



Skiing Washington Volcanoes: Baker, Shuksan, Rainier and Adams

June 12-20, 2004 *Reiner Stenzel*

This trip was a sequel to last year's successful trip to the Oregon Volcanoes. We planned to ski the more challenging volcanoes in Washington and had a great ski mountaineering adventure. We were a group of five compatible skiers and climbers: Alvin Walter and Fred Gabbard from San Diego, Stan Huncilman from Berkeley, and Wally Drake and myself from the LA area. With two rated leaders (A.W., R.S.) it became an official SMS trip. We all flew into Seattle where we rented two SUVs to drive from peak to peak, usually camping in nearby campgrounds. We traveled north to south, adjusted our plans according to weather and road conditions. We arrived at the end of a two-week rain period and were very fortunate to experience five days of sunshine, which allowed us to summit Washington's two highest peaks, Rainier and Adams. Below are the details of our trip:

After meeting on Sat, 6/12, around 4pm, at the SeaTac airport we drove north on I-5 to Bellingham, took SR 542 to the Baker National Park and stayed at the Silver Fir Campground that is closest to the Mt Baker Ski Resort. The latter was of course closed and so was SR542 beyond the ski area. All along the way it rained and we arrived at a wet campground setting up the tents in the rain. Alvin and Fred slept in the seats of their car. My Bibler tent developed a leak. It could only get better, we thought.

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NEXT ISSUE

Next issue deadline is Jan 15th, 2004. All letters, photos, slides, or articles should be sent to Mugelnoos editor, Heiko Knapp, 2209 W. 12th Street Apt A, Los Angeles, CA 90006. Materials can be sent on CD or emailed to heiko.knapp@web.de. Electronic photos and articles are preferred and appreciated. For files or emails >2MB, please email me for special instructions.

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!

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The Mugelnoos is a newsletter published by and for the Ski Mountaineers Section of the Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter since 1938. Send subscriptions and address and email changes to: Pat Holleman, 1638 6th Street, Manhattan Beach, CA, 90266. \$15 per year payable to "SMS". Due in October. Subscription payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions.

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Cover photo: Reiner, Stan, Wally, Alvin and Fred on the Sulphide Glacier below Mt Shuksan, Cascade N.P. See the main article in this issue..

Calendar of Events 2004-2005 Ski Season

Jan 18 Tue SMS

Monthly Meeting at Griffith Park: "Skiing the Cascade Volcanos" by Reiner Stenzel. In two consecutive years the SMS has skied on 12 Cascade volcanoes in WA, OR, and CA. This year's highlight included the ascent of Mt Rainier. The picture and movie presentation will describe trip organization, travel, and nature. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Crystal Springs Ranger Station Auditorium.

Jan 21-23 Fri-Sun SMS, OCSS, PVSB

I: Ski Mountaineers at June Mtn: Practice your telemark/parallel turns on lift-served terrain. Join Andy and Owen as they practice their teaching skills, free ski with other skiers and SMS'rs, collaborate with other members to hire local PSIA professionals for group lessons or organize ski touring in local mountains. Something for everyone from advanced beginners to expert. Limited condo space available in Mammoth (must clean or pay for cleaning) send check for \$45 per person (SMS) to Keith Martin for 2 nights. Half day group lessons approx. \$60 per person through Mammoth Mtn for group of 5. Send check for \$60 (SMS) with ski level to Keith Martin for each lesson or take chances when arrive (pay any cost difference when arrive plus instructor tip). Send email or SASE to Keith if want more info. Ldr: Keith Martin. Asst: Reiner Stenzel, Andy Fried, Owen Maloy.

Feb 5 Sat SMS

TI: Thunder, Telegraph, and Timber: Ski the 3 T's in the San Gabriel Mtns. Intermediate or better skiing ability required, not for beginners. Metal-edged skis with skins required. Send experience, h/w phones, e-mail address to provisional leader. Ldr: Jonathan Meagher. Asst: Alvin Walter.

Feb 13 Sun SMS, MBC

TI: Mt Cerro Noroeste (Mt Abel, 8280'): Mtn bike partially snow covered paved road toward MT. Abel, 18 mi rt max, 2000' gain. When snow coverage is solid, abandon biking and continue XC skiing. Tour the slopes of Mt Abel. Bring light XC skis, attach to daypack during bike ride. Intermediate skiing and biking abilities reqd.(B/T2/E3). Trip may be rescheduled as snow conditions permit. E-mail or call with experience, h/w phones to provisional leader. Ldr: Lorene Samoska. Asst: Reiner Stenzel.

