

Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1964

VOL. III, No. 4

A day will come, perhaps
when winter mountaineering
will surpass
summer mountaineering.

-Marcel Kurz



LAPPI AID-SHELTER

-HALL-

Located at Lappi Lake
Bitterroot-Selway Wilderness Area

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ASSISTANT.....BOB HIGHAM

PUBLISHER.....ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS OF WESTERN MONTANA

2100 SOUTH AVENUE WEST, MISSOULA

SUBSCRIPTION: \$1 A YEAR OR MEMBERSHIP (\$2.50) IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
MONTHLY, OCTOBER THROUGH JUNE

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CAPSULIZED

The December Meeting

Pete Hall showed slides of Ski Mountaineering on Mount Rainier and Mount Shasta in the Cascades.

An equipment display and discussion gave us a view of the many types of equipment for ski touring and snowshoeing!

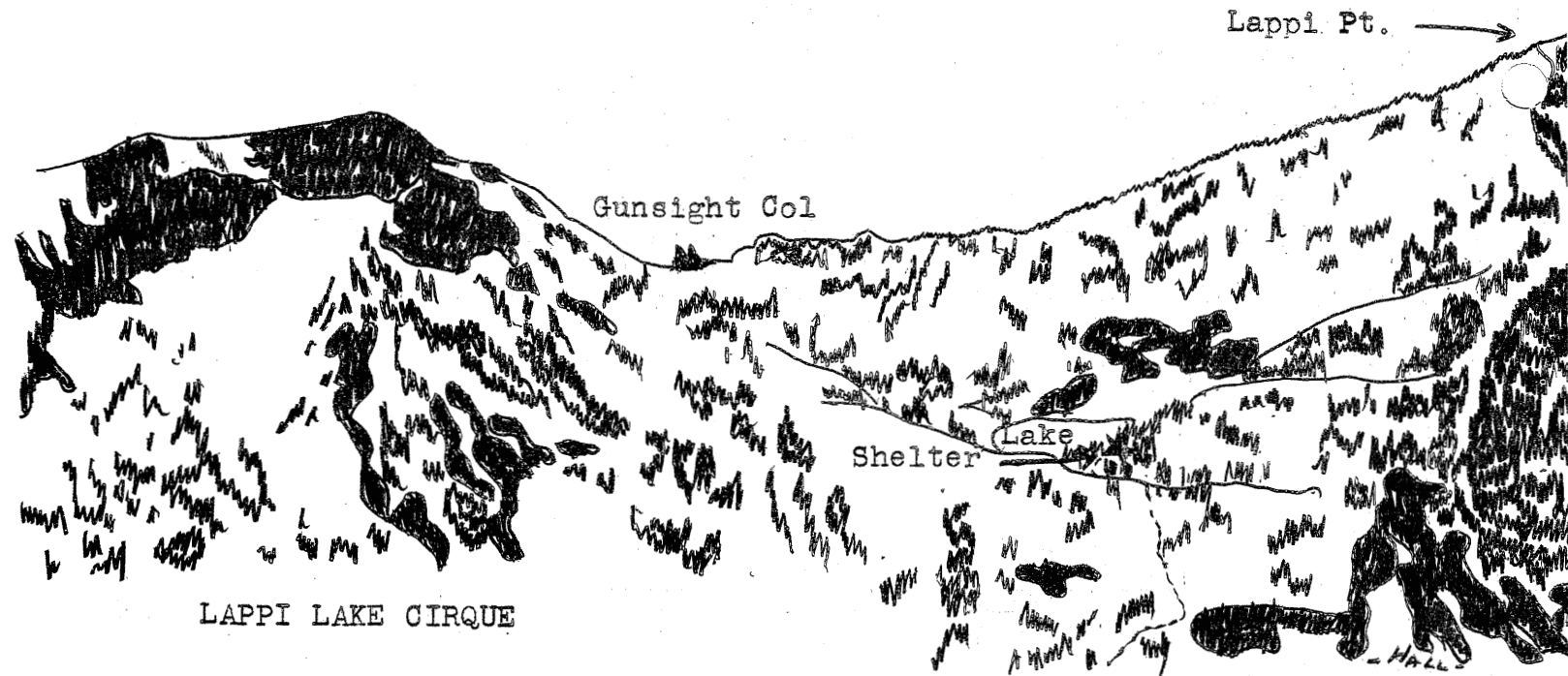
The January Meeting

Virginia Vincent and Lionel Hall showed slides of ski touring around Lolo Peak.

Back-pack stoves, cook sets and other utensils, and tents-tents-tents were on display and were discussed.

THE NEXT MOUNTAINEER MEETING

Jack Bolander will show slides on climbing in the Cascades and Sierras. Packs and sleeping bags will be on display and will be discussed by the pros. Tuesday, February 11, 7:30 p.m. in Room 107 of the Geology Building.



