

# THE MOUNTAIN BIKE NEWS

March 2005

Issue # 793



## **Mt. Abel Bike-n-Ski 2005** **SMS and Mountain Bike Committee** February 13, 2005 *Lorene Samoska*

The Mt. Abel Bike-n-Ski trip has appeared in the schedule for several years in a row, but for various reasons (mostly due to lack of snow!) it has not gone on for some time. With over 40 inches of rain in the valleys and many feet of snow in the local mountains this year, we hit Mt. Abel in its prime with wonderful spring skiing conditions. The trip was also the first co-sponsored Mountain Bike Committee/Ski Mountaineers Section trip, which incidentally involves the oldest Outings section of the Angeles chapter (SMS) and the newest Outings section (MBC).

Ten adventurous spirits set out from the Apache Saddle trailhead with skis, boots, skins and poles strapped to their packs, helmets on their heads and feet on their pedals. We posed for several group photos while the

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## NEXT ISSUE

Next issue deadline is Apr 01<sup>st</sup>, 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](mailto: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 link is: <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/skim/>

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**Cover photo:** Eager mountain bikers heading up to ski Mt. Abel. Fltr: Keith, Lorene, Rich, Mike, Greg, Reiner, Nancy, Scott. Mark Angevine taking the picture.

## Calendar of Events 2004-2005 Ski Season

**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: Baffin Island Traverse.** In July of 2002, Rich Henke and Rena Tishman joined a group of friends for a 12-day, 60-mile backpack across Baffin Island. Located above the Arctic Circle and just to the west of Greenland, Baffin Island contains polar bears, 24 hours of daylight, and incomparable scenery. Mt Asgard, with its unique truncated shape, is one of the most distinctive mountains that exists. Mt Thor, where the top of a 3800-foot high cliff overhangs the base by 200 feet, is said to be the highest single vertical wall in the world. Twelve days is a long backpack trip when clothing and equipment have to be sufficient for extreme weather conditions. Rich's slideshow will show the beauty of this remote area and also explain that is not too difficult to plan and experience a similar trip. In the spring, this route becomes one of the World's great ski tours. 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](mailto: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 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:** Slide show *Skiing in the Shadow of the Great One*. Join Marcus Libkind as he takes us on a trip to one of the worlds most spectacular places, the Ruth Amphitheater in Alaskas Denali National Park. With 20,320-foot Mt. McKinley towering above, we will explore The Great Gorge, ski beneath the vertical granite walls of Mt. Dickey and the Mooses Tooth, Ski by gaping crevasses and witness the power of thundering avalanches. His adventure will conclude with a crossing of 12,000-foot Ruth Gap, which separates the Ruth and Kahilta glaciers. 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 Sat SMS**

**TI: Eastern Sierra Day ski tour/Introductory trip: Climb and ski Kearsage Pass, 7 mrt, 2500' gain.** Intermediate backcountry skiing skills, skins, metal-edged skis required. Newcomers to SMS welcome. Optional car-camp Sat night. Combine with Eastern Sierra Day Ski tour scheduled May 1. Send experience, H&W phone, email, carpool info to Ldr: Jan St. Amand. Asst: Leader: Tom Marsh

**May 1 Sun SMS**

**TI: Eastern Sierra Day ski tour/Introductory trip:** Enjoy intermediate ski tour up Robinson Basin to Robinson Lake for lunch and ski back. 5mrt,



## Calendar of Events 2004-2005 Ski Season

2000' gain. Intermediate backcountry skiing skills, skins, metal-edged skis required. Newcomers to SMS welcome. Send experience, H&W phones, email, car-pool info to Ldr: Lorene Samoska. Asst: Tom Marsh.

**May 02-May 8 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 re-

quired 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 14-15th Sat-Sun SMS, PVSBG, OCSS**

**TI: Rock Creek Introductory Ski & Basecamp** Please join us for an introductory ski backpack in the Rock Creek area. Saturday, ski with overnight pack to make snow camp in Little Lakes Valley, 8 mrt, 600' elev. gain with pack. Sunday, explore surrounding ski bowls and lakes & practice turns, then packout. Additional 3 mile, 1000-1500' ski touring with daypacks each day. Intermediate skiing ability and some prior backpacking experience necessary. Metal-edged skis, climbing skins, shovel, snow-camping gear, warm sleeping bag required. Send/ email experience, home & work phones, email, to Ldr: Lorene Samoska, Asst: Keith Martin