Feb 15 Tue SMS, SPS, HPS, DPS

Annual Joint Meeting of the climbing sections at Griffith Park: .HPS is the main organizer this year. 7:30 pm Crystal Springs Ranger Station Auditorium.

Feb 19-23 Sat-Wed SMS, SPS

TI: Silliman-Tablelands-Alta Traverse: A four-day winter tour through the western Sierra Nevada. Experience in snow camping, backcountry skiing, climbing and stamina required. Short car shuttle from Lodgepole to Wolverton involved. Metal-edged skis with climbing skins, avy beacons, shovels, and snow camping gear required. Send e-mail to leader. Ldr: Reiner Stenzel. Asst: Alvin Walter.

Mar 5-6 Sat-Sun SMS

San Gorgonio and Mt Jepsen: Ski the chutes and surrounding bowls from a basecamp. Intermediate or better skiing ability required, not for beginners. Metal-edged skis with climbing skins, avy beacons, shovels, and snow camping gear required. Send e-mail to leader. Ldr: Alvin Walter. Asst: Reiner Stenzel.

18-20, 2005 Fri-Sun Natural Science Section

O: Winter Ecology Workshop at June Lake. This trip fulfills the Natural Science 2-day requirement for the "I"-rating. Join us for two days of cross-country skiing, tracking, and naturalizing in the spectacular Mammoth-June Lake area. Intermediate ski touring ability required. This trip satisfies the Natural Science requirement for the "I"-rating. Cost of \$60 includes naturalist instruction, breakfasts and trail lunches, and accommodation at local Sierra Club members' houses on Friday and Saturday nights. Reserve a place by sending sase and check for \$60 payable to SC-Natural Science Section by March 10th to reservationist Ginny Heringer, 245 San Miguel Road, Pasadena, CA, 91105. Leaders Ginny and Jim Heringer. For more information, contact Ginny Heringer at ginnyh@ix.netcom.com or 626-793-4727

Apr 2-8 Sat-Fri SMS

TI C: Wapta Ski Traverse: Ski the Canadian Rockies answer to the Haute Route. Guided hut to hut ski traverse across the Wapta Icefield, staying at the following huts: Peyto Lake-Bow-Balfour-Scott Duncan. Chance to climb peaks along the way. Guiding cost around \$800 US. Fly to Calgary, pre-trip meeting in Canmore, drive to trailhead. Advanced backcountry ski skills required. 25% deposit due by end of Nov. E-mail experience, address, and h/w phones to organizer. Prov Ldr: Jonathan Meagher. Asst: Reiner Stenzel.

Mar 11-14 Fri-Mon SMS

TI: Wheeler Mt: Exploratory out-of-state trip to ski desert peak in Eastern Nevada. Bring metal edged skis with climbing skins, avy beacon, shovel and snow camping gear. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: Reiner Stenzel. Asst. Randy Lamm

Mar 15 Tue SMS

Monthly Meeting: Entertaining slide programs featuring equipment, safety and outings. Newcomers wel-

Calendar of Events 2004-2005 Ski Season

come. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station.

March 19-20 Sat-Sun

South Lake Base Camp. Stay tuned: Details to follow in a later issue of the Mugelnoos. Provisional Leader: Jim Couch Evaluating Leader: to be determined

April 2-8 Sat-Fri SMS

TI/C: Wapta Ski Traverse: Ski the Canadian Rockies answer to the Haute Route. Guided hut to hut ski traverse across the Wapta Icefield, staying at the following huts: Peyto Lake-Bow-Balfour-Scott Duncan. Chance to climb peaks along the way. Guiding cost \$800 US. Fly to Calgary, pre-trip meeting in Canmore, drive to trailhead. Advanced backcountry ski skills required. 25% deposit due by end of Nov. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: Jonathan Meagher. Asst: Reiner Stenzel

April 16-17 Sat-Sun SMS

Lamarck Col: Stay tuned: Details to follow in a later issue of the Mugelnoos. Provisional Leader: Mike Samoska Evaluating Leader: Tom Marsh

Apr 19 Tue SMS

Monthly Meeting: Entertaining slide programs featuring equipment, safety and outings. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station.

