

February 1963

Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

Vol. II No. 4

From here we must go down,
Down ten thousand feet,
Down to accustomed levels,
Down to the blare and cry of ordinary living.

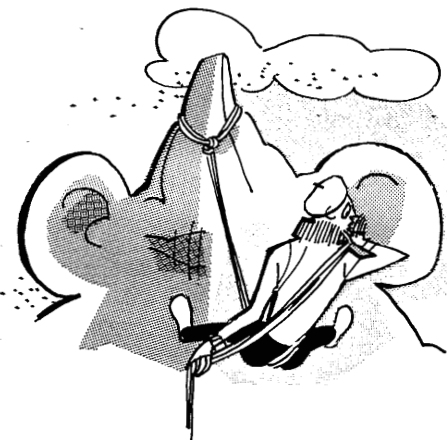
- Cedric Wright

Why I Climb

Everything done, that is worth doing, is in a sense an "adventure" that is to say a pushing out of the human spirit into regions unknown, usually for no other purpose than just to push out, to prove itself, to voyage where it has never yet voyaged before. Without this sense of adventure in us we human beings would not be human. We would be like fish or cows. We must travel to the ends of the earth, to the poles, to the bottom of the sea, yes, and to the world's highest point also, just "because it's there", in Mallory's phrase. And, as he also said, on another occasion, "if you cannot see that what we get from this adventure is pure, sheer joy - then it is no use my trying to explain to you why we go and climb Everest". ...Adventure is usually, I have said, a collective effort. We share the controlled risk and the discomfort, we enjoy them. But it seems to me that the man who has never climbed alone misses something of unspeakable value, too. To lie out by oneself on a high grassy ridge, cradled in the hills and with only the stars for company; to scramble up some rough rock buttress and be greeted by the infinite prospect of the evening beyond; these are the experiences we must know are good, because our whole being tells us they are so.

- Wilfrid Noyce

SKI MOUNTAINEER'S
DOMAIN



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COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY MEETING: Tuesday, February 12, 7:30 p.m., MSU Lodge conference rooms. This is a special **EQUIPMENT DISPLAY** event, and we want to show all the different camping, touring, clothing, etc. items we can, so please **BRING YOURS**, especially if it is homemade, imported, or especially good for some phase of mountaineering. We want to compare several types of tents, sleeping bags, touring bindings, etc. Also on the agenda is a **MOVIE** - note change in plans - "**SNOW CLIMBING**", a training film produced by the Seattle Mountaineers. Refreshments, trip planning and other things are planned, so **COME**.

MARCH MEETING: Tuesday, March 12, 1963. Same time and place. The avalanche program has been deferred to this date to schedule the climbing movie (above). Remember these are National Ski Patrol slides, an outstanding collection presented by experts.

RECENT EVENTS

JANUARY MEETING: Since Gary had to attend the conflicting avalanche training sessions, the group was called to order by Tom Choate. Discussion was held about the organization of a touring and winter climbing class. Most members felt that an informal help session on outings would be the best approach and prevent the usual sag of interest or irregularity of attendance which spoils formal training sessions. Plans were made for ski and snowshoe tours on the following two Saturdays. The program was the Forest Service movie on winter survival. A small group also worked over the photocopy of the forthcoming Mission Mountain Topographic Map made available to us by Hal Kanzler of Columbia Falls.

POINT SIX SKI TOURS: The weather was fair but cold on the projected target day. Twenty below shouldn't stop the ambitious mountaineer, but it seemed to have. Five people appeared at one time or another on January 19 at the appointed place at Snow Bowl. There was more interest in downhill skiing than touring it seemed, or at least when the result of the disorganization is considered. Two persons made this tour, a very easy and pleasing one when you start from the top of the upper chairlift terminal. By then you have gained your thousands of feet the easy way. An alternate is to drive up the TV mountain road, as the Halls did a few weeks earlier. This gives you more climbing, but it is easier on the pocketbook. The final choice is to ride to the bottom of the Snow Bowl area and climb the big ridge from there by a number of routes. This is easiest to get to and provides the maximum of climbing, adding about an hour or two to the hour it takes to get to point six from the top of the chairlift. Probably the easiest route from the top of the ridge is to follow the upper ski slope north to the road and then follow this to point six proper. From here the best choice is to cut straight up to the upper switchback of the road through the large clearing on the south facing slope. We followed the road on around to the north side of the point and enjoyed the views into the Jocko and toward Stewart peak before ascending the last few feet to the windblown weather station on top. There was a bit of wind blowing at twenty below, so the short tarry on top was done on the lee side of the building, enjoying fine views clear to the Anaconda-Pintlar and Flint Creek mountains, over 60 miles south and east. The Missoula area looks like a very insignificant patch of smog from this summit, despite being nearby, thanks to being 5000 feet above town. The return is fun, especially cutting the switchbacks through deep powder snow. You stayathomes must have forgotten the sparkle of powder on a sunny, cold day!