LAPPI AID-SHELTER

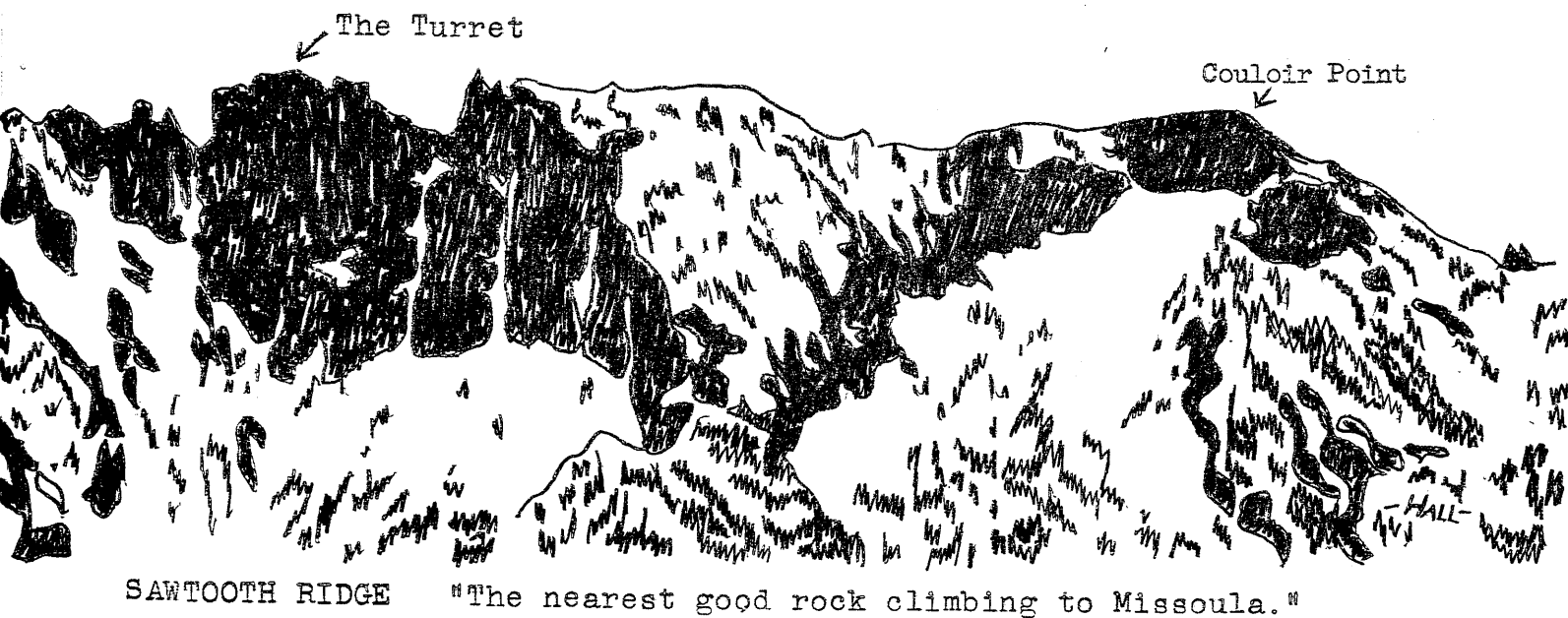
by Thad Lowary

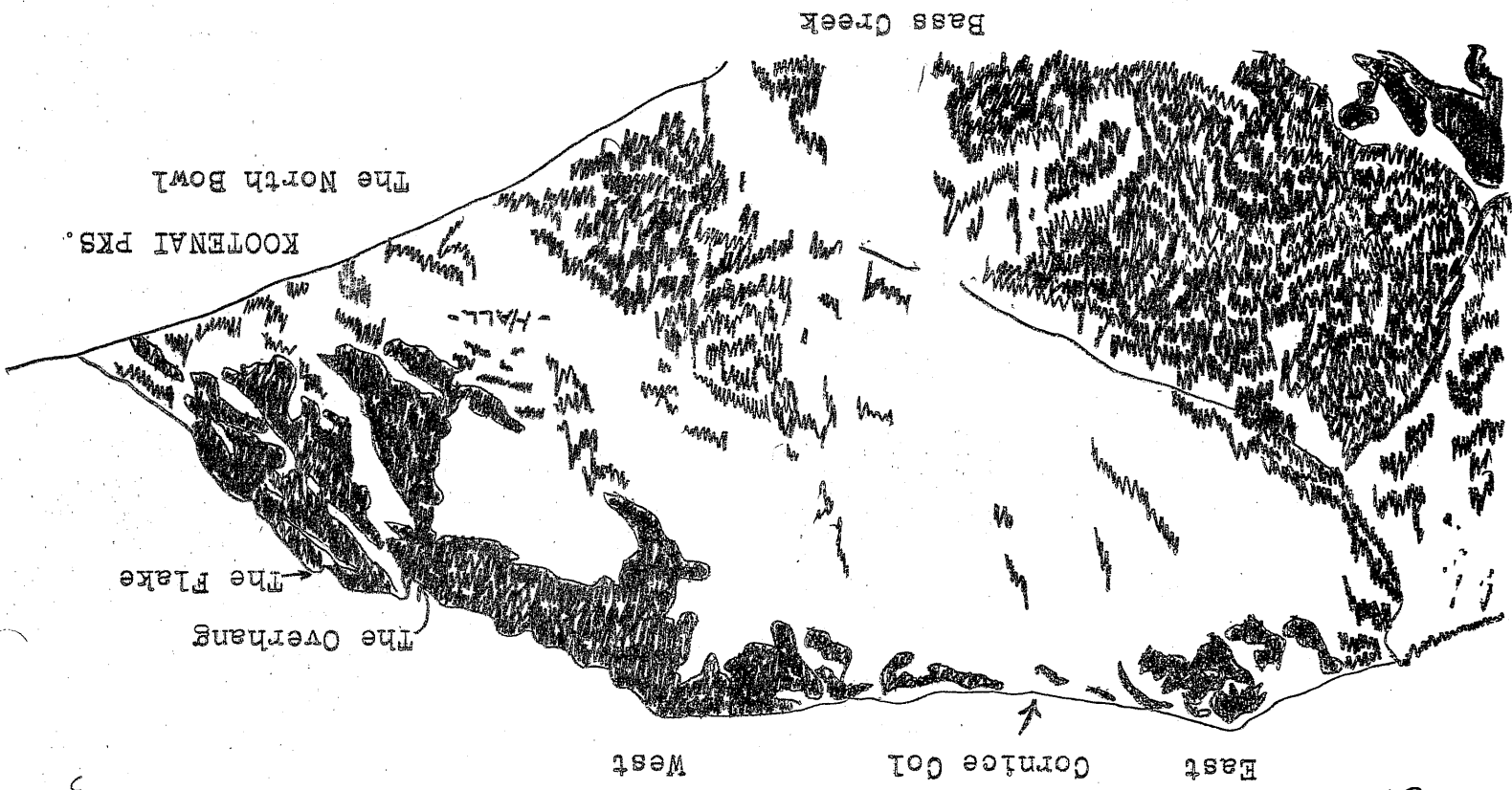
Another significant advancement in winter mountaineering has been realized by the establishment of an aid-shelter hut at Lappi Lake in the Bass Creek drainage of the Bitterroot range of mountains. This aid-shelter has been made possible through the cooperative efforts of District Ranger C. H. McDonald of the Stevensville ranger district of the Bitterroot National Forest. Although special-use permits cannot be issued within the wilderness area boundaries, the Rocky Mountaineer Climbing Club has received authorization from Ranger McDonald to restore and use a 9' x 12' cabin as an aid-shelter. Members of the club are hopeful that, in time, other aid-shelter huts can be established in the more remote alpine areas of the Bitterroot range to encourage both summer and winter mountaineering.

During the past three years, increasing use has been made of the Bitterroot range of mountains for summer rock climbing. However, in order to encourage use of the back country and high alpine areas for cross country skiing and snowshoe trips, aid shelters are necessary to provide a haven in case of a storm, exhaustion, sickness, or injury. Many mountain users don't have all of the proper winter clothes, down beds, tents, primus stoves and other winter equipment required to spend a winter night in the mountains with any degree of comfort or safety. Some of us who do possess this sort of gear don't have the legs or back to tote it all in and still class the