Apr 23-24 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Ski Mountaineers Peak (13,323): Our goal is to ski from the high point of Thompson Ridge down its long east slope. Sat hike and ski from below South Lake to Treasure Lakes snow camp, 1200 gain, 3 mi. Sat afternoon ski near by slopes below the Sierra Crest. Sun tour to Ski Mtneers Peak, 2900 gain, 4 mi rt, and then pack out. Requires intermediate or better bc skiing and snow camping experience. Send email/sase, past experience, phone, ride share info to Ldr: Leslie Hofherr. Asst: Mark Goebel

Apr 30-May 6 Sat - Fri SMS/SPS

TI: Onion-Boose Trip: Join this Sierra Crest ski tour from Onion Valley to Taboose Pass. Ski and climb by day, followed by happy hour in camp. Hi route goes via Kearsarge Pass, Dragon/Rae Lks, Baxter Lks, Twin Lks, Pinchot Pass, Lke Marjorie and Taboose Pass for a short car shuttle back to Onion. On the way there are optional ski ascents of such class 2 peaks as Gould, Baxter, Acrodetes, Cedric Wright, Crater, Wynne, Pinchot, Striped. Need advanced backcountry skiing skills, proper ski and snow camping experience, bring good food and the right spirits. Must have skied/climbed with the SMS/Ldrs before the trip. Extended ski pack touring experience req. Trip subject to modifications depending on snow and weather. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: Tom Marsh. Asst: Reiner Stenzel

May 7-8 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Mt Gibbs and Gaylor/False White. Ski Mt Gibbs and Gaylor/False White with car camping or snow camping in the Dana meadows. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: Jonathan Meagher. Asst: Leslie Hofherr

May 14 Sat SPS/SMS

MR: Bloody Mtn. (3826m): A day climb and ski tour of this peak near Mammoth Lks. Hike up the Laurel Creek Rd to snow line and climb frozen snow in the am. Climbers will curse the soft snow in the pm and skiers will enjoy a wonderful ski run before returning to the cars. 12 mi rt, 5,196 ft of gain. Restricted trip, ice axe and crampon exp required for climbers and skiers must have advanced skiing skills, metal edged skis, climbing skins, avy beacon, and shovel. Can be combined with the Mt. Morrison climb and ski tour on Sun, May 15. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: RJ Secor. Asst: TBA

May 15 Sun SPS/SMS

MR: Mt. Morrison (3748m): A day climb and ski tour of this peak near Mammoth Lks. Hike x-c to the hanging valley east of Mt. Morrison and climb frozen snow slopes in the am. Return by glissading or skiing soft pm snow before returning to cars. 6 mi rt, 4,580 ft gain. Restricted trip, ice axe and crampon exp required for limbers and skiers must have advanced skiing skills, metal edged skis, climbing skins, avy beacon, and shovel. Can be combined with the Bloody Mtn. climb and ski tour on Sat, May 14 Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: RJ Secor. Asst: TBA

May 17 Tue SMS

Monthly Meeting: Entertaining slide programs featuring equipment, safety and outings. Newcomers welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station.

May 21-22 Sat-Sun SMS

TI: Basin Couloir: Base Camp in the Buttermilks. Day tours to ski Basin Couloir and the slopes of the Bishop Bowl. For strong, well conditioned skiers with metal edged skis, skins, beacons and shovels. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: Randy Lamm. Asst: Reiner Stenzel

May 28-31 Sat-Mon SMS/SPS

TI: Mineral King Base Camp: Depending on road opening, drive/ski from Silver City to basecamp near Mineral King. Then do day tours to nearby peaks and passes. Experience in backcountry skiing and climbing required. Bring metal edged skis with climbing skins, ski crampons, avy beacon, shovel, and snow camping gear. Experienced SPS snowshoers welcome. Send experience, address, H&W phone to Ldr: Reiner Stenzel. Asst: Randy Lamm



Group heading for Mt Baker

Sierra Crest Tour (continued from Page 1)

