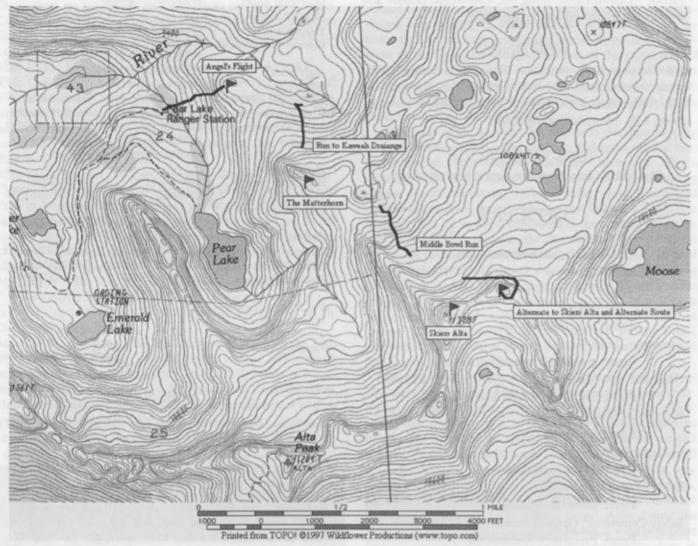


April 2001

Issue # 766



Pear Lake Route, 2001

(Map Courtesy of John Anderson)

2001 SMS Pear Lake Trip, February 23rd-26th

By Randy Lamm

This was the third year in a row for good snow on the north facing slopes of Skiers Alta. There were six of us on this trip: John Anderson, Jan St. Amand, Angel Ocana, Bahram Manahedgi, Mark Goebel Assisting, and I as the provisional lead. Although this was a stormy weekend, the weather cooperated just when we need it to. After an icy drive up to Lodgepole to get the key and a very cold Thursday night (later found out it had gotten down to 6 degrees F.) Everyone met up at 7:30 am for an early departure at the Wolverton trail head (Elev 7,240°, UTM 11 S 0344953E, 4051336N – for GPS users.) I was a little apprehensive because it had snowed about 6 inches of light powder the night before, and I was not looking forward to breaking trail. Nevertheless, the light pow turned out to not be a big problem, and with 200 HP Bahram, and uphill Ocana taking over it turned out to not be any problem at all!. After only about an

(Continued on page 4)

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EDITOR MUGELMAILER Lorene Samoska Pat Holleman

NEXT ISSUE

May issue deadline is May 5th, 2001. All letters, photos, slides, or articles should be sent to Mugelnoos editor, Lorene Samoska, 701 Craig Avenue, La Canada, CA 91011. Materials can be sent by IBM disc or emailed to samsei@earthlink.net. Electronic photos and articles are preferred and appreciated.

MEETINGS

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

SMS WEB PAGE

The link is: http://angeles.sierraclub.org/skimt/

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FOR SALE

For Sale: This year's Big Easy Tua telemarking skis brand new 170 cm. \$350. (retail \$475+tax). Petzel ski-alp AT binding \$150 like new. Koflach AT boots men's size 5 1/2 \$75. Tyrolia AT bindings \$75. Snowboard 147cm with Burton bindings and Sorel snowboard boots \$125. E-mail Ruth: mtngoat@gbis.com

For Sale: Tua Escape S (waxless) 210 cm, telemark binding, used 5 times. Retail over \$345, sell \$95. Tua Transalp 197 cm. New, never mounted. Retail \$270, sell \$125. Dynastar Telmark 205 cm, telemark binding, like new. Retail: \$345, sell \$95. Dynastar Gaurou Alpine snowboard 163 cm, Original Sin LOFO alpine bindings, like new. Retail \$645, sell \$175. Fischer Country Crown (waxless) 210 cm, telemark binding. \$30. Dynastar CrossComp Alpine 205 cm, Marker M48 Titanium bindings. \$90. Leki Poles: Super Extreme-3 Section, new: \$65. HI TEC Alpine 50 in. & 48 in., new: Retail \$100, sell \$70. Excel touring pole 150 cm: \$30. Synergy internal frame pack. \$50. Al Tapia (661) 242-2205. Email: mtnbiker@frazmtn.com

For Sale: Crampons: Grivel G10 New-Classic. Light but sturdy 10-point. Adjustable. Excellent condition. REI wants \$95; steal 'em for \$50. Craig 626-705-6099 or sprocket_toil@hotmail.com.