- T. Choate

Lolo Peak (9,075') - June 21, 1962 - a faster route from the north.

In testing the feasibility of the Mormon Peak road approach, Gary Hall and Doug Smuin climbed all three peaks from Missoula and back in twelve hours with a couple of hours wasted enroute. Time Schedule:

6:10 a.m. left Missoula, 7:05 a.m. reach junction of Mormon Peak Road and the Mill Creek Trail, 10:45 a.m. reached summit of False Peak (lost about an hour in trying to find Sam's trail after it was lost), 10:55 a.m. left for nob between False Peak and Lolo Peak, at nob ate lunch and wasted an additional 45 min. Noon left for summit of Lolo by route up Northwest face, 1:15 p.m. reached summit spending about twenty minutes looking for register which later was located on South Lolo summit. 2:15 reached South summit, 2:30 left for car spending an additional fifteen minutes glissading on north face of Lolo Peak, 5:10 reach car, approximately 6:00 p.m. arrived back at Missoula.

Christmas Ski Tour to North Lolo Peak - Gary Hall

During the latter part of the X'mas vacation, Thad Lowary, Lionel Hall and myself were able to make an enjoyable one-day ski and snowshoe trip to the summit of the False or North Summit of Lolo Peak. We were also accompanied by two doctors who turned back about half way, having to be back earlier than ourselves. Reaching the point where the Mill Creek Trail leaves the Mormon Peak Road just before dawn and finding there about two feet of snow, we left from the jeep and carryall on two pairs of skis and three pairs of snowshoes. Near the apex of the Mill Creek Trail, there is a blazed "route" two-thirds the way up the Carlton Ridge (thanks to Sam Braxton) which has cut the approach time into the Lolo Peaks nearly in half compared to the Carlton Ridge Road and Lantern Ridge Trail approaches. At the point where the blazes quit (the route is planned to be completed in the Spring of '63), one can either keep following the ridge to the top of Carlton Ridge and then drop into Carlton Lake or traverse into Mill Creek and proceed up to the pass between the False Summit and the Carlton Ridge. The difference is about 300' of elevation one gains but then loses in the first alternative, but the latter is only recommended if the party is on skis or on foot (if spring snow is firm enough). Avalanche danger is also present on the latter route during the winter and early spring. If on snowshoes or the snow cover is under three feet it will be faster to follow the first route.

Thus we chose the wrong route, the traverse, because (1) Thad was on snowshoes, (2) the east side of the creek to our amazement being bare, (3) the bottom having only about a two foot snow cover which was icy and wind scoured, and (4) with the west side (the Northeast face of the False Summit) being a lee slope, had an avalanche hazard. Finally at 12:30 we reached the pass (contrast to my early trip the preceding spring in which we reached the pass by 9:30) while also wasting at least an hour enroute. Taking about a half hour out for lunch, we reached the top of the North Summit at 2:30. Originally we had planned to climb Lolo Peak proper but with the insufficient snow cover on the talus slides we reduced our goal.

On top, Thad and Lionel began taking pictures as it was a beautiful sunny day, while I began tinkering with a ten milliwatt citizen band transceiver. By heating the Mercury batteries among other things, I was able to increase its output so that I was able to talk to a resident of the Rattlesnake area very clearly, and finally telling Thad's wife hello. This, along with my new design of a three pound emergency rescue sled which we had along, may give small ski touring parties increased safety. The skiing conditions even on the False Summit were impossible, causing us to be late in getting out and we ended up walking the last hour in the dark (we dared not ski the three foot wide and wind fall bordered trail).

SAWTOOTH WILDERNESS SKI TOUR - Idaho, January 4&5, 1963 - T. Choate

This trip was planned before Christmas to include a carload from Bozeman, one from Missoula, and Charlu and I on our return trip from California. Through confusion of dates in one case and the dropping out of some participants in the other case, only the two of us made the trip. The others don't know what they missed!

Although ski areas all over were suffering from lack of snow, there was enough in the upper Salmon River valley to make good touring. We arrived over Galena Summit in the morning of a sparkling day, temperature about zero, with the rugged sawteeth startlingly black and white against the blue sky. Several hours were wasted hunting for the missing companions and checking in with forest service people who were out in the woods away from their ranger station. Finally, we started up the Stanley Lake road which was open the farthest of any approach routes. By midafternoon we were skiing over the thinly covered meadows above the lake, constantly admiring the late sun on the ragged 10,000 foot peaks. Coyote tracks joined us, and so did an old set of ski tracks from a week or so earlier. Apparently we were not the only ones crazy enough to ski into the wilderness as the residents of Stanley seemed to imply.