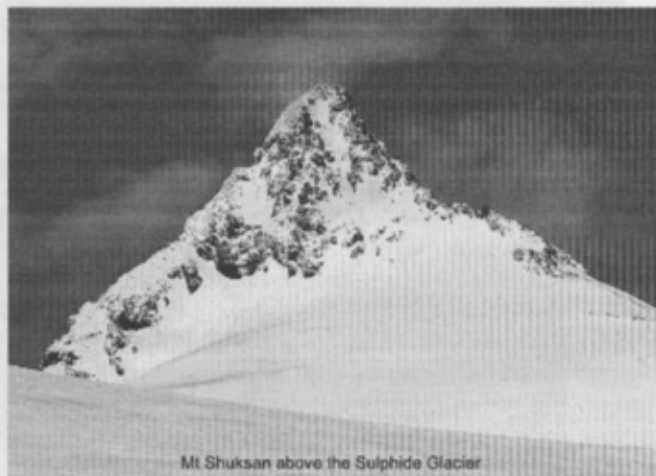
Sun, 6/13, we woke up to a rainy morning. We gathered under a gazebo with a waterproof roof, ate our oatmeal and discussed the situation. We gave up the idea of skiing all day long in the rain and decided to spend it in "town", i.e., in Vancouver, Canada. But nobody had a passport. At the border we were told that if a heightened security alert would arise we could not return back to the US without a passport. Well, life is a gamble and we could have skied in Canada as well; so we went. We shopped for outdoors gear at Mountaineering Equipment Corp., had lunch and returned in the afternoon. Stan got a bottle of Cognac, in case the rain would not stop. Spent another rainy night in the campground. The locals in Glacier told us it would clear up on Tuesday.

Mon, 6/14, morning: Intermittent rain. We took our chances and drove up to the deserted ski resort, parked the cars and skied toward Table Mountain. The plan was to ascend the Ptarmigan Ridge past the Coleman Pinnacle and ski on the Sholes Glacier of Mt Baker. Initially there was a glimpse of sunshine, but by the time we contoured around the steep slopes of Table Mtn we were again in a whiteout and rain. This was not a day to ski a glacier. We humbly returned and ascended the slopes of the ski resort. In the afternoon we were lucky: The sun broke through and we saw the magnificent glaciated north face of rugged Mt Shuksan in swirling clouds. We enjoyed some wonderful turns on black diamond runs of the ski area all the way down to the cars. Mt Shuksan was our goal for the next day, but we were advised to ski it from the gentler south side. Thus, we packed up and drove via State Roads 542, 9, 20, and Baker Lake Rd to Shannon Creek Cpgd where we found a fine site right at the

lake.

Tue, 6/15, we were on the road by 6:30am to find the trailhead (2,400') for Mt Shuksan (9,172') at the end of Forest Rds 1152 and 14. By 7:30am we started hiking up a wet forest trail. After about 2 hours we reached the treeline (4,800') and then the snowline to skin up. From a notch at 5,400' we enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the rugged Cascade Mountains and the impressive Mt Baker in full sunshine. We traversed on a steep slope around a rock face, and then ascended the long Sulphide Glacier. By staying on its west side we could avoid its crevasses. By midday we had a lunch break on the glacier and observed periodic icefalls from a hanging glacier, which triggered avalanches. Then we ascended further toward the impressive summit pyramid. Alvin wanted to climb it but it would have been another 3-hour adventure. The 12mi, 6,700' tour is usually

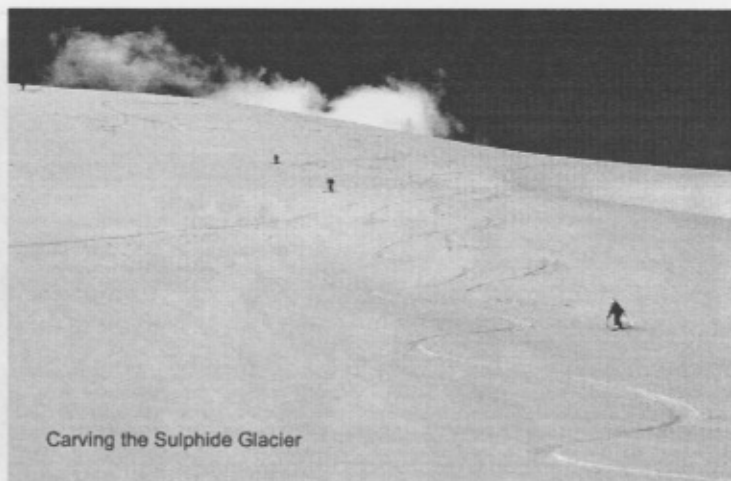
done as an overnight trip and we saw quite a few tents on the way. By 2:30pm I called for a turn around since I got concerned about traversing the steep slope on wet snow in the afternoon. We had a wonderful ski run down the Sulphide Glacier. Further below the snow turned into mush and I was glad to have brought my fat skis. We retraced our route and were safely back at the cars by about 5pm. It was our first day of really great skiing. Since it was too late for a long drive south we just relocated our campsite to the pretty Panorama Point Cpgd on Baker Lake. It was warm enough for a swim in the evening sun. There were Canadian Geese on the lake, the forest was lush green, raspberries were ripe and many wildflowers in bloom.



