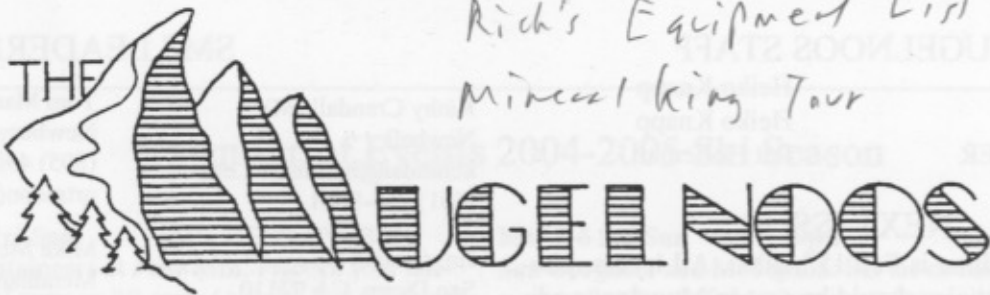
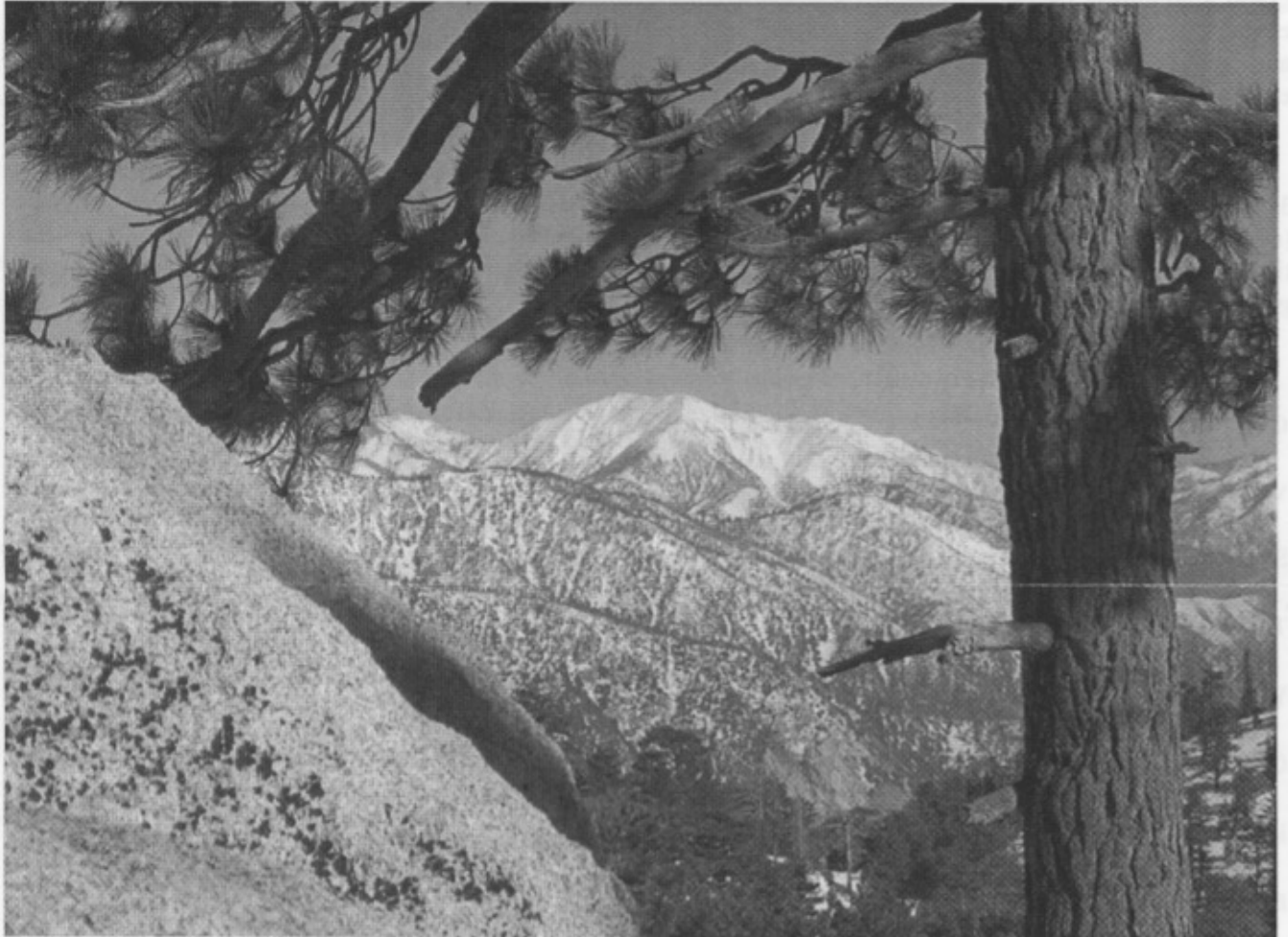