trip as recreation. As head of the rescue committee of the Rocky Mountaineers, I was quite impressed with the location of this hut and the safety it will provide for both summer and winter use of this Bass Creek area. It would certainly prove invaluable in the event of a rescue mission. Many people may be unaware that an exhausted person can freeze to death in a down sleeping bag in freezing weather when his body ceases to produce heat equivalent to body heat loss. When this condition occurs, freezing of the feet and hands can take place with eventual death if supplementary heat is not provided. It is for this reason that shelter huts, such as the one at Lappi Lake, could be the difference between life and death in treating an injured or exhausted person prior to evacuation since stove heat can prevent freezing, alleviate shock, and help prepare the victim for evacuation.

The Lappi Lake aid-shelter is simply a restored 9' x 12' log cabin situated near the outlet of Lappi Lake about one mile south and 1200 feet in elevation above Bass Creek. Members of the club have made this cabin usable by covering the roof with plastic material to keep the snow and water from dropping through and the cracks have been chinked to keep out the howling winds and drifting snow. Dry snags have been dropped near the hut for fire wood and an emergency wood supply is on hand. Note: - Mountaineers who use the hut should not overlook the Swede saw - which is hung in plain sight - to replenish the wood used during shelter. The hut has been furnished with a cast-iron heating stove, cooking and eating utensils, a gasoline lantern, axe, some emergency grub, and a primus stove for cooking. White gas is used in both the lantern and stove so don't forget to take in some gas. Plans are underway to stock the hut with emergency first-aid supplies and evacuation equipment to ensure the proper and timely action will be taken in case of an accident or sudden illness. In addition to restoring and furnishing the hut, club members have cleaned out the old trail which takes off from the Bass Creek abandoned-road south to Lappi Lake.