Mt Shuksan above the Sulphide Glacier

Wed, 6/16, we headed to our next destination, Glacier Peak, south of the Cascade NP. It was a long drive down SR 20, 530 to Darrington, then FR 20 to White Chuck. Murphy's law struck; the long dirt road to our trailhead at Kennedy Hot Springs was closed since the bridges were destroyed by recent storms. That was the end of this plan. We decided to drive south to Mt Rainier. It turned into a day of driving. I thought of taking the scenic Cascade Hwy but after two hours of driving on curved mountain roads we gave up and returned to I-5, which got us much faster down to Tacoma, then on SR 706 to Paradise on the south side of Mt Rainier. As we got closer, Mt Rainier became more and more impressive. The next day we would ski it. We spent the night at Cougar Rocks Cpgrd.

Thur, 6/17, we were leaving for Paradise by 6am in order to be sure to get a climbing permit at the ranger station by 7am. But during midweek it was not too crowded. It costs \$30/person to climb the mountain. In return you get free blue bags to carry out your treasures. We skinned up from the trailhead (5,400') near the Paradise Lodge and followed the standard route past Panorama Point (6,950'), which had a great view on the Nisqually Glacier. Then we skied up the Muir Snowfield past Anvil Rock to Camp Muir (10,060'). There are huts of the Rainier Mountaineering Inc. (RMI) outfit, the antique Muir Hut for public use, many campsites and some rest rooms. Three of our group stayed in the dungeon-like hut, Alvin and I bivvied in the fresh air. Since we arrived by midday we had plenty of time to relax and enjoy the views of the mountains, glaciers, and watched descending climbers who were all roped up. We had left our ropes and crevasse rescue gear in the car since it was not necessary for skiing on the Muir Snowfield. Originally, we wanted to ski two days on different snowfields, but in view of the good weather we decided to make a

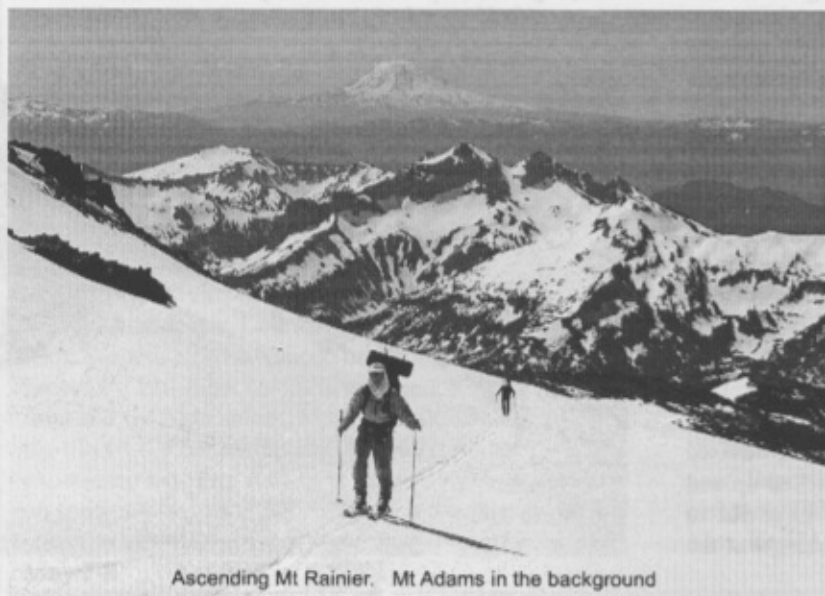


summit attempt on Friday. We signed out for this private adventure.

In order to climb this mountain one has to make an Alpine start, i.e., to leave in the night for the approx. 8 hr round trip to the summit. Then the snow bridges over crevasses are solidly frozen and one returns before wet snow avalanches and rock fall occur by midday. So we ate dinner by 5pm, went to bed by 6pm and set the alarm bell for 1:30am.