(Continued on back page)

Calendar of Events

Apr 21-22 Sat-Sun TI: Onion Valley Car Camp and Ski, Leader: Randy Lamm Co-Leader: Tom Marsh. Replaces Tour De Peaklet scheduled for April 21-22.

April 28-29 S at-Sun TI Mammoth Lakes Area Day ski, Leader: Tom Marsh Co-Leader: Gerry Holleman. Replaces Onion Valley ski originally scheduled for April 7-8.

May 12-13 Sat-Sun TI: Dunderberg Pk (12,374'), Mt Dana (13,374'):Two excellent peaks with long, wide open ski slopes. Dunderberg on Sat, 2874' gain, and Dana on Sun, 3407' gain. Car camp Sat nite. For advance intermediate skiers or better. Send recent experience, address, phone #, and ride share info to Ldr: Mark Goebel. Asst: Tom Sexton.

May 12-16 Sat-Wed Ski Mountaineers/Sierra Peaks

TM: Center, Keith, Bradley: Ski mountaineering to some cl2 SPS peaks. From Onion Valley ski via University Pass to Center Basin. Set up base camp and ski peaks with daypacks. For advanced skiers and SPS climbers with snowshoes, ice axe and crampons. Send e-mail/sase w experience to Ldr:Reiner Stenzel. Co-Ldr: Ron Hudson

May 12-19 Sat-Sat T: Yosemite High Route Trans-Sierra: Classic Yosemite High route tour from Silver Lake to Badger Pass in Yosemite National Park. Opportunity for many diversions on this 45 mile ski adventure. For strong interm. to advanced skiers with pack skiing experience. Metal edged skis, climbing skins and avalanche beacons required. Send e-mail/sase with experience to Ldr: Tom Marsh. Asst: Joe McGuire.

May 15 Tue Ski Mountaineers Monthly Meeting: 7:30pm Griffith Park Ranger Station. Bahram Manahedgi will be showing slides from his ski mountaineering trips to Mt. Damayand in Iran.

May 26-28 Sat-Mon Ski Mountaineers/Sierra Peaks TM: Mt Whitney, Mt Muir: Ski/climb our highest SPS emblem peak. Ski down open slopes from Trailcrest to Whitney Portal, snow conditions permitting. For advanced skiers/boarders, climbers with ice axe and crampons. Send e-mail/sase w experience to Ldr: Reiner Stenzel. Co-Ldr: R.J.Secor.



Fresh Tracks in the West Bowl of Mt. Baldy (Above) (Right) Jennifer Iceland and John Anderson below the Hut

Baldy Hut Weekend March 10-11 by Don Pies

As the final winter storm cleared Mt Baldy on the morning of March 10th, SMS'ers made their way up the Hut Trail in some of the most pristine scenery I've witnessed in the area since my first visit in 1974. This was the last of a series of storms over several weeks which allowed us to ski from the cars to the hut on Saturday and all the way back to the main road on Sunday. The more adventurous group of Stephen Bates, Walt Davie, Gil Estrada and Bahram Manahedgi pushed an early weekend on Friday night. Under blizzard conditions with headlights, they made two assaults and two retreats back to the cars, and finally settled down around midnight at the Snowcrest Lodge. The rest of the group arrived early in the morning from various destinations between San Diego and Santa Barbara. Participants included John Anderson, David Baron, Jennifer Iceland, asst. leader Bill Lingle, Reed Moore, Don Pies and Mark Vogt.