It is now possible to snowshoe the entire distance although care must be exercised in climbing the headwall so as not to get involved in a snow slide on some rather steep slopes. There is a short stretch which can be dangerous under certain snow conditions.

The travel time from the car to Lappi Lake and return will vary with the conditions of travel and girth of pack-sack. However, as a general guide, you should be able to snowshoe in to the cabin from the car in 6 hours and return to the car in 3½ hours. This time allows for taking pictures and lunch on the trail.

There is a register at the hut which contains the names of over 30 snowshoers and skiers who have made the trip this winter. Now that the holiday season is over, more extensive use is expected to be made of this area as well as the other fine ski and snowshoeing areas in the Bitterroot mountains.

LAPPI LAKE SKI TOUR

Leaving the jeep at noon on Dec. 20, John McCammon, Lionel Hall and I left on a three-day ski tour which seemed fraught with trouble from start to finish. In addition to having to break trail through calf-deep powder with skis, this was the first ski tour of the year for my companions and it took them a while to adjust equipment (and in fact it was John's first time on skis).

Lionel lost one of his touring attachments and had to dig for it in the snow for a half hour; Sam (Braxton, who, fortunately for him, wasn't along) had forgotten to mark the beginning of his new Lappi Trail and we spent an hour and a half searching around in the dark in the creek bottom before we found the trail; we bivouacked on the trail at mid-night with only one poncho among the three of us (who packs a tent when he expects to spend the night in a cabin?); Lionel and John spent an hour and a half the next morning on a short-cut and discovered when they got there they had gained only 10 feet in trail altitude; and John's canvas climbers didn't work, so we pulled him up the trail, foot by foot.

Funny? We nearly died----laughing. And what a way to kick off '64 ski touring!

An average trip takes 5 to 7 hours. It took us 24. Seven hours of forward progress and the rest bivouacking, waiting, going back down the trail for something forgotten or dropped, waiting, fixing, waiting, pulling our First-Timer, hunting, whacking, or lamenting.

The trip down was not as eventful, and not nearly as instructive. We skied back. All the way. --- Gary Hall

* * * * *

LOLO SKI TRAIL

Two skiers and three snowshoers left the Braxton home at 6:30 a.m. Dec. 15th. Our destination ---- A trip up the new Lolo Ski-touring Trail to Carleton Lakes and possibly to Lolo Peak.

We left our cars at approximately 7:45 and the trip to the lakes took almost four hours. After a quick look around, and a short discussion of a possible site for a cabin, and an even shorter debate as to whether we would climb Lolo, we departed to an area which afforded shelter from the wind. Here we ate lunch and attempted, quite unsuccessfully, to melt snow water to make a hot drink. We left our lunch spot and headed back up to the ridge.

The top of the ridge was a fairyland. The trees were covered with hoare frost, making them objects of great beauty.

It was rather interesting to go with a mixed group of skiers and snowshoers. At different times each group had its hayday. We snowshoers had our share of trouble. On a rather steep slope one of my snowshoes kept getting buried while the other went sliding downhill. Much to my chagrin I found myself doing an unglamorous split! This slope also gave us trouble on

(continued on 7)

our way back up. After much slipping and sliding around we resorted to pulling ourselves up by the trees. Sam, thinking this was too good to go unrecorded, filmed our hurculean struggles.

At the junction of the ski trail with the forest service trail our group stopped to count noses. Only one of the group was missing -- Gary Hall. After a short search Sam came back with the information that Gary had removed a stump from the trail and in the act had ripped the seat of his pants; in fact all three layers -- whatever they might have been.

We then proceded down the remainder of the trail without incident, reaching the cars at about 4:00 p.m. --- Martha Ward

* * * * *

Jan. 5, 1964

Lolo - Carleton Ridge Ski Tour

We climbed to the top of Carleton Ridge. If you didn't have climbers on you would of had a hard time getting up. There were six skiers and one snow-shoer.

We left our home at 6:30 a.m. Our cars got stuck quite a few times on the Mormon Creek Road, so it wasn't until 9:00 a.m. that we started climbing. (We almost made it to the beginning of the trail.)

It was cold and if you stopped you would get colder. We reached the top at 1:00 p.m. It was so windy, as soon as we got up, we came right down. We skied down as far as we could. At one time we had to put on our climbers to ski down because it was so steep.

Here are the people who went, Pete Hall, Bruce Johnson, Gary Hall, Shirl Braxton, Sam Braxton, Bart Braxton, Dalt Braxton.

Dalt Braxton

10 Years

TOURING-SKI TIPS

By Sam Braxton and Gary Hall

Today most touring is done on metal rather than wooden skis..... Primarily because about the most damage you can do to a metal ski is to bend it. It can still be skied on and this eliminates the need to carry a metal repair tip.