Rich's Equipment List
Mineral King Tour

THE  UGE LNDS

January 2005

Issue # 791



Kratka Ridge to Mt. Waterman "The Crust Tour"

March 6, 2004 *Randy Lamm*

Another drought snow year locally, but a recent spring storm dropped a couple feet of snow enough to allow this tour. The early indian summer weather made the conditions interesting. The participants included David "Corinthian Leather" Baron, Don Ralphs, Jim Valensi, Mike Rector, myself as lead, and Tom Marsh co-leader. We all rendezvoused at the La Canada meeting point at the bottom of the 2 for our carpool. An indication of the day's conditions, at 8 am it was about 65 degrees.

We grouped into two cars, the skis, packs and Mike and Tom, in Tom's truck, while the rest of us luxuriated in the Corinthian Leather seats of David's Jaguar. As Hank Jr. played on the radio we headed up the Angeles Crest and parked at the Kratka Ridge parking lot. Since the base area at Kratka burned down a few years ago

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NEXT ISSUE

Next issue deadline is Feb 15th, 2005. 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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SMS WEB PAGE

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

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Cover photo: Our local San Gabriel Mountains, Spring 2004. View of Mt. Baldy from Mt. Waterman, as seen on the "Kratka Ridge to Mt. Waterman" tour, 03/06/2004.

Calendar of Events 2004-2005 Ski Season

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 Geronio and Mt Jepson: 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.

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 welcome. 7:30 pm Griffith Park Ranger Station.

March 18-20 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

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

Calendar of Events 2004-2005 Ski Season

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. rovisional 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, Acrodoctes, 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

Journal Notes

Mineral King Loop Ski Tour

April 23-26, 2004 *Rich Henke*

The Mineral King ski trip is history! After talking about this trip for at least 5 years, it is finished. For years we had hoped that there would be a way to avoid the 6-mile walk along the gated road that leads to Mineral King. Although the road is snow free late in the spring, Sequoia National Park does not normally open the road to vehicles until around Memorial Day and if you wait that late, there is usually not enough snow to ski.

On 23 April 2004, four of us met at the locked gate, about a mile before the Atwell Mill Ranger Station. It had taken over an hour to drive the last 20 miles or so from the Mineral King road intersection with Route 198. Karen Davis, John Langbein, Steve Cochran, and I planned a 4-day loop going counterclockwise over Farewell Gap, Shotgun Pass, and Sawtooth Pass. Most of the route can be seen on the Mineral King 15 min quad map. The eastern portion is visible on the Kern Peak map.

Day 1 - Locked gate (6,500 ft) to South of Farewell Gap (9,700 ft). We walked about 6 miles to the Mineral King Guard Station. One more mile of walking got us to the end of the paved road at 7,500 ft where we could see Farewell Gap to the south. Skiable snow was reached at 8,000 ft and conditions were good all the way to the pass (10,500 ft). The best ski line was along the snow-covered stream west of the summer trail. The sun was setting as we had our first of many great descents on this trip. We camped at a large flat area below the pass, just west of Bullfrog lakes.

Day 2 - South of Farewell Gap (9,700 ft) to North of Rattlesnake Creek (10,800 ft). We had 2 options. A steep climb to the east past Bullfrog Lakes led to a pass at 11,600 feet that would connect us directly to Rattlesnake Creek. We could also continue south, dropping to below 9,000 feet, counter around a ridge, and head north over Shotgun Pass at 11,500 feet to reach the same destination. We choose the latter which in retrospect was a mistake. The snow disappeared quickly and we had to carry our skis about 3 miles. Luckily the summer trail was easily followed. Shotgun Pass was a straightforward ski ascent. From the top, we could see Mt Whitney and Mt. Williamson across the Kern River Canyon to the Northeast. To the south, much lower terrain was visible for miles. This is really the edge of the

High Sierra! The north side of Shotgun Pass provided great corn snow as we descended 1400 feet to Rattlesnake Creek. A short climb brought us to a pleasant campsite with water and a view.

Day 3 - North of Rattlesnake Creek (10,800 ft) to Columbine Lake (11,000 ft). We had early sun and a beautiful day. By 9 am we were skiing toward Little Claire Lake but almost dropped too low. Luckily John's map reading skills kept us from skiing back down into the Rattlesnake Creek drainage. We had a fast icy descent to Little Claire Lake and then an excellent steep descent to Soda Creek. Part way down, John attempted a turn on an icy spot in the shade. He slipped and slid down about 150 feet before coming to a stop against a tree. He had a couple of minor scrapes but we were concerned that his back was bothering him. We offloaded some of his gear and continued on. He was able to finish the trip OK. We stayed on our skis for several miles as we descended Soda Creek. Below 9000 feet, we had to carry our skis but found the summer trail and followed it to the west into the Lost Creek drainage. We soon were skiing and had good snow all the way to Sawtooth Pass. It was late by the time we approached Columbine Lake. A steep ascent was required to get to the lake and we didn't arrive at camp until 7 pm. We camped next to the lake and were able to chop a small hole for water. It was the 3rd straight night that we had water, one of the real advantages of late spring trips.