Fri, 6/18, we had a quick breakfast, packed and were on the trail by 2:30am. It was cold, windy and pitch black. With flashlights we followed the footsteps and occasional wands marking the trail. The trail led up a rocky slope followed by steeper snowfields, which called for crampons and ice axe or double ski poles. When looking around one could only see the flashlights of a few climbers. By 4am there was a sliver of light on the eastern horizon. By 4:30am it became light and we could hike without flashlights, and half an hour later we witnessed a most

beautiful sunrise from high altitude. Clouds and snow lit up in red and purple colors. We were in an eerie landscape of glaciers. The trail was faint and difficult to find without wands. We had crossed already half a dozen of crevasses. The climbing was relentless and our group became spread out. One could not take long breaks because of the cold wind and lack of shelter. The pace slowed down as we climbed above 13,000, then 14,000'. Finally, at 7am I reached the crater rim and looked into the large, snow-filled caldera. There was not a soul on the mountain. Of course the high point, the 14,410' Columbia Crest, was at the opposite end. I crossed the crater and inspected a snow-free area from which hot steam rose. It created strange ice formations on rocks and round vent holes in the snow. One had to be careful not to





Glaciers on Mt Rainier

break through the shallow snow near these vents. I had expected great views from the summit of Mt Rainier but clouds drifted in and out and one could only occasionally see Mt Adams, St Helens or even Liberty Cap. A cold, 30mph wind limited the time of picture taking and trying to get radio or cell phone connections. So I retraced my steps and ran into Alvin at the crater rim. He headed for the summit; the others had returned earlier. On the way down I took many pictures of spectacular glaciers, icefalls and deep crevasses. More roped-up climbers came up, but nobody with skis due to the crevasses, wind-blown crust and steepness of the upper mountain. I retraced the route and was back at camp by 10am. We packed and waited for Alvin. Then we had a wonderful ski run down the Muir Snowfield on corn snow. Further below it turned into mush on this sunny day. Since the weekend was approaching we counted over 100 hikers climbing up to Muir Camp. After regrouping at Paradise we had a fine meal to celebrate the successful climb/ski of Mt Rainier.

Since we lucked out of Glacier Pk we had time for one more volcano, Mt Adams. So we packed up and drove south to the town of Trout Lake. We stayed at the local county campground, took hot showers, had a good dinner and a long sleep.

Sat, 6/19, we got up at 5am, drove out by 6am, and were at the Cold Springs trailhead (5,600') by 7am to find a surprisingly large number of cars and people. The south face of Mt Adams is just a popular route for both climbers and skiers. It offers over 6,000' of crevasse-free skiing and climbing. After an hour hike on forest trails we reached the snowline and skinned up. The day had started sunny and clear but the forecast called for afternoon thunderstorms. Indeed, as we ascended the

slopes leading to the false summit (11,700') thunder and lightning moved in. Soon we were in a whiteout, wondering whether to continue or to descend. We joined the majority of other climbers and continued up. Without sun the snow crusted up fast making the steep ski ascent below the false summit somewhat tricky. We had lunch at the false summit. Wally skied down to join Stan and Fred while Alvin and I continued to the real summit some 600' above. Fortunately, the thunderstorm moved out and we had intermittent sun and shade. We were soon on the summit of Mt Adams (12,310'). When the clouds opened up we could see Mt Rainier to the north, St Helens to the west and Mt Hood to the south. We took some pictures,

had a snack and waited for the snow to soften in the sun. Then the fun started with a wonderful ski run down the mountain. Below we met up with Stan and Fred. We all skied the mushy snow in the early afternoon on the low part of the mountain. Many wet snow slides were released by us and other skiers. We were glad to be safely back at the tree line. After a fun run through the forest we were back at the trailhead by 5pm. We returned to Trout Lake Cpgd for another hot shower, and then headed south on SR 141 to Hood River for dinner with local microbrews. After 8pm it was time to find a campground. We drove on the Lewis & Clark Highway (SR14) along the Columbia River to Beacon Rock Cpgd, but unfortunately it was full. So we camped wild on the shores of the mighty Columbia River. Except for the sounds of occasional tugboats and trains we had a peaceful night under the stars.

Sun, 6/20, the sun woke us up at 5am. Fish were jumping in the river, herons were after



Snowbridge over crevasse

them, and Canadian geese flew by, quite a different environment from the sterile world of glaciated mountains. We packed up and headed for a solid breakfast in a country restaurant. Then we packed our stuff to get ready for the flight home. Since we were too early at SeaTac we made a detour to Downtown Seattle, mingled with tourists at Pike's Market, shopped for souvenirs and finally returned to the airport. After a week of adventures on the Washington volcanoes we were ready to return home. We had a great week in WA with all kinds of weather, some great skiing and climbing, beautiful sceneries and nature, a fine group of people and no accidents or incidents. Thanks to Alvin for assisting to lead this SMS trip.



Skiing from the summit of Mt Adams

Reminder — If you have not renewed your subscription for this winter yet, send a **\$15** check made payable to "Ski Mountaineers Section" to the Mugelmailer: Pat Holleman, 1638 6th Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266-6347. Please include address and email changes.

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