**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

# Angeles Crest Tour New Year's Eve

Dec 31, 2004 *Randy Lamm*

I had procrastinated making holiday plans for skiing at June or Mammoth. The last trip to June in the middle of December it had not snowed since November and it was looking like spring conditions for xmas weekend. But then right after xmas the Dweeb report said the big one was coming. Now it was too late to find a place, all the calls to the hotels they said forget it. I thought maybe I can dig a snow cave behind the tiger bar, but then the problem of too much snow, chain restrictions from Lone Pine, and cars buried at Rock Creek. I got desperate and emailed everyone, but more bad news. Here's what BuckHowdy said: Brian McElwain wrote: *I drove to Mammoth. I counted 10 cars that ran off the road. They closed the road up from the village. I tried to get to canyon but there was a big traffic jam. I thought I would go to Tamarack and cross-country ski but the road was closed. I drove down to Rock Creek because I have a snow park pass but they haven't plowed the road and the snow is 2 feet deep.*

*Some snowmobiles went up the road and I followed their tracks. They said there are many stranded vehicles parked at the snow park parking lot about 6 miles up the road. I'll try again tomorrow. I'm taking all of my skis including the cross-country skis. I should be able to ski no matter what with all of this snow everywhere. How was the Angeles crest tour?* I resigned myself to waxing my skis, resorting my cd collection and reorganizing my sock drawer. Its too snowed in up north, I got desperate and started emailing everyone I knew someone might be up for a tour on the crest. Mike emailed back, he was at mt. pinos on the 29th and said there was some sweet powder, he would do it. We met at the rendezvous point at the bottom of the 2. It was cold and raining and the sign said closed 29.9 miles from La Canada. Would we get to Kratka? With Mikes new 300 hp, V8 Turbo diesel, 4wd econoline - Home Off Road (HOR for short) we probably could. At 5k the rain changed to snow. We passed Newcombs ranch and then a lit-

tle past the gate was closed at the snowplay hill at about 6700'. Rather than wait for caltrans to plow the road and open the gate, we suited up in the HOR and exited the airlock into a wet snowstorm. We put our skins on at 11:30am and followed a snow covered dirt road up a drainage. There was about 4" of wet powder on a well consolidated base of about 3-5'. It was foggy and windy and we veered off the road which was heading south and started arching back to the North to go up a ridge. We continued up to about 7400' and the clouds parted. At about 1pm we reached the top of the ridge at 8,000'. We could see Mt. Waterman to the east about 1/2 mile away. We ate our lunch, pulled our skins and headed down for easy skiing on 4" of fluff on a billiard table smooth under surface. The snow was super easy to ski and we made some nice turns down the steep north facing slopes. Soon we were back at the bottom. We still had time for another run. This time we went back up the ridge further to the



west. The slope was a little gentler, the powder just as good. We hung out at the top and watched the alpine glow start, then headed back down. With the good snow, the terrain and conditions were just like the Selkirks ( less vertical, but only an hour from downtown LA). I reported the conditions to the Goebel's and recommended they head up there on the next day - New Years. Here's Mark's report: M & J Goebel wrote: *Randy, Thanks for the photos. Joy and I repeated your tour on Sat and the snow was sweeter than sweet. Surely nothing this good since 1998 El Nino. Although the road was icy, we made it up without chains. Cal Trans was giving rides up the road past the gate, but went from the gate like you did. There were more tracks, apparently some snowboarders followed your tracks, going up on snowshoes. It was very cold all day with clouds coming in. We started down from your same high point, skied down about half way, then went back up again. At*

*(Continued on Page 8)*

neighbors looked on with amusement to see the skis and bikes going out on the same trip. The trip participants were: Mark Angevine, David Baron, Rich Henke, Scott Koepke, Keith Martin, Nancy Mathison, Greg Scarich, and Mike Seiffert, with me doing my first provisional lead for the Ski Mountaineers and Reiner Stenzel assisting.

Riding uphill with heavy packs and big skis sticking out is quite a workout, especially at high elevation, as we soon found out. The single-track junkies Rich and Greg could not resist trying to ride uphill in every patch of snow which covered the road, and provided entertainment when they stalled out. The rest of us took the conservative route through the early morning ice and snow and got off our bikes for short snow portages.

After 2.5 miles and about 600' of elevation gain, we reach a hairpin turn where the aspect was north facing and the road snow-covered, and we could abandon our bikes and head up on skis and skins.