The jaunt to the hut was a bit tedious as skis kept scraping away the fresh surface snow and then sliding on the icy base layers beneath. Ski crampons would have been nice. After a recharge at the hut, it was time for a mass powder shredding session on the mountain. Variable soupy skies discouraged summit attempts for the day, but that was OK since Baldy was offering some of its finest conditions in the west bowl region. And to add icing to the cake, the tree section next to the bowl was being unusually friendly to skiers. Gil Estrada concluded his day by making a sweeping traverse to the top of the long gully above the hut. This run is an overlooked treasure he has coined GilSki. Walt was less fortunate on his last run when a dense whiteout caught him on west bowl and caused such an intense case of vertigo that he was nauseated for two hours. The evening was spent in classic Baldy style, warm friendship and fine food thanks to Bahram and Gil.

Sunday was a stellar day for backcountry skiers. Deep blue skies lured us out of the hut and toward the summit early. By mid-morning a constant parade of skiers was either climbing up the airplane gully or setting perfect tracks down its length. The soft snow gave way to crust only on the summit plateau. Reed had an unfortunate experience that taught us all



a lesson. "If you lose your ski pole basket, take your hand out of the strap." After losing his basket, a solid pole plant dropped the tip deep in the snow and changed the pole into a permanent fence post. Reed kept going and so did the top section of his ski pole. The greatest challenge of the weekend was the return to the cars in whiteout conditions and variable snow. But who's complaining since it's a rare Baldy weekend when you only take your skis off at the hut!

(Continued from page 1)

hour or less we found the Panther Gap Junction (Elev 8040' UTM Coord 11 S 0347115E, 4050883N) and started up towards Heather Gap, another 2 hrs or so, we topped out at Heather Gap (Elevation 9,460', UTM Coord 11 S 34348666E, 4051859N). After a brief lunch – snack we skied with skins on downhill thru the dry powder to Heather Lake at 9,260'. Next we crossed Heather Lake, and climbed a short hill overlooking Aster Lake – except we could not see it due to the snowy conditions. In order to avoid the avalanche risk on the slopes separating Emerald and Pear lake we made a low detour into the drainage leading up to the Pear Lake Hut.

At around 2:30 we arrived at the hut to find it empty and cold (Elev 9,200', UTM 11 S 350266E, 4052270N) after everyone securing their favorite bunk, we set upon getting the pellet fueled heating stove going - we got it going, but could not get the heat in the hut above 50F! (The current Pear Lake stove is tricky, it was not until the end of the trip when Jeff the caretaker arrived that we learned how to do it. - The trick is to put the primer fuel and a can of pellets on the burning wood chips and let it go for a real long time - like 20 or 30 minutes, with the flew open a little. Make sure all the ashes are cleaned out. Those pellets go for a long time, after about 30 minutes turn the motorized dispenser dial to the 3 o'clock position and close the flue. Jeff got the temp up to about 60 a record! FYI- I think the Ostrander hut has a better stove!) Our next task was to trap the marmot living in the privy. After several close calls we trapped him in a garbage bag (which we used to take him to the top of Skiers Alta for a one way trip to Mineral King, so that he could have change of diet brake lines, radiator hoses and anti-freeze!)

After each SMS'er claimed his or her bunk, we suited up to venture out into the storm to ski Jeff's run. This entailed a climb up towards Pear Lake and up to the ridge separating Pear and Emerald Lakes. This was the driest powder of the trip - like talcum powder - so slippery you had to hold your skis while putting them on -- frictionless runs down the slope above the hut's front door. I was totally nakerred after the hike in and that run, but Angel, seeking to get his money's worth, hiked up again for another couple of runs. Snug in the Hut, Bahram prepared the first of a series of delicious meals. Tonight' menu was spaghetti. Aside from the awesome snow, Bahram's cooking was a major highlight of the trip - his food rivals the Selkirk Culinary Experience - Reudi, you need a new chef? After dinner another storm moved in - this time more like a Sierra Dumper. The next morning -- Sat, we awoke to a couple of feet of new snow, not the light dry stuff from Friday, but not totally sierra cement either. Due to the storminess we continued to ski the slopes around the hut. Richard Geist, along with a friend, was there on a private trip. Richard found some nice knee deep stashes for us on the gullies going back down to the path between Emerald Lake and the Pear Lake creek drainage. We had to balance our need for gravity wells, with our fear of avalanches. The snow was more viscous - instead of 5 wt. Wasatch grade, we were skiing 40 wt. Sierra (however still better than the dreaded 90 wt. Sierra Cement Gear Oil variety). We traded off between making a few runs, going into the hut to eat and warm up and going back out. It snowed all day and got very deep. We were