A few miles up the valley we were nearing the peaks themselves and the sun was hidden behind them. We began to be aware of the clouds of frost our breath was making. The trail forked and we changed our original plan of going over the pass at the head of Stanley Creek to look at the west side of the divide. Why? The sign pointing to the south had the simple and charming title "Alpine Way". This led, according to our map, over a pass and eventually to Alpine Lake. Shortly we came to Stanley Creek which blocked our way. Several logs lay across the stream, each with a two foot cover of hard snow. Have you ever tried to ski across a log? It works if you have two parallel logs and you can keep from sliding forward or backward! This is easier said than done, and after finding myself teetering near disaster on my one remaining log, a change of tactics was called for. Removing skis with a pack on your back while balancing on a log over a rushing stream is a feat fit for the winter olympics, so I retreated to shore. After working back out on the log with skis in one hand and poles in the other, I tried balancing with my poles on one log while kicking with one foot to remove the snow from the bridge log. This was lots of fun, since when the snow would give way easily the flying leg caused a backward shift of the pack and if the snow didn't give way, the pack abruptly shifted forward. Since tightrope walking was also not my specialty, I again retreated and shed pack and skis before returning (why doesn't one foresee things?).

After crossing the stream it was getting dark, so we set up the tiny mountain tent nearby so we could get water. It was below zero so we crawled in the sleeping bags while dinner cooked. Then we didn't want to get out while we ate so a layer of frost accumulated on the roof before the food was gone. This proved serious, since the dampened sleeping bags not only were colder, but were hard to dry out. This in part caused us to decide to ski out rather than stay the planned second night. The following morning was so cold that we probably wouldn't have gotten up at all if we hadn't had too much tea for dinner. But the cold silent dawn offered its own rewards.

During the night we had been visited by a deer, a coyote, a snowshoe hare, and a pine marten. We tried to imagine a dramatic meeting of the latter two, but could find no sign to suggest it had happened. We skied up the trail and before long had attained a view point above the valley where there was some sun. For the rest of the morning we climbed up through forest and powder until we reached the pass. After lunch we climbed up on the ridge leading to the high peaks, but the going was slow. We abandoned the plan to attain a summit and enjoyed the view of jagged pinnacles and sheer walls from this point about 2000 feet above the valley. Then it was time to descend. There was a foot of new powder snow at this height and the turns down through the timber were delightful. On down the trail it was icy but not dangerous. Back at camp it took only a few minutes to pack, but it was dark by the time we crossed the creek. Yet the skiing out by moonlight was perhaps the highlight of the trip. I can still hear the crunch of cold snow, the hooting of two distant owls ... and the picture of the rugged peaks in the pale moonlight....

Paid up membership (Feb. '63) ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

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C. H. Ammons	411 Keith Ave., Missoula	543-5359
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Ken Gerber	317 W. Spruce "	549-7947
Vic Gilliland	804 Monroe "	
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Gutkoski	830 Hart "	549-9657
Gary Hall	236 Dixon "	549-7951
Lionel Hall	3700 Dore Lane "	543-3715
Dan Harper	208 Sentinel "	549-7124
Robert Harrison	224 Hastings "	543-5327
George Heliker	920 Evans "	549-1760
John LaCasse	323 1/2 B E. Front "	
Dave Line	Rte. 3 "	549-8444
Thad Lowary	408 King Street "	549-9469
John McCammon	236 Craig Hall, MSU "	543-7241 Ext. 560
Jack Middleton	5 Craig Hall, MSU "	543-7241 Ext. 553
Gardner & Mary Miller	Box 1184 "	549-5004
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Sue Stirling	1429 Jackson "	543-7044
Phil Strommen	119 Craig Hall "	543-7241 Ext. 556
Scott Tunnock	320 Woodford "	549-2644
Tom Ulberg	362 Elrod, MSU "	543-7241 Ext. 585
Virginia Vincent	1309 Idaho "	543-6944

(This space is left for you to add names of unpaid or new members)

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Bob Larsen	Box 1536, Billings
Leo Renfrow	Columbia Falls, Mont.

An Analysis of the New Selway Bitterroot Wilderness - Thomas S. Choate

The recent establishment of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness area by the Secretary of Agriculture represents a valuable step toward protection of the Bitterroot Range and the Selway River canyons.

Compared to the original proposal, which would have cut the previous primitive area by a net 711,445 acres, the established area has certain distinctly advantageous features, such as the addition (#1) of 37,380 acres north and west of Paradise R.S. and (#2) 15,870 acres of lower Selway River Canyon. Thus conservationists succeeded in keeping the major portion of the river as intact wilderness, defeating the original idea of a road below Paradise R.S.

