees and tents.

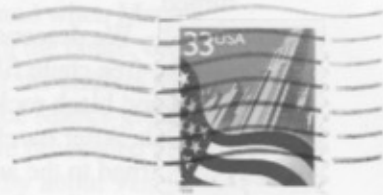
On Monday, Memorial Day, we got up leisurely at 7 am, ate breakfast and packed in the sunshine, and hiked/skied out by 9:30 am. Skiing down with full packs through trees and bushes is another backcountry experience which lift ticket cannot provide. The fun ended near Donkey Lke where we rediscovered the trail and marched out like normal hikers. At Blue Lke we regrouped for lunch, and at the South Fork of Bishop Creek we had another interesting stream crossing. It's interesting to see the variety of approaches in a big group: Some did a ballerina dance on tele boots over slippery logs, others walked barefoot through the icy water, some did not care and plowed through the gushing creek with full gear, but luckily nobody fell in. By 1:30 pm we were all back at the cars, signed out and ready to hit the Muleday traffic.

It seems that everyone was satisfied with the successful peak climbing and skiing in beautiful weather and mountains. The leaders were especially pleased that the large group had no accidents/incidents. Shows that we had a wonderful group of fine ski mountaineers. Thanks, Mark, for helping to lead such an enjoyable outing. And thanks to Craig for the stats of the trip from his map program: 18.2 mi, 7,430', rt.



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