worried that it had snowed too much and that instead of making the ascent to Skiers Alta, we would instead be building an addition to Hut's guest room – the Igloo below the hut.

We had a turn for the better as the next day - Sunday dawned clear, or at least not snowing. While Richard and friend head back to Wolverton for the drive home, the rest of us built a skin track up towards the Matterhorn looking peak above Pear Lake. After making the ridge below Matterhorn, we made our way to the shelf which separates the bowls coming directly off of Skiers Alta and the lower headwall which descends to the Kaweah River Canyon running up to the tablelands. After some discussion about route finding, Mark suggested that instead of taking the usual ramp up to Skiers Alta, we traversed around the corner to the east which is above Moose Lake and gained the peak just to the east of 11,328' (Skiers Alta.) This alternate was to avoid the ominous looking cornices overhanging the ramp to Skiers Alta. Since there had been some wind there were areas of slight crust. Still, the skiing was pretty good and Angel found us a good steep slope to lay some 8's down above the small spring at just s. east of the Matterhorn at 10,200' (Bowl Run on Map). We made several runs down that slope. As it was starting to get warm we started to make our way back to the hut. As we were traversing the slope towards the Matterhorn, we eyed the inviting steep slope down towards the table lands canyon (actually I believe the Kaweah river drainage). It looked inviting - a long vertical drop, but was it safe? A few test turns felt good and no crust. We S'd down to the bottom, -- for me the best run of the weekend - thru consistent fairly easy shin to knee deep powder with full weighting and unweighting for an uninterrupted 800' of vertical drop. Then an easy traverse and skiing down the slopes on the west side of the Matterhorn down to the hut.

When we got back to the hut, Jeff was there with a friend. Jeff and friend decided to go have a ski and, Angel wanting his money's worth joined in. They climbed back up to the Matterhorn ridge and beyond skiing the slope we had just skied. On the way back they skied a steeper longer slope off the Matterhorn Ridge, dubbed - "Angel's flight", when Angel molested the powder on the tight contour lines off the end of the Matterhorn ridge. That night we dined on Bahram's Kabob dinner. Monday morning we packed up and found Jeff's trail from the previous day to make it an easy out for us. From Heather Gap down we had decent powder transitioning into heavy stuff. Eventually we joined the toboggan track and made it back to the cars in good time. We found our cars with 3' of snow on them and dug out. All in all good pow, good food, and a good trip with good friends. Looking forward to doing it again next year!

* * *

Mt. San Jacinto March 3, 2001

By Randy Lamm

Following the Pear Lake trip this was my second provisional lead with a change of location to San Jacinto instead of Baden Powell due to the road being closed to Vincent Gap. Assisting me on this trip was Mark Goebel, and participants: Jan St. Amand, and Mike Seiffert. Also along at the tram stop