Day 4 - Columbine Lake (11,000 ft) to Locked Gate (6,500 ft). Again, we had early sun but we took our time to let the snow on Sawtooth Pass soften up some. It was quite cold during the night; 18 degrees in our tent. The route over the pass went directly over a cornice. I angled up to the right of the cornice and climbed on rock for the last 100 feet. The others took a line further north and climbed over a slightly higher pass staying on the snow all the way. We had to remove our skis and kick steps. The snow was hard enough to get our attention and it almost required an ice ax. From the top, we could see Glacier Pass below us to the west. Taking a long break, we let the snow soften some more and then had 3000 feet of wonderful skiing before the snow finally gave

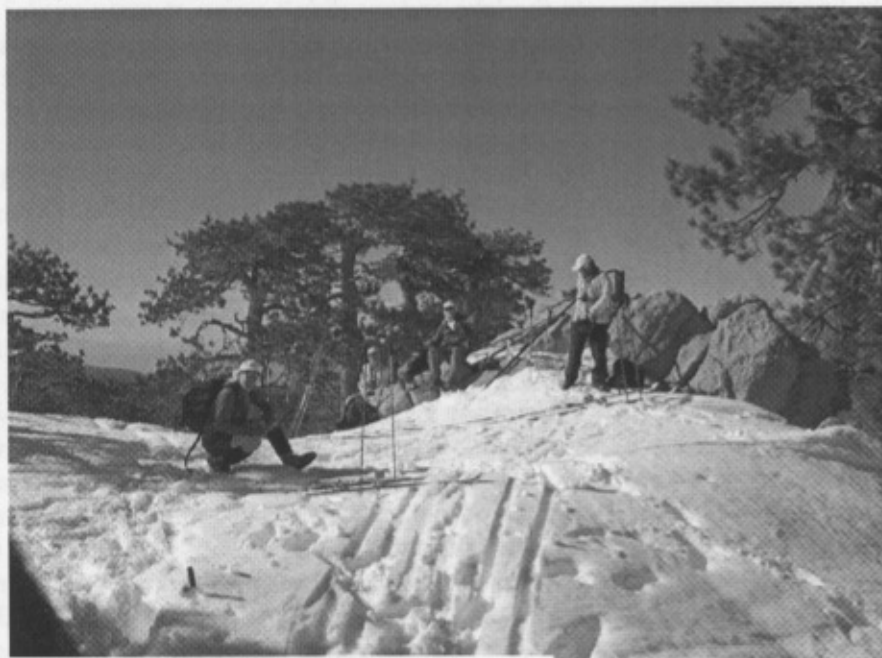
(probably an insurance collection scam), its now the unofficial Southern California Region SMS training center. On the 700' ascent to the top of Kratka ridge the firm corn snow was misleading. At the top we headed west, traversing the crest into the day long all you can eat serving of breakable crust on top of 12" of rotten depth hoar. After an hour of hop turns and face plants we made our way around the manzanita bushes and wound up at a drainage almost at the highway and ran into a family playing in the snow. In this area the snow was melting and it was difficult to find continuous patches of snow to ski on. We then ascended up the other side past what looked like old rusty lift towers, and remnants of what looked like an old lift shack. The snow got more continuous. We reached the top of the ridge and came to the top of the rope tows for the Buck Horn Ski Area. We ducked under the



Don and Tom talking about labor relations

running rope tows and continued across the ridgeline to our lunch stop, which had views south into the haze of el stinko. After lunch we started the final climb up to the Mt. Waterman Plateau. We skied across the top of the plateau to the top of the waterman ski area, which was closed. Our treacherous descent

included the runs on the "easy" top lift and then we continued on the area access road. Traversing over to the north slopes we attempted skiing down the steep face area. In the shadows the breakable crust was even more breakable. After many hop and hope and fanagled telemark turns we finally reached the highway. While the rest of the group shivered in the shadows of waterman, Tom hitched up the road to get the cars. As we headed down the 2 into the sunset we concluded that the challenging local snow conditions are often the price we pay for so. cal skiing. Thanks to all for participating.