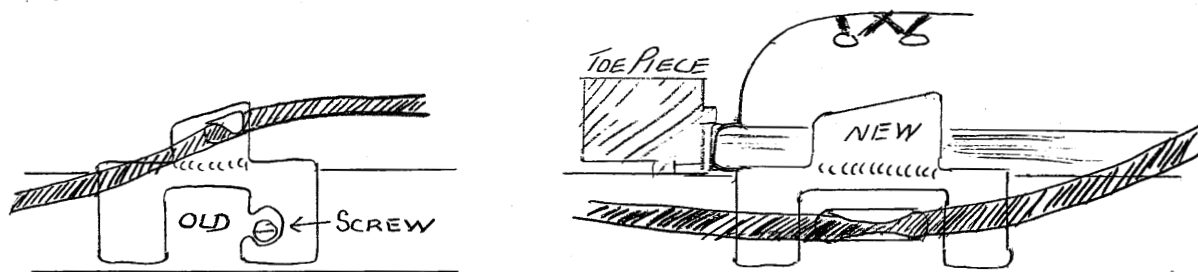
But there's no reason why wooden skis won't work just as well if a few precautions are taken.

To fix a pair of downhill skis for touring you must take the cable out of the rear cable-clamps so the heel can be lifted as you ski-walk along. Otherwise you'll get leg cramps and lose speed. Now, on most downhill bindings, you won't be able to keep your boot from popping out of the binding so you'll have to do one of two things.

1) Change your downhill toe piece for the Ramy-Securis, a release-type bear-trap which gives the lateral stability needed for touring. This works well if your boot sole isn't too thick to fit under the sole lugs. Most ski boots, including those with a Roccia sole, will fit, but a climbing boot with a Montagna sole often will not.

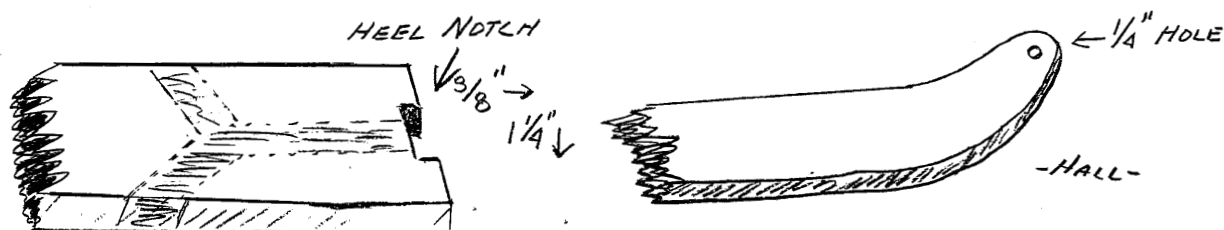
2) An easier adaptation is available however. Most safety toe pieces can be fitten with a touring attachment. Marker and Minaret are the best known. These have a removable 'bear trap' that's placed behind the toe piece to hold the boot squarely on the ski for the climb up, and can be lifted off easily for the downhill run. Another pair of cable clamps will have to be fixed permanently to the ski, but it has no affect on down-hill skiing.

If you buy a Marker Touring attachment (\$3.50), be sure to get the new, improved type.



The plates are flat and must be bent to fit the width of the ski and the sole of the boot. THEY MUST BE BENT PROPERLY or they won't work. All that's required is a good vice, a hammer, and a little forethought.

Two more tips.....Drill a 1/4 or 3/8" hole in the tip of the ski. This hold is handy for guying a tent or making a rescue toboggan. And (number 2) the heel of the ski should be filed out to hold the heel straps of the climbing skins. If your ski has a rubber butt on the trailing end you don't need to file notches because the butt makes a natural groove to anchor the skins to.



TO SKI UPHILL.....

Climbers or wax must be used for the uphill pull. Wax isn't often used by tourers today because it's hard to get on and even harder to get off.

There are two basic types of skins.....One is hooked to a permanent bracket placed in the groove of the ski, and the other is clamped on with a strap, buckle, or catch arrangement. Trima (Co-op - \$13.95) is an example of the first, and Vinersa (Co-op - \$13.95) typifies the second. These two brands have the highest quality material and workmanship on the market. The Vinersa has an advantage because the skis don't have to be drilled. Both Vinersa and Trima keep snow from balling up between the skin and the ski and prevent the skin from slipping off to the side. This is important! (in case you haven't already discovered)

Other brands of buckle-on skins are a poor substitute. Tension on straps is difficult to maintain because the skins stretch and then the skins won't stay on the bottom. And the straps are easily, and often, cut off by the cutting edge of the skis. (In a pinch the cut ends can be over-laped and bound with adhesive tape - which presumably you have in the first-aid pack) These less desirable skins have a tendency to pick up snow between skin and ski which causes strain on the skier when he's going up hill or on a steep traverse.

Rope climbers (See Mountain Ear, Jan. '63) have several advantages and a few disadvantages.....They cost only about \$1 a pair to make, they don't ball-up as the inferior skins do, and in wet snow they are easier to climb with because they are light-weight (most climbers water-soak) and cause less frontward friction. The only disadvantage is that they are useless in powder snow. They're a little more difficult to put on.