getting the scoop and recovering from a knee operation was our editor Lorene Samoska. After getting on the first tram at 8 am and signing in with the ranger we headed up the Round Valley trail to the first switchback then we headed cross country to the northwest towards Tamarack Valley and just west of Miller Peak. This shortcut saved a lot of time and after about 2.5 hrs we reached the summit. Across a sea of clouds we could see Mt. San Antonio appearing crystal clear looking like Denali, or Annapurna. To the North we had a clear view of San Gorgonio. We took a few pictures and had a look down the Sastrugi crossed entrance to Snowcreek. No thanks maybe next year. We then skied down to the emergency hut/summit shelter, had a bite to eat and then started our descent. It was not so easy! The sastrugi and breakable crust made it hard for both Teliers and Rando skiers. What contrast to the powder at Pear Lake the weekend before! Mark had an idea that maybe the snow would be better on the north face of Jean Peak. So Mark, Mike and I climbed Jean, while Jan took a break. We climbed up to the ridge separating San Jac and Jean. The snow was still light and dry. After pealing our skins we headed down, not too bad. We got some good pow, caught up with Jan. Next was the dreaded trip out. We negotiated sastrugi, breakable crust, hard pack and toboggan runs. After a lot of faceplants, swearing and snowplowing we eventually made it to the ranger station. After turning in the permit, we still had one more hill to climb - the path back to the tram. Once in line we could relax and we ran into a climber we had met on the top - a meteorologist who had spent several years at the South Pole and who had just climbed Mt. Logan the year before - Not bad for being in his 60's. A quick ride down on the new revolving tram and we were back in warm weather. Well the snow was better at Pear Lake, but this was good exercise and practice skiing crappy snow. Thanks to Mark, Jan, Mike and Lorene for joining on this trip.

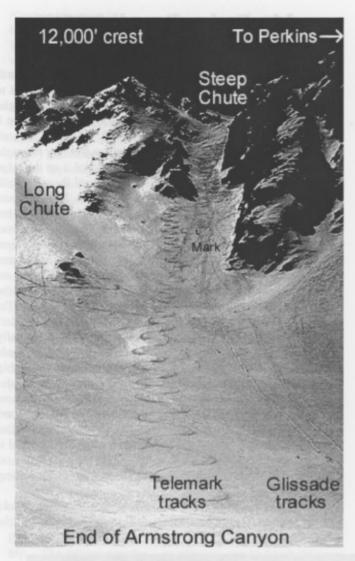
Mt. Baden Powell 3/25/01

By Randy Lamm & Craig Connally

After hearing from Reiner at the Angeles Chapter Awards Banquet that the road to Vincent Gap was open, I decided to do a private trip to Baden Powell. Joining me were Bill Lingle. Craig Connally, Angel Ocana and Wally Drake. We met at 8 am and started hiking at 9. Even though it was in the 50's already, the snow was firm having been below freezing the night before. Due to the firm snow we all boot kicked it up the ridge line which the hiking trail follows. Again Angel floated uphill, never tiring, carrying Craig and Wally with him. Bill and I settled into a grinding, grunting trudge up hill. Eventually 3 hrs later we summitted. Seeing another skier - Russ - a tele stud visiting from Tahoe, jump into the couloir descending east from the summit towards the Mt. High ski area, Angel and Wally decided to follow - Wally on Snow board, Angel on Rando gear. As they dropped out of sight heading down to the bottom of the north face of Baldy, Craig, Bill, Russ from Tahoe and I bided our time listening to the rock fall and wondering if Angel and Wally were at the point of impact. Eventually Wally and Angel came back up and we all traversed towards the east from the summit to look for the entrance to the big couloir (gully) which we could ski to the parking lot. We descend through the trees and hit some decent and some so-so spring/corn snow off the sides of the gullies. We traversed over to the east skiing pitches on two other gulleys. After 2,800' of vertical we arrived at the old mine road and hiked it a short ways back to the parking lot. All in all a good day on Mt. BP, and thanks to Wally, Craig, Bill and Angel for joining

Below is a shot of Wally and Craig admiring their tracks at the bottom of the chute while waiting for a meeting of the Silly Hat Club!





Mt Perkins Mar 31-April Foolsday, 2001

By Reiner Stenzel

In the Alps most mountaineers, certainly the guides, are both climbers and skiers. In our Sierra Club Chapter, with a few exceptions, the peak climbers (SPS) don't ski and the skiers (SMS) don't climb peaks. With both skills, however, the spring trips to our Sierra Nevada become some of the best adventures. Thus, by scheduling joint SMS/SPS I hope to find others to share the fun of skiing and climbing. This report describes how our recent ski mountaineering trip to Mt Perkins went. The description may also fill a gap of trip reports for Perkins in the SPS archives.