Summit of Waterman

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR LIGHTWEIGHT SIERRA SKI TOURS

By Rich Henke

The following list of equipment is sufficient for a 3-day, 2-night spring ski tour, where the objective is to cover lots of distance. Most of the daytime hours are spent skiing and camp time is spent in a tent. If you are skiing to a base camp and plan to spend camptime outside of the tent, more clothing is required, but then pack weight is not a big concern.

The common equipment assumes a 3-person party skiing together. Three people in a dome tent such as a Sierra Designs Stretch Dome will generate enough heat so that heavy sleeping bags and extra clothing are not needed. The hanging stove system also provides warmth while cooking, especially in the morning.

The total weight per person should be in the range of 27-35 pounds depending upon the amount of safety equipment needed, and whether you are using weight efficient gear. For longer trips, add 2 pounds additional food per day. Group gear should be reviewed at the trailhead to avoid duplication, which is the most common cause of heavy packs. The tradeoff is that the lighter your pack, the easier and more fun it will be to ski.

Group Gear (4-5 pounds per person)

- Set of maps
- 3- 4 person dome tent, 6-10 pounds. A good tent is essential for a lightweight group. It is your salvation if you are caught in a big storm.
- Gaz hanging stove + 1 pot + cartridges (1.5 oz fuel per person per day) to be used inside tent to melt snow, to provide hot water only, for dinner and breakfast
- First aid kit
- Ski repair kit
- 1 pair vapor barrier socks, to use as booties to go out at night.
- Alarm clock
- Altimeter

Safety Gear – only if needed (0- 4 pounds per person)

- Ice ax, rope, crampons, transceivers, shovel

Skis and Sleeping

- Metal edge skis, poles, climbing skins
- Boots (leather is best for long distance tours + uphill, plastic for downhill- you should choose before each trip)
- Gaiters
- Light pack (3 pound pack is possible if you avoid excess bulky clothing)
- Light sleeping bag (down or synthetic)
- Thermarest or Ridgcrest pad, ¾ length (you don't need a long pad or 2 pads, use pack for

insulation)

Eating

- Plaspoon, small Swiss Army knife
- 5 pounds of food - 2 dinners, 2 breakfasts, 3 lunches (approximately 2 pounds per day)
- One 1- liter water bottle (full) stic cup,

Miscellaneous

- Sunglasses
- Sun and lip protection
- Camera and film
- Headlamp
- Miscellaneous personal bag (1 pound)

Clothing

- Capaline underwear – top and bottom. White top is best for spring skiing – Layer 1
- Pants + shirt, wool or synthetic – Layer 2
- Fleece jacket – Layer 3
- Goretex jacket and pants – Layer 4
- Down vest (If temperatures are expected below 5-10 degrees F)
- Sunhat + wool or pile balaclava, + silk or light poly facemask
- Light gloves + heavy gloves (Dachsteins are hard to beat)
- Overmitts, *socks* *spare socks*
- *spare* bandanna

out about 1000 feet above the end of the road. After walking the trail to the road, we repeated the 7 miles of walking to our cars. Luckily, we got a ride for the last mile or so from a person who had a cabin at Silver City (a small picturesque village about 3 miles from Mineral King). He had a key to the gate. Having friends in Silver City would be very nice if we ever want to repeat this trip! We arrived back at the cars at 5.40pm.

Summary – We estimated that we covered around 40 miles including the walk along the road. There was considerable elevation gain – about 9,000 vertical feet. It was a late spring tour and we went light. Steve and I averaged about 31 pounds at the start including full water bottles. We shared a Bibler tent while John and Karen were independent of us in an Integral Designs tent. There was no avalanche risk at this time of the

snow year. Due to a mistake, I had brought only one cartridge for the hanging Bluet stove that Steve and I used. We thought that we would have to “beg fuel” from John and Karen but we managed to get 6 man-days out of the 7 3/4 oz cartridge. Further proof that the hanging stove system is the most fuel-efficient setup that one can use.

An alternate tour would avoid dropping low at the southern and eastern parts of the loop. In the 1st edition of “Backcountry Skiing in the High Sierra”, Moynier talks about skiing Bullfrog Pass (11,600 ft) and it also appears feasible to cross the crest from Amphitheater Lake to Crystal Lake. Another possibility is the class-3 pass between Sawtooth Peak and Needham Mountain. You will need to review the maps to make sense out of these alternatives. Bring ice axes for those deviations and plan to do some climbing. With more time, the upper bowls east of Franklin Pass looked inviting for skiing.

Certified Avi I (start Feb 5) and Avi II (start Mar 11) — Professional guide Kurt Wedberg is offering his popular courses to SC members at a discount. Normally \$230 (level I) and \$345 (level II), they are offered at \$130 and \$280, respectively. For convenience, I've listed them on the Outdoors Club website: www.outdoorsclub.org Go to the respective dates on the calendar to sign up for the trip you want. Membership in ODC is free. Please include address and email changes.

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