They weigh little, so I take a pair of them along as spares even when I am using my Vinersas. I've found that many times, depending on snow conditions, I'd rather use the ropes.

Canvas climbers work only in wet snow but they don't work there nearly as well as rope climbers and are heavy when wet. At best they are a low-ranking substitute. But still better than wax.....or nothing!

For more information and opinions write to the Editor - or come to the meetings! - Hall

* * * * *

FORMULA "A" VITAMINS

Adapted from the Seattle MOUNTAINEER

More extensively discussed in the Jan., April, and June '63 issues of SUMMIT, Formula A is available from Gerry.

Conclusive cause and effect relationships are difficult to establish, but many climbers believe that Formula A Vitamins speed recovery from muscle fatigue, causing perceivable change sometimes as quickly as 3 hours after taking the vitamin. There is no noticable added strength during the climb, but recovery during the evening and for the next day is apparently boosted.

BE CLOTHED FOR WINTER MOUNTAINEERING

By S. A. Braxton

Through the winter months conditions above timberline in the Bitterroots and Missions can quickly become arctic. The change from bright sunshine to a fierce blizzard might take only an hour. Thus - winter mountaineering is reserved for the experienced and properly equipped mountaineer.

Inner Clothing

Head - Wool Stocking-cap and scarf or, preferably, a balaclava helmet.
 Body - Wool or fishnet underwear, wool shirt, light-weight wool sweater and down jacket. A heavy wool shirt, two light-weight sweaters and one heavy sweater will give protection equivalent to a down jacket if you don't have one.
 Legs - Wool or fishnet underwear and wool pants, preferably knickers.
 Feet - Light-weight wool under heavy wool socks.
 Hands - Fingerless mittens or silk gloves and wool mittens.

Outer Clothing

Head - Parka hood that covers most of the face by drawstring.
 Body - Wind-proof parka.
 Legs - Wind-proof pants and gaiters
 Feet - Korean boots, or a combination of an insulated leather boot with overboots and crampons to fit.
 Hands - Insulated down or Korean mitts: MUST have cord attachment.

Now you're ready for a Nor' wester.

* * * * *

WATCH FROSTNIP AND BITE!!!!!!.....

Frostnip, affecting the upper layers of skin, is a mild form of frostbite. High winds and extreme cold cause a sudden blanching of the skin on the nose, chin, cheeks, ears, fingers and toes.

It is easily relieved by covering the area with a warm hand and applying steady pressure. Don't rub! But cupping the hands and blowing on cold hands, nose or cheeks is a safe alternative. Fingers can be warmed by holding them in the armpits. A Good Friend may suggest that you warm your feet on his toasty stomach. According to Jack London, Eskimo women quickly warm the frosted hunter's feet under their ample bosoms. This may or may not be practical for American mountaineers.

When extremities cease to feel cold or painful after they've been nipped and uncared for, they are being bitten. This is a signal to seek shelter and perhaps medical care.

If the hiker has miles to walk for shelter he should keep his shoes on and keep walking instead of removing them to thaw his feet. Walking on frozen feet is less harmful to the tissues than walking on thawed-out feet. Alaskan prospectors have walked for several days on frozen unthawed feet to reach a place where they could be treated, carried, or flown to a hospital.

(continued on 11)

Rapid rewarming of the frozen parts is the best current treatment for frostbite. The extremities are placed in a large tub containing water heated to 108-112 degrees. A thermometer should be used because the iced parts will cool the water. Dry rewarming is less desirable because it takes four times as long to thaw out the deep freeze.

Never expose the frozen parts to open fire, extremely hot water, or any intense heat. The frostbitten extremity is numb and the skin may burn before the individual realizes what has happened. Don't rub the frosted area before, during, or after rewarming. Applying snow or iced water is passe! Out! No Good! Quickly seek medical care because the tissue damage is likely to be serious.

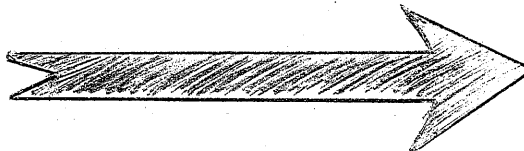
For more information read:

MOUNTAIN EAR, January 1963 - Miller and Dr. W. J. Miles
SUMMIT, November 1962 - Dr. W. J. Miles
1962 AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL for comprehensive, illustrated
article by Bradford Washburn.

* * * * *

(notes out of the Rucksack)

A RUGGED SNOWSHOE HARNESS



A stable and rugged harness is a great aid, and sometimes an absolute necessity, when snowshoeing in steep country. Since the harness provided with snowshoes usually doesn't meet this need, Sam Braxton offers a tougher heel-strap design and Thad Lowary gives us an idea for a toe piece.