Mt Perkins (12,566') is a cl 2 SPS peak on the Eastern Sierra crest, and the ascent via Armstrong Cyn makes a classic ski tour. We had a fine group of qualified people: Three climbers (2 list finishers!), propelled by snow shoes, one snowboarder, using short ascent skis, and five telemarkers. They were Steve Eckert, Brian Smith, Susan Clark, Wally Drake, Mark Vogt, Reed Moore, Joy Goebel, Keith Martin and myself. We met Sat at 6 am at the intersection of the Black Rock Springs Rd and Hwy 395, drove up to the Saw-

mill Creek Road, switched into 4WD cars at the power house, and ascended 2.6 mi on a dirt road (#12S01) to Scotty Spring (UTM 4088807N, 382280E, NAD 27, elev 5,660'). Perhaps one could have driven further up the old mining road, but nobody brought a humvee. Starting at 7:30 am on a sunny morning we muscled up 2,000' to the snow level near 8,000'. Just below Rudy Mine (8,400') a side trail leads into Armstrong Cyn. Here we skied/snowshoed up the steep, long, and remote canyon. Our scenic lunch spot was at the 10,000' level with views into Owens Valley 6,000' below and, in the opposite direction, the end of the canvon with steep chutes, a long ridge and our goal, Mt Perkins, 2,500' above us. Our peace was slightly disrupted by an avalanche from Perkins, triggered by a cornice breakoff We continued ascending the canyon to about 10,300' where, by 2 pm, we selected a safe and scenic campsite among the last trees. After the 4,500' climb without running water, the first job was to melt snow and replenish lost fluids. Then we set up tents, a snowshelter (Steve's cave) and a snow kitchen. Most of us drifted into in a relaxed state of mind. Only Wally and Reed climbed further up for an afternoon ski run. An avy beacon exercise found little enthusiasm until we finished our early 4 pm dinner. The wind picked up and by 6 pm everyone crawled into their bags. One reason was my request for an alpine start next morning, i.e., a 4 am wakeup call (could not announce that it was really 3 am due to change to daylight savings time). At last daylight, the mountains were in the clouds and the wind blew hard, so we were not quite sure about our summit attempt the next morning.

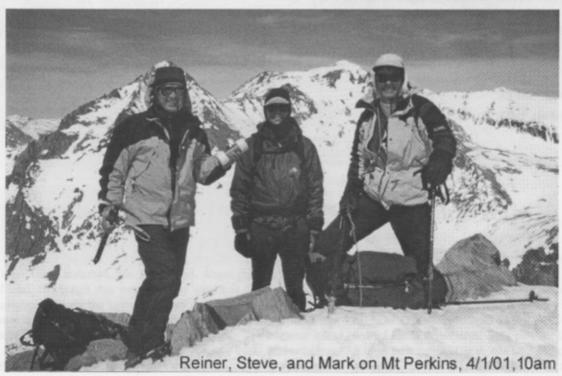
On April Foolsday the wind was gone (no joke), the sky clear, and we proceeded as planned. By 5 am we cramponed up the slopes to the end of Armstrong Cyn. Joy and Wally did not feel up to the peak climb and stayed at basecamp with radio contact to the rest of the group. There are two chutes leading up to the ridge, a left (southern) one which is longer but less steep than the right (northern) one. The choice was clear, why make detours? But even the steep (40-45 deg) right chute to the crest was long and exhausting. By 8 am seven of us we were on the 12,000' ridge. We left our skis since the ridge was unskiable, i. e., mixed rock and snow. We had a spectacular view to the west over many snow covered Sierra peaks, especially Mt Clarence King, Brewer, the Kaweahs stood out. But a cold wind blew again from the west and low clouds hung over the San Joaquin Valley. On the Mt Pinchot topo map the ridge to the summit looks flat and straightforward. However, the 20m contour spacing does not resolve several 30' obstacles along the ridge which, combined with cornices amount to a class 4 adventure. So we decided to contour below the ridge on the western slopes. We headed toward the first obvious high point on the ridge only to find out that Perkins was still half a mile further north. Perkins has distinguished red-brown rock while the ridge is grey granite. So we backed down from the ridge to continue our traverse. The western slopes are full of gullies separated by steep walls which makes it a slow and tiring traverse. We cramponed over steep snow fields and climbed over cl 3 rock walls. After the third gully Keith radioed that the tail of the group was getting tired. He, Brian and Susan turned back while I continued with Steve, Mark and Reed. After traversing at least six gullies we finally made it to a broad chute which lead straight to the summit. By 10 am we stood on the top of