At the 7000' level, we skinned up through the mixed conifer forest of pinyon pine, Jeffrey & Ponderosa pine, and white fir. We headed up in a southwest direction on firm snow and then made our way south to access the sunny west ridge of Cerro Noroeste. By noon, we ascended the ridge



On the summit of Mt. Cerro Noroeste (Abel). Photo by Reiner

to the large campground Campo Alto. In summer one can drive to the summit, but in winter it is 12-mile round trip cross-country adventure, made much nicer on skis. The picnic tables at the camp made for a nice lunch stop before we headed out to tour the flat-topped peak. We headed southeast out of the campground toward a radio tower and were pleased to find the Mt. Abel (8286') summit register under a pile of rocks, with views toward Reyes Peak and the Cuyama river valley below. We then headed toward the other nearby highpoint which looks up toward Mt. Pinos and down to the Puerta del Suelo (Gateway to the Bottom). In the 1800's, Spanish sheepherders used to run their sheep from Ventura to the San Joaquin Valley and graze them in the high country through this route. It is said that the missionaries blazed a cross on an old Jeffrey pine somewhere in the camp-



Mountain bikers stuck in the snow





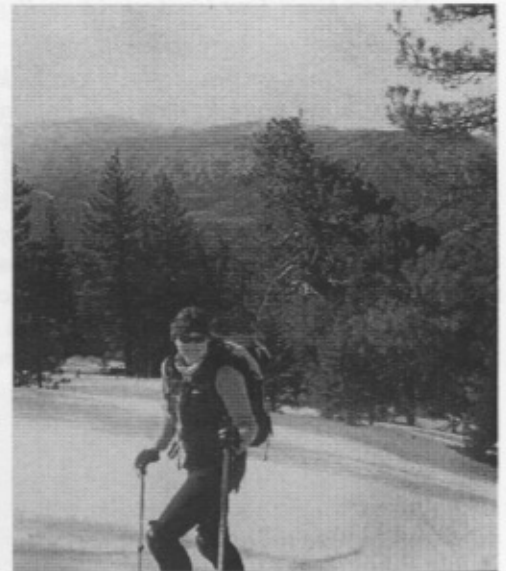
*Switching from biking to skiing. Photo by Reiner*

ground where they held mass for the shepherds, but we did not find the cross. However, the tour on top was pleasant and the sun stayed out for the rest of the afternoon. Back at the picnic tables, skins were removed and we started our descent the way we came.

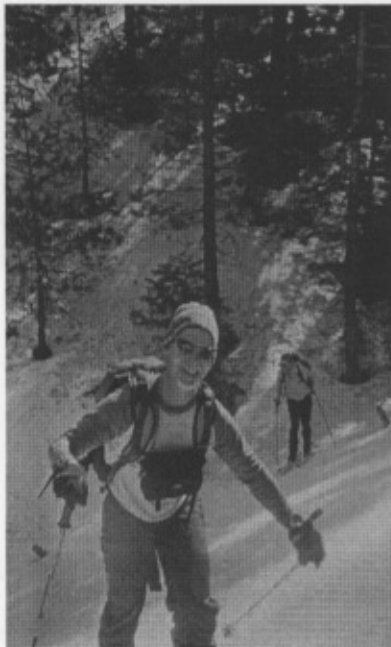
A couple of enthusiastic skiers started heading down the northern aspects, which had very good snow, but unfortunately funnel steeper and start traversing along rocky cliffs. We had to catch one and climb back up to the ridge while the rest of the group yo-yo'd for awhile practicing their turns. Once back on the ridge, we found silky sierra-quality corn! We enjoyed many nice turns and wound our

way down through the forest, catching open areas

with the most sun and best snow. We quickly descended the ridge and then back through the forest until we hit the Mt. Abel road, where our bikes waited patiently for our return. Once packed up, we had a fun coast down the road, and were pleasantly surprised that much of the early morning ice and snow had melted out, making the bikeride down a cruise. We had great camaraderie, wonderful spring snow, and excellent attitudes from everyone willing to give this unusual bike-n-ski thing a try. Thanks to everyone who participated and made my first provisional SMS outing really fun!



*Lorene*



*Mark*



*Finding the way*

the top again, we heard a hoar and looking up spotted a pair of B-2 bombers though an opening in the clouds. It was about 2pm and they were there for a flyby at the Rose Bowl. WHAT a sight! We stayed a little more right on the second run and ended up above the gate a half mile, skiing some exciting steep slopes right to the road. Once back at the parking lot, it was jammed with snow play family, cooking on BBQs or camping stoves. Saw some exciting snow sliding devices including a baby's bathtub, skateboard without wheels, & car floor mats. But the best was a heavy wooden chair mounted on some skis! (the chair had the looks of an ex-electric chair) Definitely a death ride. Every pullout was jamed with snowseekers all the way down to Red Box RS, at the Mt Wilson turnoff. Fortunately the downhill traffic moved well, but lots of cars were still coming up at 3pm. A great New Years Day! Mark

Definitely going back as these El Nino storms keep dumping



**Wanted** — monitor! The editor of this newsletter is looking for a used monitor, preferably 17 inches, but 15 inches would also make him quite happy. This would greatly simplify his work. If anybody has an unused monitor in his basement or garage, please email [heiko.knapp@web.de](mailto:heiko.knapp@web.de). Thanks.

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