The heel harness attachment points should be as far apart as the width of the snowshoe will allow. The heel strap should be a double piece of leather sewn together with a strip of nylon tape between. The tape will keep the leather from stretching and eventually breaking, which will happen to the usual commercial heel strap because of the heavy strain put on it when climbing.

The arch strap should be riveted to the heel strap. This is usually a weak spot in the commercial harness. Adjustment is made with two 5/8" roller buckles, one on each side. A very efficient hinged toe-piece can be made by riveting three straps to a rectangle of rubber belting. Attach this piece to the snowshoe with rawhide thongs at the base of the toe-hole.

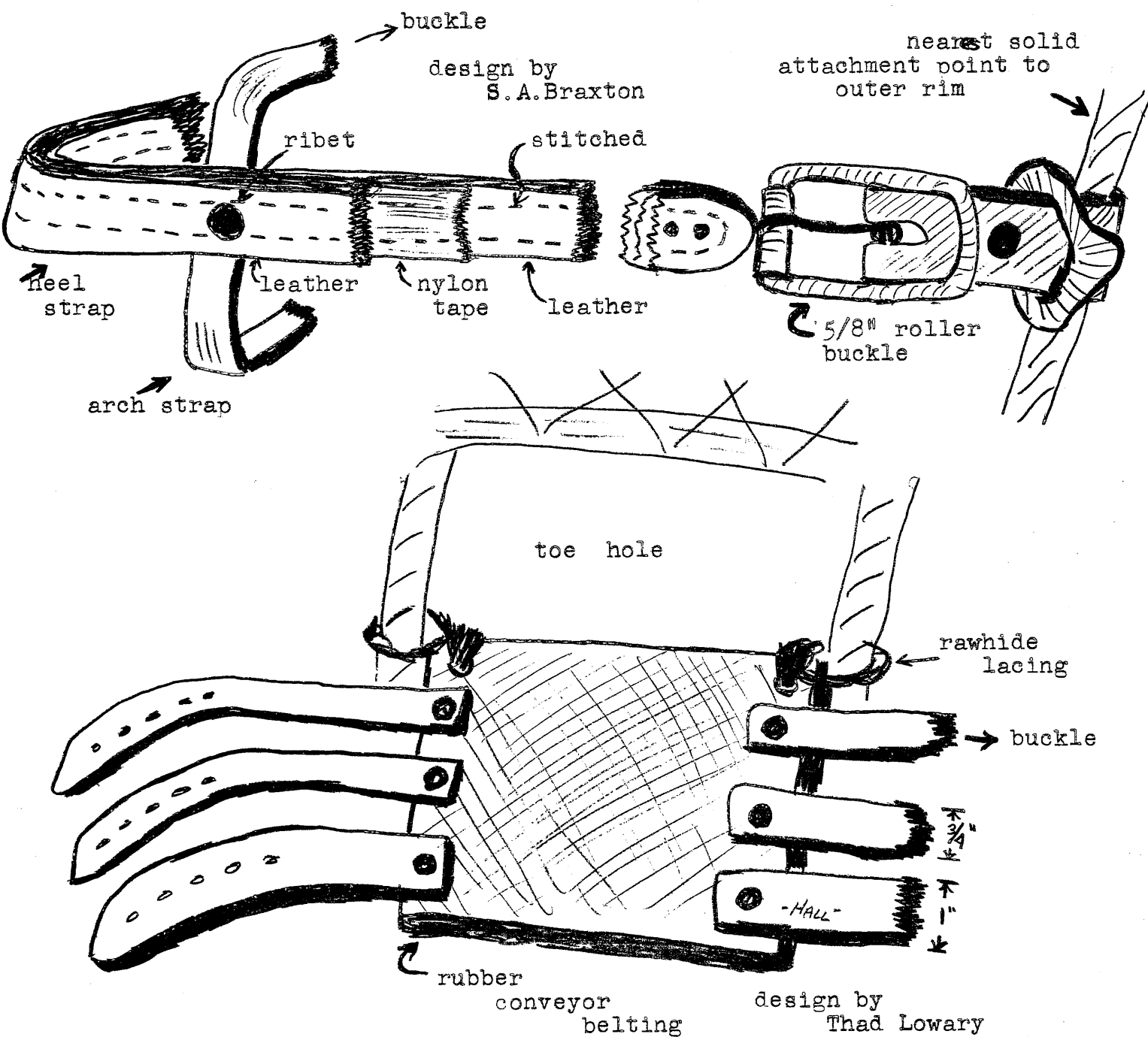
Ray Bruce, 314 Brooks, Missoula, will make the toe piece for \$1.50 and the heel strap (sans the buckles, which can be bought at Westerners in Missoula) for \$2.

Ray also makes a good ice-ax-head cover and a piton hammer holster, with strap and snap to keep the hammer from falling on your partner's head, for \$1 each.

NEW SNOWSHOE

HARNESSES

-FOR MOUNTAINEERING



MADE BY RAY BRUCE, 314 Brooks, Missoula, Mont.