Mt Perkins, tired but satisfied. We called the others by radio, ate and drank, took pictures, dug out the peak register from a plastic cylinder. It must have been rained on and was now frozen. Mark volunteered his armpits, and we managed to open a page without breaking it. It was a pleasure to sign in as the first group in 2001, and as #211 in my SPS stamp collection. The cold wind eventually drove us down and we retraced our steps. By 12 noon we were back at the main gully where our skis were waiting. Steve pulled out a handy plastic sheet, sat down in the now soft snow, and vanished down the gully. This is the joy of peak climbers. Skiers prefer a series of pretty turns instead of a broad straight track. But in a 45 deg chute this requires some attention. Jump turns are a must, rear ski weighting vital to avoid forward dives. While Mark and Reed were discussing to switch to the less steep chute I tried some jumps and it worked fine because of the soft snow. So we all descended the steeps. It is anaerobic, exhilarating, requires absolute concentration of mind and body to avoid a nasty fall. Snow conditions can changed from soft snow to hard pack within a few turns. The upper gully was of similar caliber as Bloody Couloir or the Wahoo Gully. But all fun comes to an end. By 1 pm we were back at basecamp, eating lunch and packing up. As we descended, the snow got really soft. Wally elegantly snowboarded through the mush with a full pack. The skiers had to struggle a bit more with balance. Engineer Steve used his frictionless seat to glissade with full pack. It was faster than skiing and had the advantage that you could not fall any lower. Snowshoers Brian and Susan had a real struggle on the steeps. Keith joined the struggle because each fall with a cement-filled pack costs at least a hundred calories. After we paid our dues in Armstrong Canyon it was still a long slog down the dry trail to Scotty Springs. Big lenticular clouds developed over Owens Valley.

By 5:30 pm, the last folks were back at the cars. Although the bodies were a bit tired after the 6,500' descent, everyone was in good spirits. We had challenging climbing and skiing, great weather, a fun group with a variety of skills, and a patient coleader Keith who deserves all my thanks for making the trip possible and enjoyable. Last, but not least, the trip will be remembered for a rare display of an aurora borealis on Friday night.







SMS ELECTIONS

It is time to elect new Officers to lead the Ski Mountaineers Section for next season. Please vote for no more than 6 in the enclosed ballot, and mail to:

> SMS Elections c/o Lorene Samoska 701 Craig Ave, La Canada, CA 91011

FOR SALE

(Continued from page 2)

For Sale: Heavy duty tire chains; fit tire sizes 205-14 thru 205/65R16. Class "S" for low clearance vehicles. In very good shape. Paid \$80, asking \$45. Also, have two other sets for smaller vehicles (Acco models 1122 and 1130). E-mail Dennis at dlandin@aol.com or call (818) 543-1241.

For Sale: Kastinger Yeti AT ski boots, men's size 43, used three times, \$100. Contact Jim at debram@ucla.edu or (818)970-5540

WANTED

Wanted: Avalanche Beacon, Probe, Snow Saw, Adjustable (snap-lock) Ski Poles, Climbing Skins (65mm). Ron Haky, 310-545-1602, email haky@earthlink.net.

Wanted: Any old avalanche beacons that will still transmit on 457 MHz to be used for practice. Men's Scarpa T2 boots, size 8-1/2, in good condition. Contact Jim at debram@ucla.edu or (818)970-5540



Mugelnoos

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