The retention of part of the Lochsa face is also a worthwhile "gain" as more of that canyon will remain beautiful wilderness. Perhaps the large declassified area west of Powell R.S. will retain its present scenic beauty under the "Recreation Key Value" management. It is still a shame that the Powell area and Lost Horse area roads were ever built, so that there would be an excuse to so badly penetrate the essential unity of the area.

The exclusions along the Bitterroots on the east, particularly in Fred Burr, Blodgett, and Lost Horse Creek, provide what in my opinion are serious inroads into the wilderness high country of this range. Since the peaks and glacial cirques and lakes of the Bitterroot crest are probably the scenic climax of the wilderness, it follows that they should be uniformly protected. The present access roads and dams are a great detraction from the wilderness aspect of this high country, and to propose more invasion of these beautiful east-slope canyons is in part a rejection of the concept of the Bitterroot Range as an integral part of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. In short, wilderness users gained in the lower Selway, but lost in the Bitterroot Range. The river runners may rejoice, but the mountaineers among us must remain sad. The hunter, however, will benefit from the four roadheads pointing into the center of the wilderness. (In this area hunters and fishermen comprise the majority of wilderness users.) Two more important points: not only did the establishment quietly and administratively remove large parts of two beautiful canyons (Blodgett and Fred Burr) with the implication of flooding the beautiful cliffs along them, but left the dangerous loophole of allowing future boundary changes to be administratively made along the eastern Bitterroots for dam building purposes. There are already many dams within the wilderness here, and future needs probably do not justify jeopardizing this essential Bitterroot section of the wilderness. The loophole for mining development is probably nothing new (?).

Finally, a good word can be said for the establishment (retention) of primitive area status for the Salmon River Breaks area (216,870 acres). If it is appropriately managed to keep out the "creeping roads" which plagued the old Selway-Bitterroot primitive area, it represents important protection for the wilderness canyon of the Salmon River. In the future it could become an essential component of a Salmon River wilderness in combination with the Idaho Primitive Area.

Thus, despite some losses along the Bitterroot, the established area has 76,285 acres more than the original proposal by the Forest Service and represents a reasonable compromise area. The declassification of over 400,000 acres of primitive area represents a considerable loss, but one which has largely been slowly taking place over the years due to road building under weak regulations. Conservationists should keep an eye on the administrative loopholes in the present establishment under Regulation U-1 so that the new area itself remains intact for the future.

Breakfast Omelet (for 1)

Heat $\frac{1}{2}$ C water to boiling. Add 1 T. dried tomatoes and 1 T. dried onion s. Cook about 5 min. Drain off hot liquid and add $\frac{3}{4}$ C cool water. Stir in 4 T. powdered eggs and 1 oz. grated cheese. Cook slowly. When thick, omelet is ready. Takes about 10 min. to prepare.

Spanish Rice (for 4)

At home: Package in a plastic bag $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. dried tomatoes, rolled fine with a rolling pin. Add 1 t. salt, 1 T. sugar, 1 t. chili powder & 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ C Minute Rice.

In camp: Add 5 C. cold water & simmer 5 min. Add 2 oz. cheese & any meat desired. Keep hot 15 min. covered tightly.

Blackstrap Caramels (2 lbs.)

2 C. granulated sugar	$\frac{1}{4}$ lb. butter
$1\frac{1}{2}$ C. blackstrap molasses	2 C. cream
$\frac{1}{2}$ C. light corn syrup	

Combine sugar, molasses & syrup in large saucepan & boil to firm ball stage (245° F.). Gradually add butter & cream so slowly that mixture does not stop boiling at any time. Continue to cook rapidly, with constant stirring to medium ball stage (242° F.). Pour into a 9x12" buttered pan. When cool, cut into about 36 bars & wrap in aluminum foil. 2750 calories/ lb.

Bozeman Doings

We received a letter from Lou Wendt telling of the Bozeman group's birth and fall activities:

"We went through with our recruiting program in Sept. and got quite a turnout. A push to organize immediately developed, so now we are the mountaineering section of what we are calling (for want of a name) the MSC Outing Club. This will probably become an 'official' college organization this winter.

We held many, many practice sessions and rock climbs this fall thanks to the beautiful weather. Sadly, our only two attempts at major peaks coincided with the first and second major snowstorms of the year. This winter we are continuing with some short ski tours and snow-shoe trips. We will probably have one major group trip, a couple of day ski tours, and possibly, one or two more demanding trips for smaller parties.

Our spring vacation plans are still open. One of our boys from Colorado has been talking up a Rainier climb in cooperation with a couple of his friends from down there. If this doesn't work out I'd like to go into or at least look at Granite Peak, in the Beartooths between here and Billings."

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