Heel Strap-----\$2 excluding buckles

Toe Harness-----\$1.50 " "

ATMOSPHERIC MOISTURE CONDENSATION IN TENTS

adapted from the Seattle MOUNTAINEER

Dew forms whenever a surface, such as a blade of grass or a tent wall, is cooled below the dewpoint of the air. As humidity rises less cooling is necessary for a surface to collect dew; And since the only way a surface can become cooler than the air is to lose heat by radiation to the night sky, dew will ordinarily condense only when the sky is clear at least part of the night.

Element cloth, coated and uncoated nylon, and plastic all 'dew', but the impervious materials seem to fare worst. Cotton material (Element and Oxford Cloth) absorbs much of the moisture and has, as does uncoated nylon, a much larger surface area (each thread is an independent surface) than does coated nylon or plastic. So Element Cloth feels driest and passes less moisture on to the sleeper and his bag.

Both the inside and the outside of the tent condense dew. So does a sleeping bag exposed to the night sky. The solution is simply to screen the material so it can't be "seen" by the night sky. Trees and clouds give good protection. And thus a paradox.....Above timberline you'll need a rain-fly or tarp on a clear night, but not when it's cloudy, unless the clouds drift off during the night or dump rain or snow on you.

Dry air, a brisk breeze (which keeps the tent surface warm), or clouds will limit or eliminate condensation. And if it is raining, an impervious material will not condense moisture from breath or humidity because the tent walls will stay warm and water vapor then cannot lose heat by radiation.

If it is important that you keep your bag absolutely dry it will be necessary for you to (1) have a shelter large enough so the bag won't touch the walls or (2) have two layers of cover between the sleeping-bag and the night sky; One to collect the condensation and the lower cover to shield the bag and sleeper. But a bag will usually begin to feel damp only after several days of contact with consistently damp air.

When the temperature is low the condensation will turn to frost and inside the tent moisture-laden-breath will add to the accumulated condensation.

Nylon sleeping bags melt fallen frost much more rapidly than a cotton covered bag does and absorbs the moisture and water more quickly. But the nylon bag also dries out more quickly.

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SKI-SHOW
OF THE
'64 SEASON

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continued on page 15

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It's The Hans Gmoser Movie VAGABONDS OF THE MOUNTAINS,
a color projection of the climb to the top of
Canada's highest peak --- 19,850' Mount Logan. .
-- 270 miles on skis!!

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MISSOULA, MONTANA

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* and *

AVALANCHE

!!!!!!!!!!!!

from National Ski Patrol Headquarters

RADIO CODES

(by the Rucksacker)

A number of climbers and skiers have been using small pocket transceivers in the mountains. Perhaps these codes will be of value.

10-1.....Receiving Poorly
 10-2.....Receiving Well (signal strength if requested)
 10-3.....Stop transmitting (off freq., over mod., etc.)
 10-4.....OK
 10-5.....Relay Message
 10-6.....Busy
 10-7.....Out of service - leaving the air.
 10-8.....In service, subject to call.
 10-9.....Repeat, reception bad.
 10-10.....Transmission completed, subject to call.
 10-11.....Talking too rapidly.
 10-12.....Officials or visitors present.
 10-13.....Advise weather and road conditions.
 10-20.....What is your location.
 10-23.....Stand-by.
 10-24.....Trouble at Station.
 10-25.....Do you have contact with _____?
 10-30.....Does not conform to rules and regulations.
 10-33.....Emergency traffic at this station.
 10-35.....Confidential information.
 10-36.....Correct time.
 10-41.....Tune to channel for test, or emergency service
 10-60.....What is next message number?
 10-65.....Clear for message
 10-68.....Repeat Message
 10-70.....Net Message
 10-71.....Proceed with transmission in sequence.
 10-92.....Your quality is poor, transmitter difficulties
 10-99.....Unable to receive your signals.

* * * * *

Two excellent shows

and your dollar will buy a piece of Mountain Rescue Equipment
 (not even Senator Byrd gets that much out of \$1)

Friday, February 21, 1964 - 7:30 and 9:00 (two runs)

St. Patrick School-of-Nursing Auditorium

/////////
 /admission/ one buck - just
 ///////////

TO AN UNCLIMBED MOUNTAIN

You're there, inviolate - I am here;

As long as those two facts maintain,
Your summit-block must e'er appear

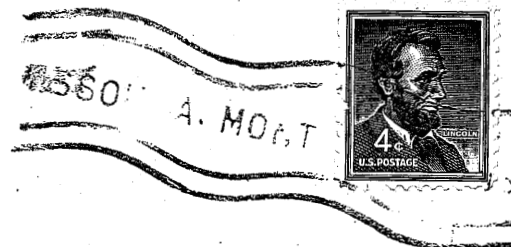
A goal which I must strive to gain.
I'll fail, perhaps - but life's a jest
For those who aim beneath the crest.

-Stedman Chandler

"MOUNTAIN EAR"
2100 South Ave. W.
Missoula, Montana



Dave Line
Whitaker Road
Rt. #3
Missoula, Montana



Exp Oct